

Official Report

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST SESSION (2015-2016) OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF GUYANA UNDER THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA HELD IN THE PARLIAMENT CHAMBER, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, BRICKDAM, GEORGETOWN

31ST Sitting

Wednesday, 17th February, 2016

Assembly convened at 1.05 p.m.

Prayers

[Mr. Speaker in the Chair]

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS AND REPORTS

The following Paper was laid:

1. Audited Financial Statements of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for the year ending 31st December, 2014. *[Minister of Finance]*

PUBLIC BUSINESS

GOVERNMENT'S BUSINESS

MOTION

MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR 2016

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

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

AND WHEREAS the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana for the financial year 2016 have been prepared and laid before the Assembly on 2016-01-29.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That this National Assembly approves the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2016, of a total sum of two hundred and twelve billion, nine hundred and sixty three million and one hundred and thirty two thousand dollars (**\$212,963,132,000**), **excluding seventeen billion and seventy three million, three hundred and ninety four thousand dollars (\$17,073,394,000)** which is chargeable by law, as detailed therein and summarised in the undermentioned schedule, and agree that it is expedient to amend the law and to make further provision in respect of finance.” *[Minister of Finance]*

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, the Assembly will now resolve itself into Committee of Supply to continue consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 2016.

Assembly resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

In Committee of Supply

Agency: 71 Region 1: Barima/Waini

Current Expenditure

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$169,838,000

Mr. Croal: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees - there was an increase of three in the staff compliment but approximately \$8 million increase in allocation. Could the Hon. Minister indicate who those new employees are and their dates of employment? Secondly, what is the rationale for the \$8 million increase?

Minister of Communities [Mr. Bulkan]: Mr. Chairman, Hon. Member, the three new employees in this category are two caretakers and one boat hand. They were employed in December of last year. With respect to the increases in budgetary allocations, that is due to the annualisation and the 5% increase paid across the board.

Mr. Croal: A follow-up on this same line item: The Hon. Minister indicated annualisation as well as the 5% increase. The 5% increase in 2015 would have been reflected on the 2015 expenditure. So, could the Hon. Minister clarify that answer?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the annualisation is for all 18 employees and it would be for 2016.

Mr. Croal: I accept the explanation. Line item 6211 – Expenses Specific to the Agency: Could the Hon. Minister give a breakdown of the projected expenditure? I have some follow-ups but they are dependent on the information provided.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, under this line item, the details for this projected expenses would be for the payment of stipend for Toshaos, Deputy Toshaos, the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) Councillors, the expenses relating to the Regional Chairman's (RC) office, expenses for the RDC meetings, which are bimonthly, as well as visits of the Regional Chairman and the Vice-Chairman to the sub-regions in the Region as well as to Georgetown for meetings and other activities of the RDC.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister provide the information as to the current stipend that is being paid to Regional Councillors? Secondly, could the Hon. Minister confirm where the allocation for repairs to the Regional Chairman's vehicle is, which line item?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I am informed that the stipends that are paid are \$10,000 monthly and the provision for repairs to the RC's vehicle would be under this very heading.

Mr. Croal: A follow-up: Could the Hon. Minister indicate whether there is a provision for the repairs to the current vehicle that is being used by the Regional Chairman, which has been down in the last quarter?

Mr. Bulkan: The answer to that question is yes; there are provisions within this allocation for repairs to the Regional Chairman's vehicle.

Mr. Croal: This is the last question, under line item 6211, in relation to RDC meetings. Could the Hon. Minister confirm that the allocation of the resources is adequate for the current bimonthly period meetings being held? Historically, it was held bimonthly but, in 2015, they did not have the necessary allocation to complete the last meeting and they had to do a virement.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the expectation, at this stage, is that the budgetary provision or allocation ought to be sufficient but, of course, later in the year, there is always the likelihood that there may be a shortfall.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service: Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the vehicles and motor expected to be serviced under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: Hon. Member, I will ask that the details and breakdown be provided before the end of today.

Mr. Croal: Alright. In the interim, could the Hon. Minister indicate how many vehicles and motors are expected to be serviced under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the answer is approximately six vehicles, including the all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

Mr. Croal: Line item 6312 – Subventions to Local Authorities: Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the expected allocation?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, that allocation is for the two Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NDCs) in the Region - Port Kaituma and Mabaruma.

Mr. Croal: Follow-up: What is the allocation for each of those local authorities?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, it is \$60,000 monthly.

Mr. Croal: Just to reconfirm, would this be in addition to the allocation of the subvention that is being provided under the Ministry of Communities? I just want the Hon. Minister to confirm.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, this is separate from the capital subvention under the Ministry that would have been announced last night.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask supplemental on the questions that were already put, some of which were already made clear by the Hon. Member on our side when he asked the supplemental questions.

Mr. Chairman: So, do you no longer wish to speak, Hon. Member?

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, line item 6272 – Electricity Charges: In 2015, the Budget allowed an allocation of \$1,020,000. Nothing was spent, Mr. Chairman. Here again, *Budget 2016* is also making available \$1,020,000. Would the Hon. Minister please guide us as to whether the regional administration, Programme 1, received free electricity in 2015? If that is so, why is it not receiving the same benefits in 2016?

1.20 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: This provision would be for electricity at a new office building at Port Kaituma, a building that was not in use last year, but will only be in use in 2016.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6281, Security Services: I note the allocation in 2015 was \$22,368,000, expended was \$21,678,000. In Budget 2016 we have upped the allocation to parallel what was given in 2015. My questions: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to say to us which locations are benefiting from security services and the number of hours security service is provided at these locations?

Would the Hon. Minister also say to us the name of the security company, when was the contract awarded and whether it was single sourcing or public tender? We will be grateful to have a copy of that public tender.

Mr. Bulkan: There are three locations catered for under this heading, namely Mabaruma, Port Kaituma and Moruka. The hours of coverage are 12; the current provider is RK's Guyana Security Service; and this is a continuation of a contract that was in place last year.

Mr. G. Persaud: Let me thank the Minister for the information given. Unfortunately, we know Mabaruma, Port Kaituma and Moruka as being sub districts of the regional administration. I am

not sure of the specific locations where the security services are provided. I will be grateful if the Minister can be more specific in providing his answer.

Mr. Bulkan: I can provide the actual locations before the end of the afternoon, but the information is that there are a total of about 35 government buildings in these three subregions, as earlier indicated, Mabaruma, Port Kaituma and Moruka.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6302, Training (including Scholarships): An allocation of \$350,000 was spent in 2015. We are asked to approve \$749,000 for the year 2016. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to let us know why the administration could not fulfil the programme last year? What will be different this year to allow it to spend 100% more than it spent last year?

Mr. Bulkan: Perhaps I can remind the Hon. Member that the year 2015 was a very unusual year, particularly with regard to the workings of Parliament and governance in general. The sum that is catered for, \$749,000, is for the continuation of training with the Public Service Ministry (PSM) and to expose the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) staff to a higher level of training. It will be for the full year, for twelve months of this year.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the buildings expected to be repaired and the allocation for each?

Mr. Bulkan: The buildings would be the Mabaruma Amerindian Hostel, the Moruka Amerindian Hostel; repairs to the Assistant Regional Executive Officer's (AREO) living quarters at Port Kaituma, the regional administrative building at Mabaruma, the Deputy Regional Executive Officer's (DREO) living quarters at Mabaruma as well as to the Regional Vice-Chairman's living quarters at Mabaruma.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister indicate what is being done with the current Regional Executive Officer (REO)'s building?

Mr. Bulkan: Provisions were made in the Budget 2015 for repairs to the REO quarters and those repairs are in progress.

Mr. Croal: It is the last question, Mr. Chairman. Would that mean that the Regional Executive Officer will be moving into the REO's quarters?

Mr. Bulkan: The repairs are being done to make that building habitable so that the REO can occupy it as is the intention.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Since the works are in progress and the money was budgeted in 2015, are there cheques still holding from the allocation for the REO's building which is being repaired?

Mr. Bulkan: The only unpaid portion would be the retention which normally applies.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Then that means there is laxity in completion of the project since construction is still in progress. May I ask the Minister to explain that?

Mr. Bulkan: I am advised that the remaining works are to complete the electrical installation.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: That means money is still holding for payment for the completion of the electrical work.

Mr. Bulkan: The retention would cover the full payment upon completion.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Could the Minister indicate to this Assembly the amount of the retention?

Mr. Bulkan: I will undertake to provide that information later in the afternoon.

Bishop Edghill: Under the same line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings, the Minister explained that the works are ongoing, then the Minister indicated that the moneys remaining are for the retention. My understanding is that retention is for the defects liability period and not for works that are completed or to be undertaken. It would appear that the contractor has been paid for works still to be completed.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, please ask your question.

Bishop Edghill: I am seeking clarification, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Are you asking a question of the Minister?

Bishop Edghill: I am asking the question, which the Minister answered, that the moneys remaining are for retention. I am indicating to the Assembly that retention money is for defects

liability. He has indicated as well that there are electrical works to be completed. My question to the Minister: Has the contractor been paid for works not yet completed? If not, what is the value of the work to be completed and where is the money being held?

Mr. Bulkan: The question is duly noted. I will undertake to provide the information later in the afternoon.

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$169,838,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 712 – Public Works – \$250,691,000

Mr. Croal: Line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the buildings expected to be repaired under the programme “Public Works” and the sub districts?

Mr. Bulkan: Those buildings and locations would be the airstrip terminal, Mabaruma, the Acquero Guest House, carpentry shop at Mabaruma, sanitary block at the Mabaruma Power House, sanitary block at the Moruka Power House. Those are the locations.

Mr. Croal: As a follow-up, could the Minister indicate why the Acquero Guest House is not under the regional administrative as the guest house in Mabaruma.

1.35 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: The Acquero Guest House is not one of the buildings to be rehabilitated under this programme at this time.

Mr. Croal: It is just to reconfirm because Acquero Guest House was mentioned as part of those buildings.

Mr. Bulkan: Could you repeat your question please, Hon. Member?

Mr. Croal: I am just reconfirming that Acquero Guest House was mentioned as those buildings to be repaired under this programme, Public Works, but you are now withdrawing that information.

Mr. Bulkan: I am not withdrawing it. Acquero Guest House is one of the buildings. Could you repeat your first question?

Mr. Croal: Acquero Guest House is mentioned as part of the buildings to be repaired under the programme Public Works. I am therefore asking why it was not budgeted for under the programme Regional Administration and Finance as was done with the guest House at Mabaruma.

Mr. Bulkan: Perhaps it is the case that it could have been programmed, as was the case of Mabaruma, under the programme Administration and Finance, but the current allocation is for it to be funded under the public works programme.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6264, Vehicle Spares and Services: Could the Hon. Minister indicate the vehicles to be serviced under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for repairs and maintenance to the 250 KVA generating set which is located at Matarkai as well as an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) also at the Matarkai subregion.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Line item 6251, Maintenance of Roads: Could the Minister indicate to this Assembly which roads in Region 1 will be maintained, their amounts and could he supply us with the list?

Mr. Bulkan: In the interest of time, I can certainly provide the Hon. Member with full details, a breakdown of all of the roads that are to be repaired under this allocation because it is over 15 roads. This information will be provided for in writing.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: It is just to confirm whether he will be able to give us a breakdown of the estimated cost for each road or project.

Mr. Bulkan: Yes Mr. Chairman. The breakdown will identify the full details as well as the estimated amounts for each.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6113, Staffing Details, “2015 - 10, 2016 – 9”: In the year 2016 we are asking for approximately \$400,000 more on the 2015 allocation, bearing in mind that we have one staff less. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to give us an explanation as to why we need more when we have less staff? Secondly, would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to

share with us, for the nine persons under line item 6113, their designations, their salaries and their date of effective appointment?

Mr. Bulkan: The answer to the first part of the question is based on the budgetary increase. The modest sum, as indicated by the Hon. Member, as \$400,000 is as a result of the annualisation as well as the 5% increase. With regard to the designations of the nine persons under this category, these are Building Overseer, Road Overseer, Senior Electrical Technician, Linesman, Boat Captains III and II.

Mr. G. Persaud: I am sorry. I have to restate the two components of that question that was not answered, the emoluments and the effective date of appointment.

Mr. Bulkan: This information can and certainly will be provided during the course of this afternoon to the Assembly.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6116, Contracted employees: There are 15 contracted employees for 2016. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to give us the designation and the salaries of the two highest and the designations and salaries of the two lowest? I would be very grateful if the Hon. Minister can lay over the complete list of designations and salaries for the other employees under line item 6116.

Mr. Bulkan: This information will be laid over. It will be provided for in writing to all Hon. Members.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6231, Fuel and Lubricants: Allocate in 2015 was \$91, 194,000, used \$87,381,000, requested now \$95 million, which is \$7,619,000 more than what was expended in 2015, a 8.7% increase. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to explain why this increase and at the same time let us know what additional equipment, vehicles or boats were brought on board in the year 2015?

Mr. Bulkan: The allocation is to cater for more frequent road maintenance throughout the region. I believe that the Hon. Member is aware that there is a dire need for repairs and maintenance to roadways in the region. In addition it is also to cater for the procurement of fuel for the Mabaruma and Moruka power stations. With regard to increased procurement of

equipment in 2015, that information would have been an additional two boats and three ATVs that were provided for to the region in 2105.

Programme: 712 - Public Works - \$250,691,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members I must tell you before we embark on this that we have allotted one hour to complete consideration of Region 1 – Barima/ Waini capital and current.

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery - \$ 1,029,117,000

Mr. Croal: Line item 6231, Fuel and Lubricants: Could the Hon. Minister provide information as to who will be benefiting from the use of the fuel?

Mr. Bulkan: This is for the monitoring and supervision of the schools within the three subregions, namely 33 schools in Mabaruma, 12 in Matarkai and 21 in the Moruka subregion.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister indicate if there is provision for assistance for communities for the school boat?

Mr. Bulkan: The answer to that question is yes. There is.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister indicate which areas are benefiting from this?

Mr. Bulkan: It is all three of the areas.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister tell us whether these will be maintenance of school buildings? If yes, could he say where or which schools?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision caters for schools as well as teachers' quarters. There are a number of schools, some of these being the nursery school at Wauna, the primary school, St. Anselm's, which is in Mabaruma, the Kariako Primary School in Moruka as well as the Wallaba Primary School also in Moruka, Unity Square Primary School in Mabaruma, the Lower Kaituma Primary school. Those are some of the schools in addition to teacher's quarters in other locations.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Could the Minister tell us whether the sanitary blocks and the water closets will be put in for the schools in Region 1?

Mr. Bulkan: Provision for that will be under the capital allocations. These are the current expenses.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6271, Telephone Charges: Budget 2015 provided \$2.4 million under this line item, expended a \$122,000, yet in Budget 2016 we are requesting the same sum that we could not have spent in 2015, \$2.4 million. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to tell us what is happening with regard to this line item? Why is it re-budgeted in 2015, \$2.4 million, expended \$122,000 and we are asking again for \$2.4 million in 2016?

1.50 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: The budgetary allocation for last year was in anticipation or expectation of internet connection at Santa Rosa as well as Mabaruma, a facility that did not become operational until November of last year and January of this year respectively. The increased provision is to cater for payments for those services.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6272, Electricity Charges: Two million seven hundred and thirty thousand dollars was requested in 2015, and that was given. Seven hundred and thirty-two thousand dollars was spent. Again, we are requesting \$2,730,000. Would the Hon. Minister please explain this seeming difficulty with regard to electricity charges?

Mr. Bulkan: I am advised that there were interruptions to the electricity supply at the Port Kaituma location, a situation which has been rectified in 2016. This is why the original 2015 provision is returned to 2016.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for listing some of the schools that will be maintained in this year's budget. However, I will request that if he can lay over to the Assembly a list both for the schools and the teachers' quarters, and the amounts allocated for each.

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery – \$1,029,117,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 714 – Health Services – \$571,295,000

Dr. Anthony: Line item 6221, Drugs and Medical Supplies: Could the Minister tell us how much moneys will be expended on drugs and how much will be expended on medical supplies?

Mr. Bulkan: This information will be provided to the Hon. Member and other Members of the Assembly later in the afternoon.

Dr. Anthony: Mr. Chairman, it is a follow-up. Could I ask the Minister to provide the list of drugs and the quantities and how they would be distributed in the three subregions? Secondly, I would like to know how we arrived at the figure of \$80,877,000 for this drug allocation. Given that last year, we had a smaller sum, and I understand that we were talking about four months, but there has also been, by our reports, shortages in the region. I would like to know how we came up with this sum of money.

Mr. Bulkan: As the Hon. Member would know, it is not necessarily the case that the entire amount, which would have been requested by the region that the allocation would have been made 100%, but this is the budgetary provision or allocation, and it is based on the requirements as identified by the health department in Region 1.

Dr. Anthony: Line item 6113, Other Technical and Craft Skilled: Could the Minister say what are the designations of the persons in this category and their salaries?

Mr. Bulkan: It is a clarification to the Hon. Member. Is he seeking the information on all 114 persons?

Dr. Anthony: The Hon. Minister can lay over the list. I am interested in knowing whether or not, in Region 1, there are pharmacists, midwives, lab technicians, and radiographers. If so, how many?

Mr. Bulkan: I am advised that all of those categories of health professionals and technicians are present in the region but the complete list of identifying the designations of all 114 will be laid over during the course of today.

Dr. Anthony: May I ask how many qualified pharmacists are there in Region 1?

Mr. Bulkan: That information is not available immediately but it will be provided later.

Dr. Anthony: I come back to line item 6221, in which the Hon. Minister told us that the region was able to ascertain its medical needs. I would like to know how were it able to do that if it does not have the capacity and the qualified persons. It is because we are not hearing who the pharmacists are, how many are and how they are able to do that.

Mr. Bulkan: Hon. Member arrived at a conclusion that was without basis or foundation. I did not say that those personnel are not present in the region but that the information will be provided later.

Dr. Anthony: Again, under line item 6221, the drugs that the region will be buying, perhaps based on the morbidity pattern in the region. Could the Minister say to us what are the ten major diseases in Region 1? Would the region be buying the drugs to be able to deal with these conditions?

Mr. Bulkan: As the Hon. Member knows very well, the health programme is administered, and it is monitored, and supervised by the Ministry of Health. It is self-evident that the Ministry would be cognisant of what are the major causes of illnesses as well as morbidity. Those would be the priority areas that would be targeted for rectification.

Bishop Edghill: Line item 6221, Drugs and Medical Supplies: Budgeted for last year was \$43,395,000. The document states to us \$42,164,000 was expended and we are seeking \$80,877,000 this year. The question to the Minister, Sir, is that I would like him to confirm that Region 1 received \$42,164,000 worth of drugs and medical supplies in 2015.

Mr. Bulkan: The value of drugs received in the region was not to the full amount stated because out of the allocation, drugs are still being supplied to the region under the 2015 allocation.

Bishop Edghill: As a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, we were advised that this money was vired or warranted from the region to the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Health returned this money to the Consolidated Fund as of 31st December. I would like the Hon. Minister to tell this Assembly how much was procured, and the value of what was procured, and what was not spent?

Mr. Bulkan: The Hon. Member is correct. A certain sum of the allocated amount was vired to the Ministry of Public Health. As to what percentage of that was returned to the Consolidated Fund and what was not, that information could be provided later.

Bishop Edghill: Sir, it is just seeking clarification from the Minister. Last year we were told that the reason why this allocation of \$42 million was made, and now we are asking for the \$80 million, was that the policy of the Government was for the regional procurement of drugs. We asked for \$42 million and got it. This year we are asking for \$80 million. Could the Minister confirm if this policy still stands? If this policy still stands, would the money then be warranted again to the Ministry of Health for the procurement of drugs?

Mr. Bulkan: The explanation that would have been offered last year is not that the procurement would be done by the region but that the identification would be done by the region, and that the procurement would continue to be done centrally by the Ministry of Public Health. That situation remains in place.

Mr. Hamilton: Mr. Minister, \$43 million...

Mr. Chairman: Line item, please Hon. Member.

Mr. Hamilton: It is line item 6221. Forty-three million dollars was budgeted for drugs and medical supplies for Region 1. We are told that \$42.1 million was expended. The first question is, of the \$42 million expended, if all of the drugs and medical supplies are in the possession of the Ministry of Public Health and/or the region? That is the first question.

2.05 p.m.

The second question is, of the \$42 million expended, how much is for drugs and how much is for medical supplies?

The third question is, if the answer to the first question is that the region does not have all the drugs and medical supplies in your possession, how much of it is still to be delivered to the Ministry of Public Health and/or to the region?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, two of the three questions posed by the Hon. Member, were previously asked by his Colleague, the Hon. Member, Bishop Edghill. It was explained that of

the \$42.164 million, a certain percentage of that was vired to the Ministry of Public Health but that the information is not available at this moment as to how much of that, if any, was returned to the Consolidated Fund.

With regards to the break-down as to how much of the unspent sum was for drugs and medical supplies that information can be provided later.

Could you repeat the third part of your question, Hon. Member?

Mr. Hamilton: The question is was \$42 million expended - yes or no? If \$42 million was expended, as indicated by the revised sum, were all the drugs and medical supplies delivered to the Ministry of Public Health? It is simple. How difficult is that to answer?

Mr. Bulkan: As I sought to explain before, a certain percentage of that \$42 million was vired to the Ministry of Public Health but it is unclear if any or what percentage of that was returned to the Consolidated Fund.

Mr. Hamilton: Mr. Chairman, then the information here is wrong. "Revised" is showing that \$42 million out of \$43 million was expended. Expended means spent on something, whether it was vired or not, that is not the issue.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has not responded, but if you would you take my question which falls under the same line item? It is alarming and very dangerous to hear that in Region 1 that a part of drugs allocation has been vired.

This is putting the residents of Region 1 at risk with respect to their health and the services that this Government provides. May I ask whether the vired sum will, at some point in time, be re-submitted to the region, noting that the region had suffered drugs shortages last year?

Mr. Bulkan: The allocation that is under consideration is the 2016 allocation which is the sum of \$80.877 million.

Programme: 714 – Health Services - \$571,295,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$6,150,000

Mr. Croal: Project Code 2502500 – Furniture and Equipment – Administration: Could the Hon. Minister provide a break-down of the beneficiaries for these furniture and equipment?

Mr. Bulkan: The beneficiaries would be the Boardroom of Regional Democratic Council (RDC) at Mabaruma, tables and chairs, Air-conditioning units, as well as three computers and accessories are for the Deputy Regional Executive Officer (DREO), the Assistant Regional Executive Officer (AREO) and the Regional Information Officer.

May I also take the opportunity to inform the Hon. Member, as well as his Colleagues, that a complete list of all of the expenditure proposed under the Capital Estimates will be provided to the Hon. Member this afternoon.

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, before I ask the question, please permit me to acknowledge that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture has provided the documents that he had so promised.

Mr. Chairman: I thank the Hon. Member.

Mr. Persaud: Project Code 2401500 – Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister say whether this allocation will ensure that the Regional Chairman and Regional Vice-Chairman of Region 1 are now properly provided with transportation facilities?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for a 4x4 All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) to be used in the Baramita sub-district Matakai.

Mr. Croal: Follow-up under Furniture and Equipment – Administration, could the Hon. Minister indicate whether there are any plans for furniture for the Regional Vice-Chairman's quarters?

Mr. Bulkan: There is no provision in the 2016 Capital Expenditure for that activity.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Project Code 2401500 – Land and Water Transport - Purchase of Ambulance: Mr. Chairman, Region 1 is a riverain area. Could the Hon. Minister say when will he be assisting the far-flung areas with emergency boat systems, posted at strategic points, to assist the residents to get to medical centres in the shortest possible time in an emergency?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I need to be guided by you. I thought that we were considering Programme 711 and I believe that the question the Hon. Member is asking falls under Programme 714.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, this Programme is 711. The Chairman invited Members to consider the Estimates on that matter.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the Ambulance is under Programme 714.

Programme: 711 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$6,150,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 712 – Public Works - \$92,146,000

Mr. Croal: Project Code 1100200 – Bridges: Could the Hon. Minister provide information concerning the retention?

Mr. Bulkan: The retention is for a concrete bridge (No. 2) on the Hosororo Stretch, Mabaruma.

Mr. Croal: A follow-up on that project code. Stated in the Profile, is the completion of a bridge at Hosororo. Are we talking about a second bridge?

Mr. Bulkan: No, it is the same bridge that is under consideration.

Mr. Croal: Project Code 2601400 – Power Supply: In 2015, \$20 million was budgeted and there was no expenditure. In 2016, the same \$20 million is budgeted. Could the Hon. Minister provide information as to why there was no expenditure under Power Supply?

Mr. Bulkan: A contract was not awarded in 2015 because the procurement process was not completed.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Croal, do you still need the floor?

Mr. Croal: Yes. Project Code 2401500 – Land and Water Transport: Who would be benefitting from the purchase of the All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV)?

Mr. Bulkan: That would be the Regional Engineer, as well as his support staff in the Mabaruma sub-region.

Mr. Croal: Project Code 1400400 – Roads: Could the Hon. Minister indicate or give a bit of description of the roads to be constructed in Mabaruma and Moruca under this line item?

2.20 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: In the interest of time, I have the complete document here which could be given to the Hon. Member. For the information that has been requested - it is the construction of Double Bitumen Surface Treatment (DBST) road from the Mabaruma Nursery School to the North West Secondary School. The second intervention is for the construction of a similar quality of road on the Kumaka to Kabana road, and thirdly, the construction of a similar quality road from the Kumaka junction to Kobarimo Bridge on the Hosororo Swamp Road, Mabaruma.

Mr. Croal: We would have heard about the Mabaruma end, the Legend also says Moruca.

Mr. Bulkan: The second of the activities is on the Kumaka to Kabana road, Moruca.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Can the Minister advise what portion of the Kabana-Kumaka road will be DBST or if it is the full 23 miles of roads because \$31 million seems to be insufficient to do that?

Mr. Bulkan: Of the \$31 million, it is only \$8 million that is allocated for the rehabilitation of the Kumaka-Kabana road. It caters for only a small portion of the entire stretch of that roadway.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: What distance is it catering for?

Mr. Bulkan: It caters for 0.8km.

Mr. Croal: As a follow-up on under project code 2601400 - Power Supply: Could the Hon. Minister confirm that the entire Wauna community will be benefiting from the upgrade of the electricity supply and hence, will have a discontinuation of their generating power?

Mr. Bulkan: The intervention does not cater for the supply of electricity to the entire Wauna area. It is for the first phase for Wauna and Sugar Hill.

Mr. Croal: In that case, with Sugar Hill's satellite being out, can the Hon. Minister provide a little more information as to the distance that is expected to be powered or the beneficiaries - the

number of households expected to be benefiting from this upgrade in the power supply in the Wauna community itself?

Mr. Bulkan: The anticipation is for a further 50 consumers to benefit from this activity.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister confirm that, with this current expansion, the entire Mabaruma Township will be powered or will be covered through the generating set?

Mr. Bulkan: The answer to that question is yes, the entire Mabaruma Township.

Programme: 712 – Public Works - \$92,146,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 713- Education Delivery- \$103,472,000

Mr. G. Persaud: Project Code 1902600 – Infrastructural Development: The allocation in 2015 was \$10,800,000 what was spent was \$4,475,000. Which projects, scheduled to be completed in 2015, are now repeated in the 2016 Project Profiles, and what would be the cost of each of these projects?

Mr. Bulkan: The uncompleted project in 2015 would have been a well for the Port Kaituma dorms, which will be completed in 2016.

Mr. G. Persaud: The Hon. Minister did not give me the cost for the completion of that well and I have to go by his word that that is the only project that will have be continuing.

Mr. Bulkan: The estimated cost of completion for that activity is approximately \$1.5 million and the other two activities that are budgeted for under this heading are for works at the Northwest and Port Kaituma Secondary Schools. The details and complete break-down in writing will be made available to the Hon. Members on the other side.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we have to speed up somewhat. I will allow three other questions after this.

Mr. Croal: As a follow-up, last night we were reminded that there is an allocation for the tarmac of the Northwest Secondary School under the Ministry of Communities. It is appearing here. Could the Hon. Minister confirm who will be constructing that tarmac and under which agency?

Mr. Bulkan: The Hon. Member is correct. It was brought to our attention last night. So that would have to be resolved as to which one of the two programmes it would be funded under.

Mr. Croal: Project code – 2401500 - Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister provide information of the vehicle to be purchased?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for one school bus to be used at the Karaburi area in Moruca and one ATV at Matarkai.

Dr. Mahadeo: Firstly, as a follow up to that question, is the fuel for that bus budgeted for? Also, we are building some new buildings, and health posts at different locations... [*Interruption*] Sorry.

Mr. Bulkan: Funding for the fuel for the school bus would not be under Capital Programme but under the recurrent.

Programme: 713 – Education Delivery- \$103,472,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 714- Health Services- \$123,232,000

Mr. Croal: Project code - 2401500- Land and Water Transport: Budgeted here is a purchase of an ambulance. Where will the ambulance be placed? Last year, there was an allocation of \$24.5 million under this project code, yet there was an expenditure of \$10.4 million. Could the Hon. Minister provide the information as to why was there such a low procurement done for this project code?

Mr. Bulkan: What is under consideration now is an allocation of \$12 million for an ambulance for 2016.

Ms. Campbell- Sukhai: Under the same line item, I would wish for the Hon. Minister to indicate to this House when he will start focusing on providing emergency boats from strategic points in the various sub-regions to allow for the effectiveness of transporting emergency cases to main health centres around the sub-regions?

Mr. Bulkan: The proposed budgetary allocation is a step in that direction to be able to provide better facilities, to cater for emergencies and the delivery of health care in the region.

Dr. Anthony: Project code -1902600 - Infrastructural development: Under this provision there is \$26 million for incinerators and oxygen supplied banks. Could the Minister tell us how much money has been allocated for incinerators and where would these incinerators be located? What type of incinerators would we be using, given that in the greening of the environment, incinerators were one of the things recommended that we move away from? How much money would be for the oxygen supply banks?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision for the incinerators would be \$12 million each for two locations at Port Kaituma and Mabaruma; and for the oxygen banks \$2 million. With regards to the technical specifications and the environmental credentials, Mr. Chairman, I regret, but I am not in a position to provide those details now, but it is a very valid question and I will seek to provide that information subsequently.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. Croal: Hon. Minister, I would like to revisit project code 2401500 – Land and Water Transport. In addition to examining the Estimates for 2016, the purpose of this exercise is to also evaluate the performance in 2015. Can the Hon Minister provide any information as to why we had a procurement under “Land and Water Transport” for \$10 million of the \$24.5 million?

Mr. Bulkan: I have already explained, earlier, that the provision of goods and services and the procurement for 2015 were dislocated as a result of the impaired functioning of the National Assembly and the restriction imposed with regards to the Capital Programme. These would have been contributory factors to the fact that the budgetary allocation was not spent.

Dr. Mahadeo: To avoid any dislocation for next year’s budget, could the Hon. Minister provide us with a list of the equipment and furniture that would be bought under project code 2502700 – Furniture and Equipment – staff quarters and project code 2502800 – Furniture and Equipment – Health, the cost and where they would be located.

My second question is project code 1202400 – Buildings – Health, we have budgeted for some health posts to be built in the region, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if staffing has already been identified or if not are they in training.

Mr. Bulkan: I thank the Hon. Member for the question. The information for the furniture and equipment for the staff quarters, as well as the health, would be laid over shortly and given to all other Hon. Members. With regards to the information on the staffing for the health centres, the answer to that is yes, such staffing have been identified.

Mr. Hamilton: Project code 1902600 – Infrastructural Development - provision for incinerators, could the Minister confirm for the National Assembly that the incinerators to be built would be built based on the Pan American Health Organisation's (PAHO's) specifications.

Mr. Bulkan: I did say that I am not in possession of the technical details at this stage, but it will be provided at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. Croal: Just to repeat, project code 2401500 – Land and Water Transport, the Hon. Minister indicated, in essence, that because of the late budget approval, they could not have completed the procurement under Land and Water Transport. So is the Hon. Minister saying that for five months the region could not have procured vehicles for the health programme for Region 1? Yes or no.

Mr. Bulkan: As a result of bottlenecks in the public procurement process, the capital programme was not completely fulfilled.

Programme: 714 –Health Services – \$123,232,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the estimates.

Agency: 72 – Region 2 Pomeroon/Supenaam

Current Expenditure

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$176,183,000

Mr. Damon: Under line item 6111– Administrative: I have seen an increase here of \$12,532,000 in 2016. Could the Hon. Minister say if this increase caters for contracted workers, and if so, state their designations.

Mr. Bulkan: The answer is no, this heading does not cater for contracted employees, but rather the fix establishment.

Mr. Damon: Under line item 6112 – Senior Technical: I have seen here an increase for senior technical personnel. Could the Hon. Minister say what are the designations of these senior technical personnel and how much money will be paid to them?

Mr. Bulkan: For the four persons under this category, the Hon. Member is correct, there is an increase from approximately \$4.4 million to \$4.8 million, a very modest increase. With regard to the designations, those would be an Expenditure Planning Analyst, a Senior Superintendent of Works and Superintendent of Works.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question: Could the Hon. Minister say what are the salaries of these personnel and what are their benefits.

Mr. Bulkan: In the case of the Expenditure Planning Analyst the salary is approximately \$123,000; the Senior Superintendent of Works is approximately \$103,000; and the Superintendent of Works is approximately \$85,000 monthly.

Mr. Damon: Line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled: I am seeing here that last year \$5,889,000 was catered for and we have an increase here to \$8,070,000. Could the Hon. Minister say who these officers are and what are their salaries and designations? Thank you.

Mr. Bulkan: The information being sought is: three Accounts Clerks at a salary of approximately \$61,000; Assistant Accountants at a salary of \$75,000; Personnel Officer at a salary of \$72,000; Stock Verifier approximately \$70,000; and a Storekeeper at an approximate salary of \$74,000.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question to you Hon. Minister. This increase shows that it is almost \$2 million. Could you say if those officers you spoke about just now are entitled to \$2 million?

Mr. Bulkan: That is a subjective question, but if we could deal with the empirical, the budgetary provision is to cater for the payment of salaries for the designations that have been outlined at the respective salaries that these officers earn.

Mr. Chairman: Please go ahead one more question.

Mr. Damon: One more question to me?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, I would distribute them around.

Mr. Damon: Hon. Minister, line item 6116 – Contracted Employees, I have seen a massive increase here from \$32 million in 2015 to \$40 million in 2016. Could the Hon. Minister say - one - if advertisement was done in the newspapers before these people were employed, and if so, which newspaper?

Mr. Bulkan: A total of five additional persons were hired as Contracted Employees and it is the case that there have been floods of applications directed to all of the ministries and to all of our RDCs. So sometimes it is not necessary to advertise for positions such as these. The persons hired would have been three Accounts Clerk and two Typist Clerks. Sometimes it is not necessary to do public advertisements because, as I said, there are floods of applicants for these positions. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Chairman hit gavel.

Mr. Damon: I have listened to Hon. Minister. As a follow-up, what you have just said there Hon. Minister is it not a breach of the Public Service Laws?

Mr. Bulkan: There is always the case where there are many applications on file. It is not a breach. [*Interruption*]

Mr. Chairman hit gavel.

Mr. Croal: As a follow-up on the recruitment of Contracted Employees, under line item 6116, while accounts clerk, *et cetera*, are under on the General Schedule (GS) two scale, which allows within the remit of the respective accounting officer to do the recruitment process, there is still a procurement process of service which entails having to advertise within the local system, and in

the case of the region, at a regional level. While it may not have been done nationally, could the Hon. Minister indicate whether there was advertisement done within the regional level, and when, if this was done?

2. 50 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: I am advised that advertisements were effected at the local level, namely at the office building of the RDC where the notices were publicly placed.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister provide the evidence of such?

Mr. Bulkan: Efforts will be made to see if copies of those advertisements are still available.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: There is an increase of \$1.3 million. Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the expenditure under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for the maintenance of two Amerindian Hostels at Charity and Suddie as well as the REO building situated at Anna Regina. It also caters for the purchase of materials for routine works by the Force Account Unit.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister confirm if, upon the completion of the REO quarters, the present REO will be vacating the State House?

Mr. Bulkan: That situation is contemplated for.

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Follow-up: The building that has been identified to house the REO, is it available? If so, why is it the REO is still in the State House?

Mr. Bulkan: I believe that the Hon. Member does reside in Region 2 and I am surprised that the information that is being provided is not entirely accurate. The REO does not live in the State House. The REO is occupying an annex of the State House.

Mr. Croal: For confirmation, I have two questions. Is the annex of the State House, which is behind the State House and in the same compound, not part of the asset of the State House?

Secondly, if there are excess persons who cannot be accommodated in the front building and are staying at the second building, is the accommodation not charged towards the accommodate for State House?

Mr. Chairman: This is the last question under this head. I am going to put the question after this answer.

Mr. Bulkan: The annex to the State House could be considered as part of the facilities of State House but it is a separate building.

If we are to get to the bottom of the situation, the reason the REO has been unable to occupy the quarters that is reserved for the REO is because that building was in no condition for habitation and that is why the REO was forced to make alternative arrangements for temporary accommodation until the reserved building could be rehabilitated.

Mr. Damon: Hon. Minister, I am saying to you...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you are asking a question.

Mr. Damon: Yes, I am asking the question. Hon. Minister, I am saying to you that the REO is in the State House.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, do you have a reply?

Mr. Bulkan: I do not, Mr. Chairman.

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$176,183,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 722 – Agriculture - \$299,278,000

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Under line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads - could the Hon. Minister tell this House which road has been identified for maintenance? Is the road from Chinese Landing to the Lake Mainstay Resort included in this allocation?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for the maintenance of roads. These roads would be in areas of Andrews, Better Hope, Westbury, Bush Lot, Reliance, Henrietta, Richmond, Anna Regina,

Lima, Queenstown and Huis t' Dieren. I do not see the Chinese Landing to Lake Mainstay location among those listed here.

Mr. Damon: Line item 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled: There is an increase from last year to \$15,117,000. Could the Hon. Minister say who the unskilled workers are, their designations and their emoluments?

Mr. Bulkan: I would ask that I lay over this information in writing, shortly.

Mr. Damon: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: There is an increase to \$42,055,000 from the 2015 figure. I see that there is an increase by three contracted employees. Could you say who these contracted employees are, their emoluments and where they are attached?

Mr. Bulkan: The three additional employees under this category are three sluice attendants with salaries ranging from between \$67,000 to \$72,000 approximately. The locations that these attendants are based will be provided subsequently to the Member.

Programme: 722 – Agriculture - \$299,278,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 723 – Public Works - \$104,831,000

Mr. Damon: Line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled: I see there is an increase to \$17,108,000. Could the Hon. Minister give this House the information of who the technical people are and their emoluments?

At the same time, line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support – could the Hon. Minister say who the officers are, their salaries and where they are attached?

Mr. Bulkan: Under line item 6113, the Hon. Member is correct. There is an increase in the allocation from approximately \$16 million to \$17 million and the designations under this category are Carpenter Foreman, Electrician, Plumber Foreman, Transport Officer, Auto Electrician, Carpenters, Machinery Operators, Mechanics, Plumber and Welder.

3.05 p.m.

Line item 6114 – Clerical and Office Support: There are two persons in this category who are clerical and office staff. In particular, they are two Checkers paid at a salary of \$75,000 monthly. The salaries under line item 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled - vary from a high of approximately \$75,000 to the minimum scale of \$50,000 monthly.

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Under line item 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - I noticed, in 2015, a sum of \$3,500,000 was spent and I notice now, in 2016, \$5 million is budgeted for. Could the Hon. Minister tell this House if there is a new fleet of vehicles or how this fuel and lubricant will be used? Thank you.

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is under Agriculture and it will be for supplying fuel for the Drainage and Irrigation (D&I) pumps in the Region. Yes, there is an increase in the allocation by \$1.5 million for the entire year.

Mr. Neendkumar: As a follow-up, that money cannot go for pumps. Could he explain to us?

Mr. Bulkan: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I take that back; it is my error. It is Public Works and the fleet includes trucks, canters, pick-up trucks, motorcycles, brush cutters, a minibus and two additional pick-up trucks.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister provide us with the numbers of those vehicles?

Mr. Bulkan: Would that be the registration numbers or the quantity?

Mr. Neendkumar: The registration numbers.

Mr. Bulkan: The numbers of the vehicles could be provided to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Neendkumar: In respect to line item 6251 - Maintenance of Roads - I see we have a total of \$18,500,000. Could the Hon. Minister tell us which roads?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman this information could, if the Hon. Member is interested, be laid over but there are several locations throughout the Region. There are 15 miles of roadways to be maintained in Dartmouth, Somerset, Paradise, Devonshire Castle, Danielstown, all the way down the Essequibo Coast to Supenaam. It caters, as well, for purchasing of materials (sand and clay)

to repair various streets in several locations: Adventure, Johanna Cecelia, Golden Fleece, Cullen and several other areas for 16 miles. Another 20 miles worth of crushed stone to effect repairs in Anna Regina, Henrietta, Lima, Sparta and several other areas, all the way down to Supenaam again. This is for the patching of potholes on the Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST) surface and this would be the entire stretch of roadway on the Essequibo Coast, from Supenaam to Charity, and secondary roads.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, the amount is \$18.5 million. I would like him to provide specifically the roads, the miles and a breakdown of how much money was spent in the respective areas.

Mr. Bulkan: This is only maintenance but the list and the activities that are envisaged will be laid over to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Damon: Line item 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants: I am coming back to this line item for \$5 million. Hon. Minister, is there any money in this line item for the Regional Chairman's vehicle and the Vice-Chairman's vehicle? If so, is it true that the Regional Chairman's vehicle and the Vice-Chairman's vehicle are subject to limited amounts of fuel?

Mr. Bulkan: Provision for fuel for the Regional Chairman and Vice-Chairman are catered for not under this programme, but under Programme: 721.

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Mr. Chairman, I would like a follow-up question on line item 6251 - Maintenance of Roads. Since the road from Chinese Landing to the Lake Mainstay Resort is not budgeted for under Agriculture and it is not budgeted under Public Works, then could the Hon. Minister tell me where I could find it if it is budgeted for at all in 2016?

Mr. Bulkan: I cannot provide that information definitively but I would seek to identify if any provision under the regional programme for that specific piece of roadway is catered for and I will provide that information subsequently.

Mr. Damon: Line item 6252 - Maintenance of Bridges: There is an amount for \$9,100,000. Could the Hon. Minister say if this figure also caters for the concrete bridge in Maria's Delight that is being shifted away?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the proposed allocation does not cater for any works to the Bridge at Marias Delight. That is the information that the Hon. Member is seeking.

Programme: 723 - Public Works - \$104,831,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 724 - Education Delivery - \$1,612, 231,000

Ms. Manickchand: Line item 6116 - Contracted Employees: There is an increase in contracted employees from 46, in 2015, to 56 in 2016. Could the Hon. Minister explain that please?

Mr. Bulkan: Those 10 additional employees under this category are three Typist Clerks at a monthly salary of \$50,000; two Handymen with a similar salary; two Maids; one Librarian and two Cooks.

Ms. Manickchand: Your Honour, I understand that there is a chalk shortage in the region and so I am asking the Hon. Member if, under the relevant line item, he believes that there are enough funds for there to be enough chalk in Region 2 for 2016.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, might I respectfully ask the Hon. Member to identify which line item the question is being posed under?

Ms. Manickchand: Perhaps under line item 6222 - Field Materials and Supplies or line item 6223 – Office Materials and Supplies. Perhaps I can ask an easier question: which line item do you buy chalk under? And do we have enough here to make sure there is no chalk shortage?

Mr. Bulkan: Provision for the supply of chalk would be made under either of those two line items. The budgetary provision for line item 6223 is a sum of \$13 million which ought to be sufficient to ensure that there is an adequate supply of chalk at schools in the region.

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Under line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - could the Hon. Minister tell us what is meant by Other Infrastructure? Could the Hon. Minister identify what will be maintained? Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Bulkan: This refers to areas other than the school buildings and it would include, for example, fences, repairs to broken furniture in schools across the region, *et cetera*. It is actually

quite a long list. It would include landfilling to school compounds, walkway, *et cetera*. Most of it is for repairs to fences at our schools, landfilling and walkways, Mr. Chairman.

3.20 p.m.

Mr. Damon: Line item 6116 - Contracted Employees: Mr. Chairman, it is a follow-up question. There are 10 additional contracted employees and the amount here is over \$10 million. Could the Hon. Minister say what the emoluments of these workers are?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I have already provided the breakdown of the 10 additional employees and the total budgetary allocation is to pay the salaries of all 56 employees and the salary scales range from approximately \$85,000 to \$50,000 monthly.

Mr. Damon: Mr. Chairman, line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled: I see a provision here for \$30,550,000. Could the Hon. Minister say what the positions of these workers and their emoluments are?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, it is a total of 42 employees. The increase in the budgetary allocation is approximately \$1.9 million and the complete breakdown of all of the persons in this category could be laid over and given to the Hon. Member, subsequently.

Bishop Edghill: I would just like to return to line item 6223 – Office Materials and Supplies. It relates to the issue that was asked by the Hon. Member, Ms. Manickchand, about the shortage of chalk. Sir, this is an issue that, last year, we had a budgeted allocation of \$12.5 million and, this year, the allocation is \$13 million. If there is a shortage, could the Minister say if this amount is adequate and if the shortage that currently exists is a result of his inability to access the one-twelfth provision for this year?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, this allegation that there is a shortage of chalk in Region 2, I do not want to question the accuracy or the veracity of what is being alleged, but this would have to be verified. The provision of \$13 million for office materials and supplies under Education Delivery is considered to be adequate to meet the needs of the region.

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Under line item 6272 – Electricity Charges - in 2015, I observed that \$21 million was spent. In the 2016 Budget, \$38,592,000 is requested, a huge increase of about

\$17.5 million. Could the Hon. Minister tell us if there are new places where this service will be used that caused this huge increase of \$17.5 million? Could the Minister give us the details - the locations, the new buildings, whatever it is, to the cost of \$17.5 million?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the allocation is for the provision of electricity to a total of 67 schools across the region and, as was explained yesterday, the Ministry of Finance used to provide subsidies, at the end of the year, to cater for the shortfall for the supply of electricity, but, in this Budget, the provision is being made at the agency level to cater for the payment for electricity charges at the identified locations.

Ms. Pearson-Fredericks: Mr. Chairman, a follow-up question: Could the Hon. Minister give us, in details, the names of the schools?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time, as I said, it is a total of 67 schools, starting in the north, from Charity...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I would suggest that you lay that over, since it will take some time to complete reading 67 schools.

Mr. Bulkan: Yes, Mr. Chairman; will do.

Mr. Chairman: I will now put the question.

Mr. Damon: I appeal to you, Sir, for one question.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you have one question.

Mr. Damon: Thank you, Sir. Hon. Minister, line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Last year, you budgeted for \$19,641,000. This year, you have budgeted for \$25,200,000. Could you say, Hon. Minister, where these maintenances will be done? Is it Anna Regina Multilateral School Bridge? Where will these maintenances be done?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, again, in the interest of time, I can lay over this information but, as I did say earlier, it caters mainly for repairs to fences in a number of schools and landfilling and walkway.

Programme: 724 – Education Delivery - \$1,612,231,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 725 – Health Services - \$766,313,000

Mr. Damon: Line item 6111 – Administrative: I see a reduced sum here in 2016. Last year, there was \$8,011,000 and now there is \$4,925,000. Is it a case that workers were sent home so that you have a reduction now?

Line item 6112 – Senior Technical: Could you say who these are and their emoluments? I have seen an increase here for them.

Line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled: Could you also outline who these workers are, what their statuses are and what their emoluments are?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, at line item 6111, the reduced staffing by one was as a result not of anyone being sent home, but the Regional Health Officer (RHO) who went into retirement.

Line item 6112 – Senior Technical: Those persons under this category would be three Medex, a Senior Environmental Health Officer, a Ward Sister, an Environmental Health Officer, a Pharmacist and a Junior Departmental Sister (JDS).

Line item 6113: The employees in this category are Anaesthetist Nurse, Staff Nurse, Midwife, Medical Lab Technician, Oenological Practitioner, Dentist Extender, Rehabilitation Assistant and Staff Nurse. The salary scales are ranging approximately from \$93,000 to \$72,000 monthly.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I am going to allow three more questions before we put this matter.

Dr. Mahadeo: Mr. Chairman, line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies - has been more than doubled and the question was asked before whether this would be warranted back to the Ministry of Health. Usually, the regions would have an amount that they keep in case of dire emergencies to buy medical gases and stuff like that. From this \$176,099,000, what portion will the region, through the Regional Health Officer or other departments, be able to spend on emergencies?

The other question is concerning line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants. I see \$15,500,000 was spent in 2015. The same amount is budgeted in 2016, yet I noticed, in the capital budget, vehicle and boats will be bought. I am assuming the boats will have engines, so I am assuming that there will be an increase in the amount of fuel that will be acquired but the budgetary allocation remains the same.

It is the same for line item 6282 – Equipment Maintenance. There will be a lot more equipment that will be bought.

Lastly, could I have a list of the training programmes that will be under line item 6302 – Training (including Scholarships) for \$850,000?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, in relation to what percentage of the budgetary allocation for medical supplies would be retained by the region, I am advised that that portion or percentage would be very small, perhaps 2%. The reason is that there is still central procurement that will be done; the Regions will continue to identify what their needs are and that procurement will be done centrally, but a small percentage, perhaps 2% of the total budgetary amount, would be retained by the regions for emergency drugs and supplies.

3.35 p.m.

The observation is correct that the budgetary allocation under line item 6231 remains the same. That is what has been provided for under this line item, the sum of \$15.5 million for fuel and lubricants. Under line item 6282, the observation is also accurate that the budgetary allocation in 2016 is identical to that of 2015, but this is what has been provided for under this line item.

With regard to the training, line item 6302, there is a budgetary allocation of \$850,000. The specific training activities envisaged under this heading would be for Environmental Health Officers, Food Handlers, for midwives, conference and ministerial review.

Dr. Anthony: Line item 6221, Drug and Medical Supplies: Last year a sum of \$87,912,000 was allocated. Could the Minister say how much of this was used and whether the current shortage of surgical gloves has been resolved?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision of \$176 million would certainly cater to eliminate the possibility that there are shortages for something as essential as surgical gloves. If indeed there was a shortage in 2015, it is not envisaged that it would reoccur.

With regard to the specific information as to how much of the 2015 budgetary allocation of drugs was not procured in 2015, as was earlier explained for Region 1, some moneys were returned. The moneys were warranted back to the Ministry of Health because of delays in the procurement system in 2015.

Dr. Anthony: Under line item 6222, Field Materials and Supplies, I would like to ask the Minister what is being procured under this line item. If some of it has to do with buying materials for fogging, could the Minister say how much money would be allocated to this exercise and whether or not it would be adequate given the need for extra fogging in many parts of Guyana?

Mr. Bulkan: The consideration being suggested is one that would have arisen subsequent to the preparation of this budget in light of the Zika threat. It may very well be a case that increased budgetary allocations would be needed to cater for increased fogging. I am not in a position to give actual numbers to the Hon. Member, but it is a consideration that is valid and would certainly be addressed.

Programme: 725 – Health Services – \$766,313,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$24,250,000

Mr. Damon: Hon. Minister, project 1202900, Buildings – Administration, I have seen a sum of \$11.4 million for rehabilitation of buildings. I want to ask: Does this include the building for the REO?

Mr. Bulkan: A complete breakdown of all the activities to be funded under the 2016 budgetary Estimates has been provided to Hon. Members on the opposite side. The provision of \$11.4

million does not cater for the building for which an enquiry is being made but, rather, it is for rehabilitation of the State House, both the main building as well as the annex for that total.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, it is our responsibility, duty-bound to the people, that we must ask you questions. Project 1903500, Infrastructural Development, I see \$10.5 million for provisions of play parks. I want to know if these play parks will bring futility to the people of Region 2. I mean if it would bear fruit - *fruitfulness*.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, in my own limited capacity I was trying to figure out what was being sought. The answer is yes it would bring not only utility but more than that.

Mr. Damon: It is the word *fruitfulness*, not utility. It is if it would bring fruits.

Mr. Bulkan: It certainly will bring fruits to the residents of Region 2. Residents of Georgetown can already see and smell the difference that has accompanied the greening of Georgetown and the physical transformation that has taken place recently across our capital city. It is the intention that similar activities will take place in all regions of our country. The capital allocation here is for three locations on the Essequibo Coast, for the creation of three recreational parks at Exmouth, Anna Regina and Fair Not, for the total budgetary sum of \$10.5 million.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question, Mr. Chairman. Hon. Minister, are you aware that the play park at Exmouth is on private property? Let me further tell you, Hon. Minister...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, address the questions to the Chairman.

Mr. Damon: Yes. Let me further tell you that I can even mention the name of the person.

Mr. Chairman, Hon. Member, let us not do that.

Mr. Bulkan: If the Hon. Member can provide that information definitively it would certainly be addressed, but the information that the regional administration is in possession of from the Lands and Surveys Department is that it is not private property but state property where the park is being developed.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question, Mr. Chairman. Are you aware Mr. Minister that this property is in the assessment register of the Evergreen/Paradise Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC) office? It was never exempted.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I would seek your guidance and advice. I am not too sure if I can caution the Hon. Member about the allegations he is making.

Mr. Damon: I have the facts.

Mr. Bulkan: If that information can be provided from the Lands and Surveys Department or a credible state department it would be considered. The information in possession of the regional administration is that this park is not on private property.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, I would put the question after this question unless other Members have questions.

Mr. Damon: Are you aware that it is a transported property and there is no exemption in the assessment register of the Evergreen/Paradise NDC?

Mr. Bulkan: I was loath to introduce the fact that the particular NDC area, which the Hon. Member has referred to, has been under suspicion of highly irregular activities in the past.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I do not think that is an acceptable comment. Hon. Members, the Member who asked the question has said he can make available certain information to assist the Minister. I believe the Minister has indicated a willingness to receive the information. Should we not allow the Hon. Member to present the information at a suitable time to the Minister then everything else can flow from it?

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you Sir. My understanding is that the request was made but the Hon. Member did not give a response. He did not undertake that he would provide that information.

Mr. Chairman, Hon. Minister, if the Hon. Member would not make whatever document he has available the Hon. Member can say that. I understood him to say that he has the papers and he can show you. I think I am paraphrasing what he said but that is what I understood him to say.

Mr. Damon: Excuse me Sir. I am saying that the executor of the property has the transport and I can make it available.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you can make it available and that is the important thing. I thank you.

Programme: 721 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$24,250,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 722 – Agriculture – \$44,846,000

3.50 p.m.

Programme: 722 - Agriculture - \$44,846,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 723 - Public Works - \$46,226,000

Mr. Damon: Hon. Minister, project 1100300, Bridges, I see there is a sum here for \$14,971,000, “completion and construction of bridges and payment of retention”. Could you state where these bridges are? Is the bridge at Charity, going to the mortuary, included here and also it is if all those moneys for last year were expedited, if there are any moneys remaining in the region under this project?

Mr. Bulkan: The budgetary allocation is to cater for the completion of a bridge at Good Hope for an estimated sum of approximately \$4.6 million and the construction of a bridge at Richmond for a budgetary sum of \$9.147 million.

Mr. Damon: Project 1400500, Roads: There is a sum here of \$19,070,000, “Completion and upgrading of community roads and payment of retention”. Could you say if the road at Better Success is included here and also the road at Devonshire Castle is included here? If not, could you say what villages will benefit?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is to cater for the completion of Facade Street in Dartmouth and for the upgrading of roads in Adventure, namely Butcher Joe Street, cross streets in Adventure and

Clarke Street in Dartmouth. That is the sum total of the location that will benefit under this activity.

Mr. Damon: A follow-up question, Sir. Clarke Street, Dartmouth, Hon. Minister, I think, is completed. It has about four humps. How come you are coming again for Clarke Street? What is happening?

Mr. Bulkan: This one is for Phase 2 in 2016.

Mr. Damon: Project 1901200, Land development, “Completion and upgrading of housing schemes and payment of retention”: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister if Charity extension scheme is included in this allocation.

Mr. Bulkan: It is unfortunately that location is not catered for, but rather Anna Regina and Henrietta are envisaged to be funded under the 2016 capital allocation.

Programme: 723 - Public Works - \$44,226,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 724 - Education Delivery - \$231,242,000

Mr. Damon: Project 1100300, Bridges: I have seen a sum of \$7,890,000 there, “Construction of bridge and payment of retention.” Could you say Hon. Minister where this bridge is or I wonder if this bridge is in Tapakuma?

Mr. Bulkan: The bridge, which will be constructed, would be at Wakapau, at Mabel Sandy Primary.

Mr. Damon: Project 1202800, Buildings – Education: I have seen that there is a sum here Hon. Minister for \$196,352,000, “Construct, extension and rehabilitation of schools, quarters, sanitary blocks and payment of retention.” Hon. Minister, could you say where these moneys will be expedited?

Mr. Bulkan: It will be for the construction of schools at Akawini and Aurora, that will be two new schools. It will cater for extensions at Flora Nursery School which is in Dartmouth, Better Success Nursery School, the Yariyarima in the Pomeroon River as well as the Wakapau dorm. It

will cater as well for the construction and rehabilitation of living quarters at Mashabo at Bethany in the Supenaam Creek, Ulele Primary School in the Pomeroun, for the construction of a sanitary block at Lima Sands Primary School, at the Karawab in the Pomeroun, the Bethany Primary School in Supenaam Creek and for the rehabilitation of the Anna Regina Secondary School as well as the Cotton Field Secondary School and the teacher's quarters at Friendship Primary School. As I said, this completes list has been provided to Hon. Members on the other side.

Mr. Damon: Project 2401600, Land and Water Transport: I see there is \$8.5 million to purchase a vehicle, boat and engine. Could you say Hon. Member where will this vehicle, boat and engine be assigned to?

Mr. Bulkan: The sum of \$6 million is catered to purchase a minibus for the schoolchildren of Anna Regina, and for \$2.5 million a boat and engine to be used for students in the Bethany Primary School in the Supenaam Creek.

Mr. Damon: Project 2502900, Furniture and Equipment - Education, "Purchase of furniture and equipment for schools": Hon. Minister, could you list the schools and the amount that will be spent on each school's furniture? It will be very good if you could do that.

Mr. Bulkan: The complete list will be laid over for the benefit of the Hon. Members.

Programme: 724 – Education Delivery - \$231,242,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 725 – Health Services - \$127,436,000

Dr. Anthony: Project 1202700, Buildings – Health: There is \$81 million allocated. Could the Minister provide us with a breakdown of the things that would be done here?

Mr. Bulkan: The complete breakdown will be provided to the Assembly in writing, but it caters for a construction of a maternity waiting home at Suddie Hospital, for the construction of living quarters at Suddie Hospital as well a health post at Onderneeming, an Accident & Emergency (A&E) Unit at Charity. These are the main activities, Hon. Member.

Dr. Anthony: The waiting home at Suddie Hospital, how many beds would be there and what will be the cost for that project?

Mr. Bulkan: The budgetary provision is for the sum of \$32.4 million approximately and it caters for, among other things, 28 beds.

Dr. Mahadeo: Project 2401600, Land and Water Transport: I see \$9.5 million is budgeted here and I know that a vehicle was not available for the use of the Regional Health Officer (RHO). Of vehicles, boats and engines, could the Minister tell me where would they be located? What kind of vehicle, and if the Regional Health Officer, the person acting in that position, will be allocated this vehicle or vehicles?

4.05 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for three boats at Bethany, Mashabo and Mora. The vehicle is for a 4 x 4 pickup to be used by the RHO based at Suddie.

Mr. Chairman: Your last question, Sir.

Dr. Mahadeo: Project 2601600, Furniture and Equipment – Health: I would like to ask if a list of this equipment, the cost, and where they would be located, to be provided to the staff.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, this list will be provided, and it has been provided to one of the Hon. Members but it will be provided for benefit of the other Members of the House.

Programme: 725 – Health Services – \$127,436,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we are now a few minutes shy of 4.00 p.m. – a few minutes after four, and we will take the suspension now. We will return at five minutes past five.

Assembly resumed.

Sitting suspended at 4.06 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 5.16 p.m.

In Committee of Supply

Agency: 73 Region 3: Essequibo Islands /West Demerara

Current Expenditure

Programme: 731 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$188,966,000

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6115, Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled: Staffing Details in 2015, 37 staff and in 2016, 34 staff. The revised allocation for 2015 was \$16,106,000. The requested allocation for 2016 is \$16,083,000, a difference of \$23,000. That is a bit worrying for me, Sir, because I cannot really justify a reduction of three staff members, and a reduction between the allocations of \$23,000. Would the Hon. Minister please help us to understand?

Mr. Bulkan: The negligible reduction in the 2016 allocation, even though there has been a staff reduction of three, is due to the fact of annualisation as well as the 5% increase that would have served to keep the figure at the same level despite the staff reduction of three.

Mr. G. Persaud: I must thank the Minister for his response. Given the response, would it be possible then for the Hon. Minister to provide the designation, the salary, benefits and the date of appointment of the staff members therein? For now, he can share with us the designation and salary of the top three office holders.

Mr. Bulkan: Thank you Hon. Member. The top three earning categories under this item would be the Captain Engineer with a salary of \$68,000, vehicle driver at a salary of \$60,000 and craft production worker at a salary of \$60,000 per month.

Mr. G. Persaud: I take it that the Hon. Minister will lay over the rest of the information as requested earlier.

Mr. Bulkan: This information will be laid over.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6116, Contracted Employees: There were 31 employees in 2015; there is an increase by four employees in 2016. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide the designation, salaries and other benefits and the effective date of appointment for all 35 employees under this line item? For now, would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to share with us the top four salaries and designation?

Mr. Bulkan: The requested information, as to the designation, salaries of all 35 employees will be laid over as requested. For now, the top four earning persons or categories under this heading

would be two AREOs at an average monthly salary of approximately \$120,000, Confidential Secretary at \$75,000 per month and Clerks II at approximately \$70,000 monthly.

Mr. G. Persaud: I have a similar question for a number of line items, should I share it now, or one by one?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, if the question relates to the items together it would certainly save time, and it is if the Minister will find no discomfort in or difficulty in answering them *en bloc*, Hon. Minister?

Mr. Bulkan: We can hear the questions and we will decide if it is appropriate.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line items 6272, Electricity Charges, 6273, Water Charges, 6283, Cleaning and Extermination Services, 6284, Other, 6293, Refreshment and Meals and 6311, Rates and Taxes, the observation here is that the exact sums, which were revised in 2015, are requested in 2016 under the various line items. I am wondering whether we can assume that there will be no increase in expenditure, at all, under any of these line items.

Mr. Bulkan: The observation is correct. It is not envisaged that there will be an increase because the budgetary allocations, as is being pointed out, for 2016 does correspond to the revised figure that was spent in 2015. There is no provision for increased budgetary allocation for these activities for 2016.

Mr. Ali: Line item 6272, Electricity Charges: As was observed, it is the same figure as in 2015. I heard the Hon. Minister, in responding, said he anticipates that there will be no increase. However, under Electricity Charges, there should be a decrease because as part of the budget measure, it was announced that there will be a reduction in the cost of electricity. Could the Hon. Minister say why there is not this corresponding decrease for electricity charges based on the announcement in the budget?

Mr. Bulkan: The sum proposed is a provision and it is what is allocated for the supply of electricity to buildings in Region 3, the sum of \$5 million for 2016.

Bishop Edghill: Very interestingly line item 6282, Equipment Maintenance: Could the Hon. Minister tell us what the items are to be maintained and what the estimated cost is per item for maintenance that they would require no increase?

Mr. Bulkan: The items, which are targeted to be maintained under this line item, would be servicing and maintenance of 14 computers, 19 air conditioning units, four printers and one photocopying machine, all belonging to the RDC, Region 3.

Bishop Edghill: Yes Sir, a follow-up. As those pieces of equipment age there is no consideration that it may end up costing more. I find that to be strange where budgeting is concerned.

5.29 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I believe there was a question.

Mr. Bulkan: I think it is more of an observation than a question, Mr. Chairman, but if it is found that this allocation is inadequate for this year, then I believe that the adjustments that are being inferred by the Hon. Member would be taken into consideration.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6291 – National and Other Events: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to share with us what expenditure will be made from this \$2,352,000?

Mr. Bulkan: The activities that are targeted to be funded under this line item would be the Mashramani celebrations; Jubilee celebrations; Remembrance Day Observance; Arrival Day; Emancipation Day; National Tree Planting Day and the National Village Day.

Mr. G. Persaud: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to say how much of this allocation would be spent on the Jubilee celebrations?

Mr. Bulkan: Of the total allocation that is budgeted for the Jubilee celebrations, it would be just under \$1 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6281 – Security Services: I notice that in 2015 it was \$17.351 million, and in 2016 it is \$17.352 million, an addition of \$1,000. Could the Hon. Minister tell us which security service it is, when it was tendered and what is the amount?

Mr. Bulkan: The security provider is Home Safe Security and Domestic Service. It is an extension of an existing Contract.

Mr. Neendkumar: A follow-up: Hon. Minister, can you tell us the venues/locations that are being secured?

Mr. Bulkan: The locations would include eight administrative buildings, the residences of the Regional Chairman, Regional Vice-Chairman, REO, as well as the Office at Wakenaam.

Mr. Chand: My question relates to line item 6231. I saw an increase in fuel and lubricants from \$35 million to \$45 million. The question is: Is adequate provision made for the release of fuel to the elected representatives of the region, in this case, particularly the Regional Chairman who drives an 8-cylinder vehicle and has been restricted to five gallons of gasoline per week?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, let us not stretch the matter that we are engaged on here. Please put the question that you have for the Minister. If there is not a question, then we can pass on.

Mr. Chand: I did pose a question, but let me repeat it.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, did you hear the question from the Hon. Member?

Mr. Bulkan: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: I thank you.

Mr. Bulkan: Fuel for the Regional Chairman is not provided for under line item 6231, but under another. Perhaps the question will appear. The quantity of five gallons per week, as stated by the Hon. Member, is actually five gallons per day.

Mr. Chand: I just wanted to confirm if five gallons per day is adequate.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, with due respect, when one looks at the terrains that the Chairman has to travel in West Demerara, are we saying, in all honesty, that five gallons of fuel per day is adequate?

Mr. Bulkan: It is five gallons per day, times six days per week. This is 30 gallons per week, which is almost a 45-gallon drum of fuel for one vehicle. It is sufficient.

Mr. Chand: I am pointing out that five gallons per day means that it is 35 gallons per week, because the elected representative is not restricted to Monday-Friday work.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, what is the question for the Minister?

Mr. Chand: I am pointing out to the Minister that...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you have to ask a question. Do you have a question for the Minister?

Mr. Chand: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Please go ahead.

Mr. Chand: The question to the Minister is that he ought to address the quantity per day times seven days per week.

Mr. Chairman: I thank the Hon. Member for his comment. Hon. Members, we will have to move faster than we are moving.

Bishop Edghill: I would like to return to line item 6281 – Security Services. There was a budgetary allocation in 2015 of \$14,184,000 and that amount was revised to \$17,351,000, which is similar to the sum that is being sought in 2016. Could the Hon. Minister indicate to us what was responsible for the increase?

Mr. Bulkan: That increase in the figure would have been attributable to increased locations where security was provided, such as health outposts.

I take back that. This is the Administration that we are dealing with. The increased expenditure in 2015 over the budgeted sum would have been as a result of the increased charges and the rise in the minimum wage that was applicable in that year.

Mr. Chairman: I will allow three more questions before I put the question.

Bishop Edghill: A follow-up under line item 6281. If this was a tendered contract where it came in at a particular price, how was the adjustment made?

Mr. Bulkan: The answer to that question would be that representation would have been made to the Tender Board to allow for the payment of the higher minimum wages which came into being at that time.

Programme: 731 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$188,966,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme 732 – Agriculture - \$292,566,000

Mr. Ali: Line item 6253 – Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: Hon. Minister, there is an increase from \$134 million to \$165 million. Would you be able to say whether the drainage canals in the Hubu, Ruby or Naamryck Backdam are included in this Estimate?

Secondly, is there any provision in this amount that is budgeted for 2016 to assist the rice farmers during this difficult period of the drought?

Mr. Bulkan: The three locations, namely, Hubu, Naamryck and Ruby Backdams are catered for interventions under this Programme.

With regards to assistance from the Administration to cater for the irrigation in these dry weather conditions, there is a committee in place in the region that involves a number of stakeholders, including, farmers, the Water Users Association (WUA) and the local authorities that are benefitting from drainage and irrigation (D&I). These interventions, on the part of the Central Government, are to ensure that relief is brought to our farmers in those areas, as well as in other areas across Region 3.

Mr. Ali: A follow-up question: Would the Hon. Minister be able to say to us what the specific amounts are for these three areas that I would have identified earlier?

Secondly, what is the specific amount that is catered for now in terms of irrigation for the rice farmers?

Thirdly, how much would be spent on the drainage system in the Hague Backdam?

5.44 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: The information of the specific amounts targeted for the areas identified by the Hon. Member would be provided later. With regards to Central Government's allocations for interventions in National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA), this is not the only programme that caters for funding of such activities. There will be other funding provided under NDIA allocations.

With regards to funding for Hague Backdam, again, that community would be benefiting from allocations under this programme as well as NDIA, but the specific amount could be identified and provided to the Hon. Member subsequently.

Mr. Ali: A follow up question: Anticipating the response from the Hon. Minister, I did go through the NDIA's profile and I did not see any specific allocation in the areas that I would have identified, especially Hague. So, if the Hon. Minister could point directly to where it is and how much, I would be most grateful.

The other question I want to ask is whether any provision is made here in relation to the Patientia/Wales areas, given to the announcements of GuySuCo pulling out of that area. Who will now be in charge of the maintenance of the drainage and irrigation systems in that area and was there any budgetary allocation made here to take care of that?

Mr. Bulkan: I am advised that interventions for funding for the Wales/Patientia areas would be done under Central Government provisions and not the provision before us here for the Regional Administration.

For all of the areas that would receive funding under the NDIA activities, it is listed here under the capital profile and gives some of the areas, but does not provide a complete listing. This information can be obtained and provided to the Hon. Member subsequently.

Mr. Ali: A follow up on Drainage and Irrigation: Would the Hon. Minister be able to say whether any of this sum would be used to prepare the 5-acre plots of land for small farmers as was announced by the Government?

Mr. Bulkan: These are recurrent expenses that cater mainly for the maintenance of D&I works and that would be existing areas. With regards to new cultivation areas, funding for that would not be provided under this line item.

Mr. Ali: Line item 6253- Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: Could the Hon. Minister say what would be the potential productive impact of this investment in specific relation to rice? How much does he project the increase in productivity to be as a result of this investment?

Mr. Bulkan: I am tempted to say that it is a sweep-all or a catch-all question, but it is a significant investment in the maintenance of D&I infrastructure across the region. A sum of \$165 million for the year 2016 for which all farmers, including rice farmers, would benefit from.

Mr. Ali: A follow-up question: The Hon. Minister did not say what would be the level of the increase in terms of productivity. But I would like to add on to the question and ask the Hon. Minister, how many new acres of productive agriculture lands would be opened up as a result of this investment?

Mr. Bulkan: The earlier answer that was provided again would apply that the budgetary sum here has to do with the maintenance of existing D&I infrastructure in the region. So, with regards to new cultivation that would be under a capital programme and would not be found under this heading.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6115 – Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled: In 2015, there were 33 employees, in 2016 there are 25. Can the Hon. Minister provide the designations, salaries, dates of departure, and reasons for departure of these eight employees?

Mr. Bulkan: One minute please, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Certainly Minister.

Mr. Bulkan: I would ask the Hon. Member to lay over this information later in the afternoon.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we will have to be a little faster in our questioning.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6116- Contracted Employees: Could the Hon. Minister give us the designations, salaries, and effective dates of appointment of the eight additional employees that came on under this line item? I know that we will await the lay over of the completed list of all the contracted employees.

Mr. Bulkan: The eight additional contracted employees under this heading would be: Sluice Attendants, Rangers, and Labourers. The full list of information would be laid over for the benefit of Hon. Members.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we will have two questions more then I shall put the question.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6255-Maintainace of Other Infrastructure: I see that there is \$12.5 million. Could the Hon. Minister tell us what these other infrastructures are? Can we get the list today? How much would be spent on them specifically?

Mr. Bulkan: These would be D&I structures - sluice doors in several locations, such as Hubu, Zeelugt, Hague, Blankenburg, Parika, La Retraite, and Nismes. It would also cater for the repairs and servicing to sluice structures, wrenches and pulleys. Some of the locations would be Philadelphia as well as Nismes. It is basically for D&I structures - sluice doors and the mechanisms controlling those sluice doors.

Mr. Neendkumar: As a follow-up question: We just had \$165 million for the maintenance of drainage and irrigation works. Is the Minister saying that he cannot tell us this difference? It supposed to be something different –this \$12.5 million? It cannot be the same thing.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, are you through with your question?

Mr. Neendkumar: Yes.

Mr. Bulkan: The budgeted sum, as indicated a moment ago, is for repairs to the sluice doors in the locations that were named.

Bishop Edghill: Line item 6281- Security Service: Budgeted last year was \$6.5 million, but expended was only \$4.8 million. There is a sum of \$7.6 million that is being asked to be appropriated. Could the Minister indicate to this House what is responsible for spending less as against what was budgeted? Could the Minister also tell us the name of the company that is providing these security services, and what is the reason for the increase as against what was expended last year?

Mr. Bulkan: The increased budgetary sum is as a result of: one - the increase in the minimum wages; secondly, it is for an increase in the amount of hours for a number of the location, nearly

24 hours security is being provided. The provider is as earlier identified, which is still the same company, Home Safe Security and Domestic Services.

Bishop Edghill: That is exactly why I asked the question.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member I would not be able permit after this question another one. Please make your question.

Bishop Edghill: Yes. When we consider the previous programme, the same company received a larger allocation because of the increase minimum wage. The same company spent less in 2015 on this project, but more is being sought in 2016, and the reason why I have not received an answer.

Mr. Bulkan: The volume of the increase would be dependent on the number of locations for which the service is provided, and it is not necessarily the same across different programmes.

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$292,566,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

5.59 p.m.

Programme: 733- Public Works- \$86,252,000

Mr. G. Persaud: Line items 6112 – Senior Technical and 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled: Both had a reduction of one staff member each. Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees, had a reduction of four staff members. The question for all three would be, could the Hon. Minister share with us the designations, the dates of departure and reasons for departure for the two employees under line items 6112 and 6113 and the four under line item 6116?

Mr. Chairman hit gavel.

Mr. Bulkan: The budgetary provision is for the staff that are employed by the region and not for those who are no longer under the employment of the region. So that information would have to be provided later for the Hon. Member.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Staff in 2015 – six; staff, according to the Budget 2016 - two; allocation Revised Budget 2015 - \$4,994,000. With two remaining

staff, Budget 2016 is asking for \$4.6 million or \$4,664,000. Would the Hon. Minister share with us the designations of those two staff members, their salaries and all other benefits so that we can understand that \$4,664,000 for these two remaining staff members? Thank you.

Mr. Bulkan: The two persons who are employed under this category would be an Engineer at a monthly salary of approximately \$190,000, and a Superintendent of Works at a monthly salary of approximately \$108,000.

Mr. Chand: Line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: It follows from line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads, could the Hon. Minister give details about the other infrastructure? I would like to have in details the area where this sum of money will be spent because I saw that, roads, bridges, *et cetera* are covered. We want to know about this particular item. It is too vague for me to understand where this money will be allocated under “Other Infrastructure”.

Mr. Bulkan: This sum is to cater for repairs to fences at several locations: La Grange, Crane and Wakenaam; repairs to trestles and septic tanks also at La Grange and Crane; repairs to a guard hut at Crane; it also caters for fabrication and installation of a door at De Kinderen and structure; as well as the rehabilitation of drains at the main Administrative building at Vreed-en-hoop.

Mr. Chand: Could the Minister make available to me, a copy of the list that he referred to just now.

Mr. Bulkan: Yes, Mr. Chairman, certainly these details can be provided to the Hon. Member.

Bishop Edghill: Line item 6281 – Security Services: In 2015, a budgetary allocation of \$8.1 million was sought, \$8.1 million was spent, and \$8.1 million is being requested again in 2016. Could the Hon. Minister tell the House what is the security service and the reason for it remaining the same as against the explanations that were given under other programmes.

Mr. Bulkan: The allocation caters for the payment of 152 security guards throughout the region, at an hourly rate of \$300 per an hour, for the total budgetary provision.

Bishop Edghill: What is the name of the company?

Mr. Bulkan: That would be Home Safe Security and Domestic Services.

Bishop Edghill: A follow-up question to the Minister: I am a little worried that we are getting two explanations. At one time we were told that the increase had to do with adjustments to the minimum wage...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member could you get closer to the question.

Bishop Edghill: Sir, but I am responding to the explanation that was just given and I need to...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member please, proceed. Go ahead to explain.

Bishop Edghill: The issue at hand here, if it is the same company that is providing security throughout the region and for all of the programmes, why under one of programmes we were told that there needed to be extra allocations because of the increase in minimum wages. It was not the increase of sites, it was the increase of the minimum wage, but in the other programmes the same increase did not apply. What is the explanation behind that?

Mr. Bulkan: The answer remains the same that the budgeted sum of \$8.13 million is for the provision of security services at the locations named.

Programme: 733 – Public Work – \$86,252,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery – \$2,194,167,000

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide the designations, salaries plus benefits and the dates of appointment of the three persons under this line item. At the same time, line item 6117 – Temporary Employees, if the Hon Minister could share the designations, salaries and dates of appointment or dates of engagement of these seven persons?

Mr. Bulkan: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: The two additional employees in 2015 would be a Typist at a monthly salary of approximately \$72,000 and a cleaner at a salary of \$50,000 monthly. Line item 6117 – Temporary Employees: The employees in this category are all voluntary teachers at a monthly stipend of approximately \$36,000.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6111 – Administrative: The Staffing Details show an increase from 480 to 513, would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to give us an insight as to this increase and whether these persons are trained persons?

Mr. Bulkan: The additional employees under this category would be newly appointed graduate head teachers, as well as the upgrading of teachers such as assistant masters and mistresses to senior assistant masters and mistresses within the same category.

Mr. Chairman, can I get a clarification, is the information sought only for the additional employees or for the entire list of 513?

Mr. G. Persaud: The additional employees.

Mr. Bulkan: This information would be provided subsequently to the Hon. Member.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6291 – National and other Events: Would the Hon. Minister give us an insight into this expenditure?

Mr. Bulkan: The proposed expenditure is to cater for interventions for the Mashramani as well as the Independence activities; the Science and Technology and Mathematic Fair; Regional and National Education Heritage Month activities; National Athletics, Swimming and Cycling Championships; and Regional Award Ceremony and Remembrance Day activities.

Mr. Chairman: Two more questions before I put the question.

Bishop Edghill: I would like to return to line item 6281 – Security Services. There is an increase in the budgetary request of \$13 million. Could the Hon. Minister tell us the name of the company that is providing the service and what is the reason for the increase?

Mr. Bulkan: The provider is Home Safe Security and Domestic Services and it is to provide security for the 119 schools across Region 3. It caters for 152 security guards at an hourly rate of \$300, plus 16% Value-Added Tax (VAT).

6.14 p.m.

Bishop Edghill: Follow-up: Is there an increase in the number of locations as compared to last year and what are those locations? We were told that when there was no increase, the rates were catered for?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision caters for an additional seven locations in the Essequibo islands mainly.

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery - \$2,194,167,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 735 – Health Services - \$1,172,561,000

Dr. Anthony: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: I notice there is an allocation of \$339,649,000 allocated for this year’s purchase of drugs and medical supplies. Could the Hon. Minister say how much will be used to purchase drugs and how much will be used to purchase medical supplies?

Mr. Bulkan: The actual breakdown for the two areas is not available at this stage but it will be provided to the Hon. Member, subsequently.

Dr. Anthony: I thank the Member for the promise to lay over the information but I just want to clarify; recently, the Neonatal Unit of the West Demerara Regional Hospital was reopened. I am wondering whether the Hospital will get all of the required supplies that are needed for the smooth operation of that Unit, for example endotracheal tubes, Ambu bags, *et cetera*.

Mr. Bulkan: I am assured that provision is made for the items, identified by the Hon. Member, to be available at the location.

Dr. Anthony: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: Last year, there was a provision of \$168,208,000. Could the Hon. Minister say whether this sum was used to buy drugs and medical supplies or how much went back to the Treasury?

Mr. Bulkan: As would have been explained earlier for the previous regions that were examined, a certain percentage of the allocation, under Health Services, was warranted back to the Ministry of Health. Exactly how much was returned to the Consolidated Fund and how much was used to purchase drugs and medical supplies will be provided, subsequently.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I will allow two more questions.

Ms. Teixeira: Follow-up: In the last Budget, there was a discussion on the allocations for health for the Regions. Could the Hon. Minister say how many regions sent Combined Received and Issued Vouchers (CRIVs) requests via the Ministry of Communities to the Ministry of Health for drugs and medical supplies because you are now talking about percentage of that being held by the Region?

Could you say how many CRIVs, for Region 3, were submitted to the Ministry, how many were fulfilled or processed in whatever way so that we can have an idea?

If this particular region had \$168 million and applied for all with the CRIVs, but you are saying that you have to keep a certain percentage, then who decides what is held on to and what is not because these are decisions of technical people – clinicians?

Mr. Bulkan: The question that was put earlier in relation to the procurement of drugs and medical supplies for the regions, the explanation was offered that the budgetary allocations were made to the regions for reasons of programme budgeting. The regions would identify their requirements and their needs and that would be forwarded to the Ministry of Public Health, which would continue to be responsible for procurement at the central level. It is the case that, at the end of the year, for the total budgetary allocation, a certain percentage of the drugs was not purchased and it is that figure, which was returned to the Ministry of Public Health and for which drugs were not procured by the end of December of last year, that is unavailable at this moment. I have undertaken to provide that information to the Hon. Members.

Mr. Hamilton: The Minister, in answering the question, indicated that of the \$168,208,000 that was budgeted, all was not spent and that some went back to the Consolidated Fund. If line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies – is looked at, it is saying to us that all \$168,208,000 was expended. The House needs to be advised as to which one is right – the document before us or what the Minister has said.

The second issue: Of the \$168,208,000 that was spent, could the Minister advise the House about how much of the drugs and medical supplies requested and procured are in the precincts of the Ministry of Health or the regional authorities.

Mr. Bulkan: I humbly suggest that what we are doing is belabouring a point that has already been addressed with respect to all of the previous regions. We are regurgitating and what we are dealing with are the 2016 proposed allocations which have gone up considerably, this year, to a total sum of \$339,649,000 which is expected to cater for the needs in relation to drugs and medical supplies for residents across Region 3.

Mr. Hamilton: Mr. Chairman, the Minister, in answering a question not so long ago, indicated to this House...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, is there a question?

Mr. Hamilton: Yes, I am putting the same question. The Minister indicated that, of the \$168,208,000 allocated, some of the money was not spent and that was sent back to the Consolidated Fund. When line item 6221 is looked at, it is saying that the entire \$168,208,000 was spent. Both cannot be right. Therefore, I am seeking to impress upon the Minister to tell this House which one is right. Is it the Estimates or his statement?

Mr. Bulkan: I will attempt, possibly, a final explanation. The amount has been exhausted. Not 100% of the sum resulted in drugs reaching the region but whatever was unspent would have been warranted to the Ministry of Health and that is why the entire amount is shown as exhausted, according to the accounts.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I will allow two more questions.

Mr. Chand: Line item 6272 – Electricity Charges - has gone up from \$40 million to \$80 million. When taken into account that telephone charges and water charges remained the same, the large sum of money suggests new buildings and so on. Could the Minister advise us about this increase of 100%?

Line item 6113 – Other Technical and Craft Skilled: This is increased by seven persons. I would like to have the designations and the names of the seven additional staff supplied.

Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: There is an increase of 17 contracted employees. I would like to have the names and the designations supplied as well.

Mr. Bulkan: The increased allocation for electricity would be as a result of the fact that the Ministry of Finance is no longer providing the annual subsidies that were obtained in the past. Provision is made for the payment of electricity to be funded under this Programme.

The seven additional employees, under line item 6113 - Other Technical and Craft Skilled – would be Medical Lab Technologist, Anaesthetist Nurse, Pharmacist, Rehabilitation Assistant, Medical Lab Technician, Staff Nurse and an Audiological Practitioner, with salary scales ranging from about \$94,000 to \$65,000 monthly.

6.29 p.m.

For line item 6116 - Contracted Employees - I believe that it is 14 and not 17 additional employees, as the Hon. Member said. These new employees are a Senior Dental Surgeon at a monthly salary of almost \$450,000; a Pathologist with a monthly salary of \$440,000; a Medical Officer - \$450,000; an Assistant Hospital Administrator - \$216,000; a Visiting Health Official, Dental Extender, Staff Nurse, Confidential Secretary, Community Health Worker and a Plumber.

Programme: 735 - Health Services – \$1,172,561,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 731- Regional Administration and Finance – \$8,119,000

Mr. G. Persaud: Project code 2503200 - Furniture and Equipment - Administration: Will the Hon. Minister please provide us with the items and the cost per item which would be procured under this project code?

Mr. Bulkan: A complete breakdown of all the activities to be funded under the capital programme has been provided to an Hon. Member, which, I am sure, would be shared with his Colleagues. But I do have the list with me here. I am not sure if the Hon. Member would like some of these items to be read out or if he will rely on the complete list that will be shared by his Colleague.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I would suggest that a large bulk of information could be supplied in writing if the Hon. Member asking the question has no difficulty with that being supplied. I would suggest that we do that rather than reading out for the next 15 minutes.

Mr. Bulkan: Yes, Sir. The document with complete details of the capital programme, which is what I have in front of me here, has been provided to Hon. Members already.

Mr. Chairman: I thank the Hon. Minister.

Mr. G. Persaud: Just a follow-up: I would be happy if the Hon. Minister can please provide the details to the Clerk so that we, in the House, can all benefit from that.

Mr. Bulkan: This will be done, Sir.

Programme: 731 - Regional Administration and Finance – \$8,119,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$48,020,000

Programme: 732 – Agriculture - \$48,020,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 733 - Public Works - \$98,361,000

Mr. Croal: Project code 1100400 - Bridges: Could the Hon. Minister indicate what the payment of retention is for?

Mr. Bulkan: This is retention for a bridge in Leguan.

Mr. Ali: Project code 1400600 - Roads: Could the Hon. Minister say to us which are the proposed projects by the RDC that were excluded from this Programme in the Budget?

Mr. Bulkan: Sir, I would respectfully suggest that I do not think we have time to deal with roads that funding was not provided for but the provision here is for funding for activities in Patentia, Wakenaam, Goed Fortuin and Stewartville.

Mr. Ali: Project code 1400600 - Roads: I am quite aware of the Budget process. The Hon. Minister would have been in receipt of a programme that was approved by the RDC of Region 3

and sent to him to be included in the national Budget of 2016. That is the people of Region 3's programme.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, I thought you were dealing with questions.

Mr. Ali: It is a question. I am asking the Hon. Minister to say to us which roads in the people's programme, as submitted to him, were excluded from this provision in 2016.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, what we are catering for is inclusion not exclusion. The roads that are to be funded are as listed.

Mr. Ali: Project code 1400600 - Roads: Could the Hon. Minister undertake to provide this House with a list of the roads that were excluded from the 2016 programme? Secondly, could he advise the House when he intends to have these roads included for a budget?

Mr. Bulkan: Sir, once again, I need to be guided by you but my understanding of this exercise is that we can only speak to what provision is made for the funding before us.

Mr. Ali: Project code 1400600 - Roads: In accordance with the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act (FMAA), there is an entire section that speaks to the budgetary process and the process includes a submission by the RDC from the Minister to the Ministry of Finance and from the Ministry of Finance to the Parliament. All I am saying is: in that process, some roads were left out and I would like the Hon. Minister to tell us the roads that were left out in that process. If he is not willing to give the names now, could he undertake to submit that list to the National Assembly?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the roads that will be funded under this activity for 2016 are all roads that will be used by people. So, this is a people's programme.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you are on the same question.

Mr. Ali: Yes. Mr. Chairman, I am a constituency representative in the National Assembly and I have a duty to explain to the people in Region 3 why the roads were excluded. I am just asking the Hon. Minister to undertake to this House that he will be willing to give us the roads that were excluded so that I can go back to the people who elected us here and give them an explanation. That is all I am asking. [*Noise*]

Mr. Chairman hit gavel.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members can do better. I suspect, Hon. Mr. Ali, it is possible, with the aid of amplification, to hear even a whisper. I say no more. It would be helpful. Even big *guys* do not have to shout to be heard. Hon. Member, do you have another question for the Minister?

Mr. Ali: The Minister did not respond to the request. I want to assure you I was not shouting; it is the passion of the people that drives through me.

Mr. Chairman: I thank the Hon. Member. This is the last question on this matter.

Mr. Chand: Project code 1400600 - Roads: Will the Minister advise which bridge in Patientia will be rehabilitated?

6.44 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the budgetary allocation is not for rehabilitation of a bridge, but it is for the road in Patientia Housing Scheme. It is for an asphaltic concrete road, 3,000 feet by 10 feet wide.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, I do not know whether... Hon. Member Mr. Komal Chand, is that the particular...

Mr. Chand: I am sorry, Comrade Chairman. I should have referred to project code 1100400 – Bridges. He did mention the Patientia Bridge. Under this, it states:

“Construction and rehabilitation of bridges...”

And he did mention Patientia Bridge. Could he advise me which bridge in Patientia?

Mr. Bulkan: Yes, Mr. Chairman. It is the same area. It is the Patientia Housing Scheme and it is to replace a greenheart bridge with a re-enforced concrete bridge, dimensions 30 feet by 18 feet wide.

Mr. Croal: Project Code 1400600 – Roads: Could the Hon. Minister lay over to the House - because I know he would not have it here now - the top five priority roads that were identified by

the RDC in its submission to the Ministry of Communities and, henceforth, to the Ministry of Finance?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, what is being sought by the Hon. Member is outside of the scope of what we are here for, which is an examination of Estimates of the 2016 Budget.

Opposition Chief Whip [Ms. Teixeira]: Mr. Chairman, could I raise a Point of Order, please, if you would allow me?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, indeed.

Ms. Teixeira: The Hon. Member keeps talking that we are restricted to talk about 2016 alone. Budget process and estimates are: one, the performance and accountability of the previous year; the estimates and the examination and scrutiny of the proposals of 2016; and, if anything is left out, then the Government may have a very plausible reason why it is left out, why it did not consider it. Therefore, this attempt to only deal with the numbers in the book is extraordinarily restrictive. And, therefore, I would think if I were on the other side of the House that I would want to expound on why certain choices were made over others.

Mr. Chairman, I am raising a Point of Order. I do not agree with this interpretation by the Hon. Member on what we are doing here in the Estimates. Mr. Chairman, I have been interrupted constantly, when I was speaking, by the Hon. Vice-President across from me. I hope you protect me, Sir, as you protect others.

Mr. Chairman: I shall do my best, Hon. Member.

Programme: 733 – Public Works - \$98,361,000 - agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme 734 – Education Delivery - \$133,047,000

Mr. Croal: Mr. Chairman, project code 1203000 – Buildings - Education: Could the Hon. Minister just list, for us, the buildings that would be affected by this expenditure and the nature of the works?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, this would be the education building at Plantain Walk; construction of the Philadelphia Primary School at Vergenoegen; extension and rehabilitation of the Patientia Nursery School; extension of Bel West Primary School; extension of Zeelugt Primary School, an enclosure to a bottom flat; the secondary school in Wakenaam; rehabilitation works to the McGillivray Primary School in Canal No. 1; and construction of a pathway for the Anna Catherina Nursery School.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, project code 1203000 – Buildings - Education: Could the Hon. Minister submit, to this House, the request of the RDC in the presentation of its budget?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, we have been asked to provide an explanation for which there is a budgetary allocation of zero, and my understanding is that is not what we are here for; we are here to speak to activities for which funding is provided for.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, project code 1203000 - Buildings – Education - has an allocation for \$114,457,000. It is not zero. My question is, could the Hon. Minister provide to this House the proposal as approved by the RDC of Region 3?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, funding for interventions are determined by the Ministry of Finance and the central Government, not by any other agency.

Mr. Ali: In accordance with the FMAA, part of the process of determining the funding is an analysis of the presentation as submitted by the RDC and, as geographic Members of Parliament (MPs), we have a right here. We have a right to the information that is submitted by the RDC and I am asking the Hon. Minister to share with us what was submitted so we can do our analysis in relation to what was the proposal of the Region as against what the central Government approved. You cannot avoid the proposal of the Region. It is part of the process.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, contrary to what is being alluded to by the Hon. Member, nothing was avoided. That analysis took place and a determination was made. As a result of that, funding was provided for a number of activities to the tune of almost \$115 million for education delivery in Region 3 and it includes, as I said, construction of a building in Plantain Walk to the value of \$49 million and the other activities that have already been identified, including Patientia, Bel West, Zeelugt, Wakenaam and Vergenoegen.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, could I ask the Hon. Minister whether the process allows for any adjustment in the numbers at this stage?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I am unclear as to which project code the Hon. Member is seeking this information.

Mr. Ali: Project code 1203000 – Buildings - Education: Could the Hon. Minister say whether...

Mr. Chairman: Is this a new question, Hon. Member?

Mr. Ali: Yes, Sir. May I proceed, Sir?

Mr. Chairman: It is the second question you are asking.

Mr. Ali: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Please proceed.

Mr. Ali: Could the Hon. Minister say whether he is prepared to negotiate with the Opposition on additional resources, under this head, for the expansion of the provision of education services to other areas, including the Hog Island Nursery and Primary Schools that are in critical need for investment. [*Noise*]

Mr. Chairman hit gavel.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, it seems as though our very strenuous efforts we are all making is beginning to take its toll on us but we have to press ahead. Tonight, we have to conclude the work of today. Please let me have the support of Hon. Members to achieve that. Hon. Minister, do you have a question outstanding?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the question, as I understand it, has to do with negotiation. This Administration is always open to negotiation but those negotiations will have to relate to the 2017 Budget. Right now, we are dealing with the 2016 budgetary provisions and allocations.

Mr. Ali: Mr. Chairman, just a follow-up: The purpose of examining the Estimates is not only to seek answers and clarification, but to see, as far as possible, where the needs of the people can be accommodated, and I think that there is a pressing need for the people in Hog Island, in relation

to their schools. As a result, I am asking whether we cannot consider this and other priority projects that were presented by the RDC to the Ministry in this 2016 allocation.

Mr. Chairman: The Hon. Minister of Public Infrastructure, do you wish the floor?

Minister of Public Infrastructure [Mr. Patterson]: Yes, Sir. At the stage where we are, we are examining the Estimates. The Budget process started since July, last year. The Opposition was invited, on numerous occasions, and that is the place where the Opposition was supposed to negotiate, not when it has been finalised to come here. *[Noise]*

Mr. Chairman hit gavel.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, this will not take us beyond where we are now. I would suggest that, with respect to the question raised by the Hon. Mr. Ali, that that is a matter, I believe, for another place. Clearly, the Minister has set out the answer which you do not find satisfactory, and understandably so, but I do not believe we can take it further here.

6.59 p.m.

Mr. Croal: Project 2503300, Furniture and Equipment – Education: Could the Hon. Minister provide information on the allocation for the furniture and equipment to schools? That is part one.

Mr. Bulkan: That information would be laid over to the benefit of the Hon. Member. The locations will be provided in writing.

Programme: 734 – Education Delivery – \$133,047,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 735 – Health Services – \$98,454,000

Dr. Anthony: Project 2401700, Land and Water Transport: I see here \$15 million is allocated for the purchase of an ambulance. Could the Minister tell us what is the specification for the ambulance? The reason I am asking is because we have seen in other regions sums allocated for ambulances but the sum varies. In some cases the sum is as low as \$9 million and in one

particular case as much as \$23 million. I just want to know if there is a standard specification for an ambulance we are buying and whether this would be a new or a used ambulance.

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for the purchase of a fully equipped emergency medical service (EMS) ambulance.

Mr. Croal: Project 2503100, Equipment – Health: Could the Hon. Minister provide to the Assembly where the equipment will be allocated?

Mr. Bulkan: The locations would be the West Demerara Regional Hospital, the Leonora Cottage Hospital, the Tuschen Health Centre, St. Lawrence Health Centre, the Leguan Health Centre and the Leonora Diagnostic Centre. Those are the locations.

Mr. Chand: Project 2401700: Where will this ambulance be housed or stationed?

Mr. Bulkan: It is at the West Demerara Regional Hospital.

Dr. Anthony: In my previous question I asked the Minister if he could lay over the specs for this particular ambulance. We are also interested in the ambulances from the various regions because the sum varies significantly. We would just like to know what we are buying. The other question is whether the ambulance is going to be procured by the region or is the money going to go back to the Ministry of Public Health so that it would be procuring the ambulances.

Mr. Bulkan: The question is entirely valid. The expectation is that the procurement would be done by the regions via the national procurement tender process. With regard to the varying sums for the different regions, this would be addressed.

Programme: 735 – Health Services – \$98,454,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 74 Region 4: Demerara/Mahaica

Current Expenditure

Programme: 741 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$173,497,000

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings: I see that there is \$13 million. Could the Minister tell us the buildings that will be maintained and the locations?

Mr. Bulkan: The buildings would be the RDC sub-office at Timehri, the office at Paradise, the Grove Craft Centre and the living quarters at Triumph.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, this is a follow-up. There is a new spanking building at Paradise and repairs were done in 2014 and 2015 at Timehri. Could the Hon. Minister tell us specifically how much money will be spent on each building?

Mr. Bulkan: For the building at Paradise the proposed allocation is for an expenditure of \$1.5 million is for improvements at that location. For the sub-office at Timehri, it is for more substantial repairs to the internal walls, floor and windows for the budgeted sum of \$6.5 million.

Ms. Persaud: Line item 6111, Administrative: The employment cost for 2015 was \$18,638,000 and the employment cost for 2016 is \$21,347,000, an increase of \$2,709,000. Could the Hon. Minister give an explanation of the increase?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for one additional staff, an Administrative Assistant, with a salary of \$71,000 monthly, and for the annulisation for all the staff in that category.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6255, Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister tell us which are the other infrastructure to be maintained and the cost for each one?

Mr. Bulkan: The budgeted sum of \$2.5 million is to cater for cleaning and clearing of compounds at various locations throughout the region, on the East Coast, East Bank as well as the Soesdyke Linden Highway, and for the rehabilitation of a fence at Cove and John. The respective sums are \$1.5 million and \$1 million respectively.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister make that information available to us?

Mr. Bulkan: That information could be provided in writing.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6272, Electricity Charges: I saw in the in Budget 2015 that \$2.7 million was budgeted for and a mere \$824,000 was used up, but now it is \$2,715,000. Could the Minister tell us which building electricity charges would have to be paid for?

Mr. Bulkan: This provision is for the Timehri sub-office and the Triumph main office as well as the living quarters. Apparently it was the case that the budgeted sum which is \$2.7 million corresponds to the figure that was budgeted for in 2015.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6281, Security Services: In 2015 the budgeted sum was \$33.5 million and only \$27.8 million was spent in 2015. Could the Hon. Minister tell us why is the cost now \$39.6 million for 2016?

Mr. Bulkan: There is an increase of two additional locations. The increase in the budgeted sum would also be as a result of the increased rates that would have applied, the increased minimum wages.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us the name of the security service and the locations to be secured?

Mr. Bulkan: The security company is Homesafe Security and Domestic Services and the two additional locations are for the Regional Vice-Chairman and the REO.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6291, National and Other Events: I notice \$5.5 million was allotted for 2015 but \$6.5 million was spent. In this year of our jubilee I see that there is \$6.5 million. Could the Minister explain how this would be spent, on which activities?

7.14 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: The proposed expenditure in this year is more or less constant as to what was spent last year and the events, which will be catered for, would be our national activities - the Mashramani, the jubilee, national tree planting day, the national village day as well as the International Day of Prayer.

Mr. G. Persaud: A follow-up on line item 6291. Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to tell us how much would be expended on the jubilee celebration this year?

Mr. Bulkan: The expectation is that a sum of roughly about \$2.5 million would be catered for the independence celebration.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6284, Other: Would the Hon. Minister, be kind enough to give us an insight as to how this \$2.6 million would be expended?

Mr. Bulkan: The budgeted sum is to cater for the provision of internet services at the offices, Registry and Accounts Department, as well as to pay for a stipend for one University of Guyana (UG) student who is attached to the RDC.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6116, Contracted Employees: Would the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide us with the designation, the salaries, benefits and effective date of appointment of the 27 persons so listed under line item 6116?

Mr. Bulkan: All of these employees were there in the year 2015 and there has been a reduction in staff of one, but the specific information, which is being required, as to dates of employment and designations of the 27 employees would have to be provided subsequently.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6211, Expenses Specific to Agency: Could the Hon. Minister justify the \$1 million increase?

Mr. Bulkan: This would allow for expenses related to the servicing of two new vehicles that had been acquired by the RDC.

Mr. Croal: As a follow-up on this same line item, to whom will these vehicles be assigned? If that is the case, and it is line item 6211, it means it is the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the RDC in general. How many vehicles would be the complement under the political arm of the RDC?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, are you asking several questions?

Mr. Croal: Yes.

Mr. Chairman: Then you should probably make it clear to the Minister that is what you are doing so that he can answer them seriatim.

Mr. Croal: I will repeat but I know that the Minister understands.

Mr. Chairman: The Minister understands, then let us not spend more time on it.

Mr. Bulkan: The complement of vehicles under that programme would be two vehicles and they are for use by the Regional Chairman and the Vice Chairman.

Programme: 741 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$173,497,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 742 - Agriculture - \$280,161,000

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6253, Maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation Works: I see it is a whopping \$121.3 million. Could the Minister please tell us specifically where and how much for each place that the region will be spending this money?

Mr. Bulkan: The proposed allocation is to fund interventions for maintenance of Drainage and Irrigation infrastructure in the areas across the region and these will include Unity - Vereeniging Golden Grove - Haslington, Enmore - Hope, Buxton - Foulis, Beterverwagting - Triumph, Better Hope – La Bonne Intention (LBI), Plaisance - Industry, Eccles – Ramsburg, Little Diamond - Herstellling, Golden Grove – Diamond, Good Success - Caledonia, Soesdyke - Coverden, Cane Grove, Grove (East Bank Demerara), Beterverwagting and Anns Grove. This list could be provided in writing to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Neendkumar: As a follow-up, I would like to know what specifically will be spent on the highway to facilitate the Indigenous People who are farming there. I would like to know specifically the Mahaica and Cane Grove areas as to what work will be done. What moneys will be spent in these specific areas?

Mr. Bulkan: The budgetary allocation for Cane Grove is a sum of \$5 million. There is no provision in this programme for any areas on the Soesdyke - Linden Highway.

Ms. Persaud: Line item 6116, Contracted employees: There has been an increase in 2016 of three additional employees. The number now stands at 46. There is an increase in the salaries of \$4,718,000. Could the Hon. Minister furnish this Assembly with the positions and the salaries for the now 46 employees?

Mr. Bulkan: The three additional employees would be two Sluice Attendants and one Labourer with a salary of \$50,000 each. The balance of the increase in the budgetary allocation would

2015 would be as a result of the combination of new employees as well as the annualisation for all 46 employees for the 5 %. The full details as to the designation of the 46 employees could be laid over for the benefit of Hon. Members in the Opposition.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6264, Vehicle Spares and Service: Budget 2015 was \$1.5 million, expenditure for 2015 was \$87,000. Hearing now that that there are two brand new vehicles, it means therefore maintenance should be very less and we are asking for \$1.5 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain the expenditure for 2015 and the request for 2016?

Mr. Bulkan: None of the allocation under this heading would be for the two new vehicles, but it will be for other vehicles in the fleet, including the vehicle that was previously used by the Regional Chairman which has been returned to the agriculture programme.

Mr. Chairman: I would allow two other questions before I put the question.

Mr. G. Persaud: Sir, this is a follow-up. Are you counting it as one?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, I am.

Mr. G. Persaud: Very well. The Hon. Minister in response to a specific question, the number of vehicles under this programme, said two and now the explanation given here he is speaking to other vehicles. I am a bit confused. I am hearing about old vehicles...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, what is the question that you would like the Minister to answer?

Mr. G. Persaud: I would like the Hon. Minister to verify...He said earlier that there were only two new vehicles under this programme. Now in his response to me he said that there were two other more vehicles and that those vehicles are now returning to agriculture department. I heard the word "old" Sir. The Minister needs to please justify why \$87,000 was spent on two old vehicles and why \$1.5 million is needed for two new vehicles under maintenance.

Mr. Bulkan: In 2015, there was only one vehicle allocated under that programme. This year, in addition to that one vehicle, there is a new vehicle that has been acquired for this programme as well as the vehicle that was formally used by the Regional Chairman that is now being returned under this programme. It is an additional two vehicles.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman I have a lot of questions to ask and I do not know if you are going to curtail me. Line item 6272, Electricity Charges, I saw in 2014 \$30 million in 2015, \$30 million was requested and paid and in 2016 \$30 million. Could the Hon. Minister tell us the location where electricity will be paid for?

Mr. Bulkan: That provision would be for electricity charges for approximately seven pump stations and about five living quarters. The specific information will be provided in writing for the benefit of the Hon. Member.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Hon. Minister. I will now put the question.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, I have a lot of questions to ask.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member Mr. Neendkumar, it would not be possible to accommodate all your questions if we are to complete this item and the other that are awaiting us.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, it is not fair. I am a geographic Member Parliament and I would like to ask questions to represent the people in my constituency.

Programme: 742 - Agriculture - \$280,161,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

7.29 p.m.

Programme: 743 – Public Works – \$117,352,000

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister tell us the buildings that will be maintained and the cost for maintaining each?

Mr. Bulkan: Maintenance and repairs to the officers' quarters at Sparendaaam with a budgetary provision of \$4 million, officers' quarters at Triumph with a budgeted sum of \$3.5 million, the living quarters for the Regional Education Officer at Triumph with a budgeted sum of \$2.5 million and the living quarters for the auditor at Timehri with a budgeted sum of \$2.5 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6251, Maintenance of Road: I see we have \$32.5 million allocated there. Could the Hon. Minister tell us the roads and how much will be expended on the specific roads?

Mr. Bulkan: These would be to repairs in Hope, East Enmore, Bee Hive, Mocha, Soesdyke, Mon Repos, Clonbrook, Better Hope South, Nonpareil, Beterverwagting and Melanie.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could he say the length of road and how much specifically is spent on these roads? What type of roads they would be – asphalt?

Mr. Bulkan: This is for maintenance and it is the Double Bituminous Surface Treatment (DBST), mainly for pot holes. I can undertake to lay over this information to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6252, Maintenance of Bridges: I see we have \$16.5 million. Could the Minister tell us where these bridges are going to be maintained and the cost for maintaining each one of them?

Mr. Bulkan: There will be a bridge in Soesdyke for an estimated cost of \$2 million, Grahams Street, Better Hope - \$3.5 million, Mervin Street in Victoria - \$2 million, timber bridge at Triumph, north - \$2.5 million, Buzz Bee Dam, Craig \$3.5 million, and timber bridge, last street, Nonpareil - \$3 million.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6231, Fuel and Lubricants: In 2015, \$11.2 million was allocated under this head, spent was zero, and now in 2016 we are asking for \$1 million. Would the Hon. Minister explain why Budget 2015 requested \$11.2 million? Since the region did not spend any it seems that that figure was only requested for other purposes. What will we spend the \$1 million on, requested for in 2016?

Mr. Bulkan: The reason why there was no expenditure in 2015 was as a result of an inheritance, good fortune, perhaps I can say a windfall that the RDC inherited in the year 2015, a credit from a supplier. Perhaps it was in anticipation of an increased number of activities. It is the case that there is still a credit in that account that will allow to provide for the fuel and lubricants need for the region for the year 2016. This is why the budgetary sum is such a small figure in this year.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6264, Vehicle Spares and Service: I noticed in 2014, \$2.9 million was spent. In 2015, \$4.5 million was budgeted for but only \$2.4 million was spent. Why is it that we want \$4.5 million in 2016? Could the Minister tell us what this money will be spent for?

Mr. Bulkan: There is a fleet of three vehicles under this programme and the proposed allocation of \$4.5 million is expected to cater for the servicing needs, and spares for those three vehicles.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6255, Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: I see that there is \$7 million. Could the Hon. Minister tell us what the other infrastructure is and how much money will be spent on each?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for repairs to a chain-link fence at Sparendam, at a budgeted sum of \$3.5 million, a driveway at Triumph at \$2.5 million and a gate and fence at the Regional Chairman's quarters at Cove and John for a sum of \$1 million.

Programme: 743 – Public Works – \$117,352,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we are now midway in the current expenditure for Region 4, Demerara/Mahaica and we are now 10 minutes beyond the 7.30 p.m. hour. If Hon. Members wish, we can continue and complete this current expenditure before we rise so as to move ourselves along.

Programme: 744 – Education Delivery – \$3,355,915,000

Ms. Persaud: Line item 6252, Maintenance of Bridges: There is a sum of \$5 million allocated in 2016. I am asking the Hon. Minister if he can furnish this Assembly with the list of places where these bridges have to maintain.

Mr. Bulkan: It is for repairs to bridges at Mocha Nursery School, Victoria Nursery, Low Wood Primary School, Montrose Primary School, Company Road Primary School, Enmore Primary School, Plaisance Secondary School and Covent Garden Secondary School and widening and repairs to access bridge at the Buxton Practical Instruction Centre (PIC).

Ms. Persaud: Line item 6255, Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: There is a budgeted sum of \$65,950,000 for 2016, as against, \$42,311,000 in 2015. Could the Hon. Minister furnish this Assembly with the places where the maintenance of the other infrastructure will be done and the cost as per item?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for nursery schools across the region, a total sum of \$10.6 million plus an additional \$20 million for primary, secondary - \$20.9 million and the practical instruction centres at a sum of \$16 million. The number of locations are quite substantial. This information can be provided in writing to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Neendkumar: This is a follow-up. Line item 6255, Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: The moneys, which the Minister gave us, \$30 million, \$20.9 million, \$16 million, add up to more than \$65.95 million. Could the Minister give us that in writing, the amount, and what will be spent in the specific schools – nursery, primary and secondary?

Mr. Bulkan: The sub totals are \$20 million, \$20.95 million and \$21.5 million, which gives a total of \$65.95 million but this information will be provided in writing.

Ms. Persaud: Line item 6272, Electricity Charges: In 2015, it was \$14,998,000, and in 2016, we see a huge increase, it is now \$126,204,000. Could the Hon. Minister explain this increase?

Mr. Bulkan: The increased allocation is to provide for increased security lighting to the 133 schools across the region. It is also the case that the subsidies, which would have been provided in the past by the Ministry of Finance, will no longer be provided for, but it is budgeted for, and catered under the programme in this budget.

7.44 p.m.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6281 – Security Services: I see that it has gone from \$210.5 million to \$399.6 million. Could the Minister provide in writing, the location, company and specifically, how much is being paid per location?

Mr. Bulkan: The provider is Home Safe Security and Domestic Services. The additional reason for the increase in the allocation is that there are increased numbers of locations. Prior, less than 50% of the schools in the region were provided with security, so that is being corrected. Also, some of the schools have been upgraded to receive 24-hour security.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6272 – Electricity Charges: Budget 2015 expended \$14,998,000, requested in Budget 2016 is \$126,204,000, a request that is in excess of \$111 million. Could the Hon. Minister be kind enough to explain to us, the reason for this increase?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, could I enquire from the Hon. Member if the answer that was offered a moment ago insufficient for his purposes?

Mr. G. Persaud: Mr. Chairman, I heard the answer, but I thought that there were some things still missing. That is the reason why I have repeated those questions. I thought that the Minister had a part that he is still had to disclose.

Mr. Chairman: Would the Hon. Member wish to ask the Minister the part that he feels is missing?

Mr. G. Persaud: Yes, Sir. I am asking the Hon. Minister if he could he provide us with the various locations/buildings and the sum for each building, so that we can understand why those buildings were not benefitting from electricity in the year 2015? That will help me to understand.

Mr. Bulkan: This is a budgeted sum and is a projected cost for all of the locations. The actual amounts would not be known until the bills are received for the respective months during the year ahead.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, I will allow three more questions before I put the question.

Ms. Persaud: Line item 6284 – Other: There is a budgeted sum of \$79,211,000 in 2016 as against \$65,551,000 in 2015, an additional sum of \$13,660,000. Could the Hon. Minister give an insight to this House as to what this additional sum would be spent on?

Mr. Bulkan: This allocation is to cater for payments to the Sweeper/Cleaners for the increased rates at the end of last year for which they were beneficiaries. This is what is responsible for the increased allocations in 2016.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6117: The Staffing Details are showing one temporary employee and the document is showing that in 2015, at some point in time, 48 temporary employees were on board. It is now showing that we do not have any.

Clearly, when the Budget was presented in 2015, there was no reference to any temporary employee. It therefore now warrants an intervention as to why these 48 temporary employees were brought on board, how they were selected and what they did when they were brought on board?

Mr. Bulkan: Even though it is not that late into the night, I am not too sure that I would venture to suggest that the Hon. Member is probably tired because the figure of 48 that he has referred to is not the number of employees, but rather that \$48,000 was spent for one employee in 2015. That solitary employee is no longer there in 2016. This is why the budgetary allocation is \$0.

Mr. G. Persaud: Thank you Mr. Chairman, it was my error.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Neendkumar, you have the last question.

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6272 – Electricity Charges: I am very concerned. I would like the Hon. Minister to tell us how many pre-paid metres are covered under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: There are zero pre-paid metres. All of the metres are post-paid.

Programme: 744 – Education Delivery - \$3,355,915,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$1,111,627,000

Mr. Neendkumar: Line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: I see a whopping \$586.9 million. Could the Hon. Minister distinguish and tell us where this money would be spent because Georgetown is not covered under this region? How much will be spent on drugs and how much on medical supplies?

Mr. Bulkan: The full details and the break-down of this proposed expenditure would be provided to the Hon. Member subsequently.

Mr. Neendkumar: I would like the break-down to be provided to the House.

Secondly, I would like to know if there are storage facilities for these drugs on the East Bank Demerara and on the East Coast of Demerara.

Mr. Bulkan: As was explained earlier, the needs for the region are identified on periodic basis. That information is furnished or supplied to the Ministry of Public Health, which is responsible for the procurement and delivery. The expectation is not that there would be a bulk of purchase at the beginning or any bulk storage. The procurement is done on a needs basis, during the course of the year.

Mr. Neendkumar: Hon. Minister, are we to understand that there is a difference in this region than in the other regions?

Mr. Bulkan: I believe that there is a difference because if one were to look at the population of Region 4, it would show that it is considerably greater than our other regions.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, do you have a follow-up question?

Mr. Neendkumar: Yes Mr. Chairman. The Minister said that they would be procuring and purchasing in the other regions. I want to know if the Regional Democratic Council (RDC) will be doing that now or whether it would become central.

Mr. Bulkan: No, Mr. Chairman. It is consistent with all of the regions. The needs are identified by the regions, but the procurement is handled by the Ministry of Public Health.

Mr. Chairman: We have three more questions. Please go ahead.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, this is a serious matter. It is the peoples' health that we are dealing with. The Ministry cannot buy lump sum. There have to be some criteria or some basis to purchase drugs. Drugs are very important.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Neendkumar, do you have a question for the Minister?

Mr. Neendkumar: Yes, I am asking him what are the criteria; how will he decide what drugs will be purchased, when and how much?

Mr. Bulkan: The needs or the details of what drugs are needed and required for the region, that identification is done by the Regional Health Officers (RHOs) and that list is supplied to the Ministry of Public Health for procurement to be done centrally.

Mr. Dharamlall: Mr. Chairman, I am invoking programme budgeting. Could the Hon. Minister please confirm, under Programme 745 – Health Services, the recently made revelations that spoilt milk was sent to the Diamond Hospital; what is the status of the investigations; the cost of the milk and where was it procured from?

Mr. Bulkan: If the Hon. Member could provide a report with the details that he has outlined, then an investigation would be conducted and an answer would be offered to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Dharamlall: A follow-up: According to a *I-News* Report on February 11...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you should really be fair to everyone here. It may be difficult but it cannot be beyond us. You are asking the Minister a question.

Mr. Dharamlall: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: It seems to me that you are saying that there is some information that you are privy to but the Minister is not privy to. So ask the Minister a question but do not lean on information to which you are privy and the Minister is not because there will be no progress in that.

Mr. Dharamlall: Very well. As a follow-up: Is the Hon. Minister aware that the Food and Drug Analyst Department has begun investigations into spoilt milk delivered to the Diamond Hospital?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, both of you cannot be on the floor at the same time. You have asked a question; you should allow for an answer.

Mr. Dharamlall: Mr. Chairman, there are two types ...

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Dharamlall, we cannot waste time.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I was about to ask the Hon. Member if he can identify which line item the question is being asked under?

Mr. Dharamlall: Under line item 6292 – Dietary, Health Services or Programme Budgeting, which the Minister of Finance spoke about last year.

7.59 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: We are dealing with the proposed allocation and in the case of “Dietary” it is for dietary needs for the remaining period ahead.

Mr. Chairman: You may Hon. Member, but there will be one other question after yours.

Dr. Ramsaran: Okay. This question has three sub-points. Under “Dietary” we notice a healthy increase could the Hon. Minister explain that? It is a significant increase. Could the Hon.

Minister also tell us if any of this money was accounted for in the recent loss of milk allegedly reported in the media? Was the \$7 million link to this in anyway? It is a good increase. What is the cause of the massive increase?

Could the Hon. Minister explain or indicate if it has any link with the recent lost or the recent alleged scandal, where the link was supplied by a local contractor to the East Bank Regional Hospital? Did it fall under this dietary item? That is the first question in two parts.

The second question I would like to ask is under staffing. The Hon. Minister has a modest increase of one, but if we were to look at the salary increase, it seems a bit significant. Could the Hon. Minister tell us who the additional staff are, their functions and emoluments? So, I have three questions there, Mr. Chairman, under “Dietary” and the staff.

Mr. Chairman: Are those the questions that you have?

Dr. Ramsaran: Yes Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Bulkan: The increase in the allocation for the “Dietary” is to cater for the maternity services at the Dr. CC Nicholson Hospital which has recently been rehabilitated and reintegrated into the health service. It is to provide for meals for patients as well as for the medical personnel at that facility.

The increase in the budgetary provisional allocations under line item – 6116, even though there has only been a total increase of one employee, there has been a number of staff changes. There would have been resignations and new recruitments, but the overall effect is that there is one greater number. Among the new employees under that category, medex, mid-wives, health centre attendants, and ambulance drivers would be catered for. With the annualisation and the 5% increase, this is what is responsible for the increase in the budgetary provision in the year 2016.

Mr. Chairman: There would be one more question.

Dr. Ramsaran: Mr. Chairman, if you may allow me.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, have you had your questions.

Dr. Ramsaran: I thought there was some hesitancy.

Mr. Chairman: I noticed that too Hon. Member.

Mr. G. Persaud: Line item 6281- Security Services: There is 100% increase on the allocation for 2015, would the Hon. Minister provide us with the health locations, the number of hours, the number of guards, and the cost per hour, so that we can do our own computation to arrive at this allocation? Mr. Chairman, seeing that this is the last question you are allowing, I wish to remind the Hon. Minister of Communities that last year he made quite a number of commitments and fulfilled none. So, I am hoping that this year it is different.

Mr. Bulkan: There is one additional location this year, which is a new Health Centre in the Eccles Housing Scheme. Other contributory factors to the increased allocation, in addition to that, would be the increased coverage to the 31 locations under this programme, namely 24 hours coverage. This is being necessitated as a result of vandalism at a number of these locations. Those are the two major contributory factors.

Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$1,111,627,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Neendkumar, I must tell you that, at this point, we intend to take the suspension. If you wish to speak you may speak with that knowledge.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, under this line item there is a total of \$1.1 billion and we did not question approximately half of a billion spending and this is not fair. The Hon. Minister just referred to a health centre in Eccles. I do not know where in Eccles that Health Centre is.

Assembly resumed.

Sitting suspended at 8.06 p.m.

Sitting resumed at 8.45 p.m.

In Committee of Supply.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, during a meeting of the Business Sub-Committee which met during the suspension, I would say by consensus that the following agreements were reached. It was agreed that, tomorrow at 1 o'clock when we commence our sitting, we will take as first

consideration the Estimates of Expenditure for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the end of that consideration, we will resume our consideration of the Estimates for the regions. We are conscious of the fact that we are very much behind time and it was agreed that, and I would say by consensus, we make every effort this evening to complete today's work to a maximum time, by 11.30 p.m. We believe that, with extra effort on both sides, we can achieve that.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 741- Regional Administration and Finance- \$24,200,000

Ms. G. Persaud: Project Code – 2404700 - Land and Water Transport: There is an amount for \$12 million for the purchasing of vehicles. Could the Hon. Minister say how many vehicles, and to whom or to which agency would these vehicles be located, and what are the types of vehicles?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision is for two pick-up vehicles. One is for use by the Vice-Chairman and one for the Regional Administration.

Mr. Neendkumar: Project code 1208800 – Buildings - Administration: There is \$6.7 million and the Legend is saying that the provision is for trestle, water treatment system and shed. Could the Hon. Minister tell us where this would be built and how much would be spent on the three specifics?

Mr. Bulkan: Both of the interventions are for the RDC Office in Triumph. The shed is to serve the persons who are there for the welfare and social services. So, it is to provide a waiting area for the persons who are seeking those services. It is expected to benefit some 50 persons and the water treatment is to upgrade the supply of water to the RDC Administrative building at Triumph.

Programme: 741 – Regional Administration – \$24,200,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

8.52 p.m.

Programme: 742 – Agriculture - \$45,600,000

Mr. Croal: Project code 1701200 – Agricultural Development: Could the Hon. Minister provide information as to the payment of the retention as well as the revetments, the allocations for those payments.

Mr. Bulkan: The retention payments are for two locations, which are the revetments at Beterverwagting (BV) and another one at Buzz Bee Dam. The constructions are at Anns Grove, Brickery, Cane Grove and Mahaica.

Mr. Chairman, allow me please to say that the breakdown for the complete activities for the capital programme has been given via the Clerk of the National Assembly to be photocopied for the benefit of all Members so desirous.

Mr. Croal: Project code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: What vehicle would be procured and to whom will this vehicle be assigned or what is the purpose for it?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for the purpose of one vehicle for the Agricultural Programme for the RDC.

Mr. Neendkumar: Project code 1701200 – Agricultural Development: I see in the legend we have here that it is for the construction of revetments at Two Friend's, Brickery, Cane Grove and Mahaica market. I did not see anything for Buzz Bee Dam as mentioned by the Hon. Minister. I would like to know, specifically, how much will be spent on revetment in each area.

Mr. Bulkan: The reference to Buzz Bee Dam was for the retention at BV and Buzz Bee Dam. The construction was for the other locations. The budgeted sums are: In the case of Anns Grove - \$8.5 million that is Two Friends; at Brickery - \$11.5 million; Cane Grove - \$8.6 million; and the revetment at the Mahaica market - \$9.97 million.

Programme: 742 – Agriculture - \$45,600,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 743 – Public Works – \$61,400,000

Mr. Neendkumar: Project code 1100500 – Bridges: I see in the Legend that it is for the construction and rehabilitation of bridges at Strathavon, Mon Repos and Good Success. Could the Hon. Minister tell us specifically how much would be spent in those three areas?

Mr. Bulkan: The respective sums for those three locations are: \$4 million, \$3.9 million and \$3.43 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us about the retention.

Mr. Bulkan: The retentions are for the construction of bridges at the doctors' quarter, Clonbrook and a bridge at the entrance to the Neighbourhood Democratic Council (NDC), Farm, East Bank Demerara.

Mr. Croal: Could the Hon. Minister provide a breakdown of the retention under the Public Work - Bridges.

Mr. Bulkan: For the bridge at Clonbrook it is \$557,000, and the one at the NDC, Farm is \$513,000.

Programme: 743 – Public Works – \$61,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 744 – Education Delivery – \$285,524,000

Ms. Persaud: Project code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicle and where it would be allocated to or whom?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for the Regional Educational Department and the vehicle would be a 4x4 pick-up.

Mr. Neendkumar: Project code 1203300 – Buildings – Education: I see that we have a total of \$254,124,000. In the Legend I see the Hon. Minister has "...payment of retention". Could the Hon. Minister explain "payment of retention"?

Mr. Bulkan: The retention payments are fairly modest sums ranging from \$219,000 to \$315,000. The activities that would have been constructed would have been a sanitary block at Saint Cuthbert's Secondary School; a sanitary block at Mon Repos Primary School; a sanitary block at Annandale Primary School; and tarmacs at the Timehri Primary School, Kuru Kururu Primary School and Craig Primary School.

Mr. Neendkumar: A follow-up question: In the Legend we see, construction of EastVille and Grove Nursery, Peter's Hall Primary and the Golden Grove Secondary Schools. Could the Hon. Minister give us the amount that would be spent on these specific schools?

Mr. Bulkan: Some of these are rollover projects. The budgetary provision in the case of the Golden Grove Secondary School is for consultancy and it is \$4,676,000. The consultancy for the Peter's Hall Primary School is \$3,626,000. Sorry Hon. Member what is the third location, can you repeat it please?

Mr. Neendkumar: The third location is the Peter's Hall Primary and Grove Secondary schools.

Mr. Bulkan: The Peter's Hall Primary School is for construction and the budgeted sum is \$60 million and for the Golden Grove Secondary School the budgeted sum is approximately \$94 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us how much money rolled over?

Mr. Bulkan: The rollover projects are multi-year projects and that information could be provided subsequently. It is in the list that has been circulated to the Hon. Members - that detail.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us how much money would be spent on the extension of the Kuru Kururu Primary School?

Mr. Bulkan: That sum is \$10,754,000.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us how much would be spent on the rehabilitation of Hendons Nursery School and Buxton Primary School.

Mr. Bulkan: The Hendons Nursery School - rehabilitation for \$5 million and rehabilitation at Buxton also for \$10 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us how much would be spent for the construction of walkways at Kairuni Nursery, Covent Garden, Paradise, Mon. Repos and Strathspey Primary Schools and the Friendship Secondary Schools. Could the Minister give us the specific amounts, and I am adding.

Mr. Bulkan: The Hon. Member is moving a little quickly, but at the Kairuni Nursery School it is \$1.5 million for the construction of a trestle; construction of a ramp at Kairuni Nursery School for \$800,000; at Friendship Secondary School the construction of a walkway for \$1 million; at Covent Garden Secondary School a walkway as well for \$800,000; at Paradise Secondary School a walkway for \$800,000, at Mon Repos Secondary School a walkway for \$800,000; and at Strathspey Primary School a walkway of \$800,000.

Mr. Neendkumar: Could the Hon. Minister tell us how much will be spent on the construction of sanitary blocks at Anns Grove, Helena and Plaisance Nursery Schools, along with the Friendship and Soesdyke Secondary Schools.

Mr. Bulkan: The respective sums are \$1.2 million, \$1.2 million, \$3.85 million and for Soesdyke Secondary School \$3.85 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Minister just mentioned a ramp at the Kairuni Nursery School, but now I see and that the Legend has:

“Construction of trestle, ramp and bridge at Kairuni Nursery and Swami Purnanandi Primary schools”

Could the Hon. Minister tells us this amount and supply it in writing so that we could follow it up.

Mr. Bulkan: This complete breakdown has been provided, but I would repeat it here. For the construction of the trestle at Kairuni Nursery School, the budgeted sum is \$1.5 million; for the ramp at Kairuni Nursery School it is \$800,000; and for the bridge at Swami Purnanandi Primary School the sum is \$5 million.

Programme: 744 – Education Delivery – \$285,524,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

9.07 p.m.

Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$62,930,000

Ms. Persaud: Project code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: The sum of \$6 million dollars is allocated for the purchase of a vehicle. Could the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicle will be procured and where it will be allocated?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for a 4x4 pickup vehicle and it is for the use by the health department.

Dr. Anthony: Project code 2503700 – Furniture and Equipment – Health: For the description of the project, there are a number of things listed, including fogging machines. Could the Hon. Minister tell us how much money will be spent on each of these items, how many fogging machines will be bought and how they will be used in the Region?

Mr. Bulkan: The list that was provided to the Hon. Members show that the “s” in “fogging machines” do not belong because it is a single fogging machine. The complete list has been provided to the Hon. Members.

Dr. Anthony: Similarly, under project code 2506900 – Equipment – Health – there are a number of health equipment that have been listed, including Electrocardiogram (ECG) machines, sterilisers, cervical traction and so forth. Could the Minister say how many of each will be bought and which health centre or district hospital the equipment will be located?

Mr. Bulkan: These would be for the East Bank Regional Hospital, the Dr. CC Nicolson Memorial Hospital, the Plaisance Health Centre as well as health centres at Moblissa, Silver Hill and Dora, the Mahaica Health Centre and there is a health centre that is expected to be constructed in the Eccles area. The breakdown is on the list that has been provided to the Hon. Members.

Mr. Neendkumar: The Minister referred to Eccles health centre. Project code 1203500 – Buildings – Health: There is \$37,530,000. The Legend states that it is for payment of retention and I would like to know what retention. Then there is the construction of health centre at Eccles and sanitary block at Kuru Kururu Health Centre. I want to know what the Minister is talking about, specifically, with respect to a health centre at Eccles.

Mr. Bulkan: The retentions are modest sums and they are for construction at the Clonbrook Health Centre, the Diabetic Foot Care Unit at the Grove Health Centre and for extension of the Melanie Health Centre.

The provision for the commencement of construction of the health centre at Eccles is estimated at the sum of \$22.314 million.

Mr. Neendkumar: Something is definitely wrong. Under project code 1203500 – Buildings – Health – there is \$37.53 million. The Legend does not state anything else. It is speaking specifically to the construction of a health centre at Eccles and a sanitary block at Kuru Kururu. I do not know about the other places that the Minister is talking about.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, is there a question for the Minister?

Mr. Neendkumar: Yes, I asked but the Minister was not precise.

Mr Chairman: Hon. Member, Mr. Neendkumar...

Mr. Neendkumar: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: Usually, when the Speaker calls on you, you would stand. Thank you. It is possible to ask a supplementary question. I know that you know that so, if the Minister has not given a satisfactory answer, then ask a supplementary question.

Mr. Neendkumar: Mr. Chairman, before the break, the Hon. Minister referred to a health centre at Eccles and again when Dr. Anthony questioned the Hon. Minister, he referred to a health centre at Eccles. I am saying that it is clear, in the Legend, that the construction of the health centre at Eccles falls under this project code. Further, I would like to know where in Eccles the health centre will be built.

Mr. Bulkan: The first question the Hon. Member asked was about the sums allocated for the retentions and those were the figures I provided, the modest sums of \$357,000, \$177,000 and \$133,000. For the provision for the construction of a health centre at Eccles, of the \$37.53 million that is provided for under this head, the sum of \$22.314 million is allocated for that. It will be located in the Eccles new scheme. I do not have a lot number at this stage.

Mr. Neendkumar: I am asking where, in Eccles, the health centre will be built.

Mr. Bulkan: It will be built in the Eccles new housing scheme. I believe that it would be in the area that is known as BB Eccles.

Ms. Persaud: Project code 2404700 – Land and Water Transport: The Minister did say that the vehicle to be purchased will be a 4x4 pickup to be used by the health department. Could the Hon. Minister state specifically where, which department and which location it would be used by?

Mr. Bulkan: It is for the entire health programme of the RDC.

Dr. Ramsaran: I have two quick follow-up questions. Project code 1203500 – Buildings – Health: I notice that the Government has embarked to do some work on the Dr. CC Nicolson Memorial Hospital. Could you indicate, to this House, if that also includes renovation of the two self-contained doctor's quarters on the upper flat? I think there are two self-contained quarters because we took care to see that there were two self-contained quarters upstairs.

The other question is under project code 2503700 – Furniture and Equipment – Health. I note that fogging machines will be bought. Congratulations; that is very good. But I do not see, in the Estimates or even in the central Ministry, a provision for spray cans. Apparently, there is a love for fogging machines; we concur with that. I do not know if the detailed Legend has where you are having, concomitant with fogging machines, spray cans which also have value in vector control.

Mr. Bulkan: The budgetary sum for the activities at the Dr. CC Nicolson Memorial Hospital does not cater for any work at the doctors quarters but rather it is for the relocation of the labour room for which a sum of \$3 million is budgeted as well as remodelling of the ground floor to accommodate the trauma room at a sum of \$3 million also.

On the list of items to be provided for, together with the fogging machines, there is no provision, under the current list, for any spray cans to be added to what would already be in possession of the health department.

Programme: 745 – Health Services - \$62,930,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 75 – Region 5: Mahaica/Berbice

Current Expenditure

Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$139,264,000

Mr. Mustapha: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Could the Hon. Minister identify the positions and emoluments of the seven additional employees, say when they were employed and the method used to employ them? Was it by public advertisement?

Mr. Bulkan: The seven additional employees are one Stores Attendant, one Supply Expeditor, one Cleaner, one Clerk, two Accounts Clerks and one Typist.

9.22 p.m.

They are in receipt of an average of \$50,000 each and the method of employment would have been advertised locally within the region.

Mr. Mustapha: Under line item 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister state what building or buildings have been identified for maintenance under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: The buildings that will be maintained will be the Mahaicony sub-office, the Maraikobai Guesthouse, the RDC main office and annex as well as the REO living quarters.

Mr. Gill: Line item 6293 - Refreshment and Meals: \$1,550,000 was spent last year on refreshment and meals. This has been reduced to \$1,400,000. Could the Hon. Minister explain the reason for this reduction at a time when the cost of living is on the increase?

Mr. Bulkan: The sum of \$1,400,000 is the provision that has been allocated for refreshment and meals in the year 2016. It is the same as what was budgeted in 2015 but it appears that the region had spent \$150,000 more than was originally budgeted. I believe that they are being urged to stick within the budgeted provision for 2016.

Mr. Dharamlall: Under line item 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants - the previous Government had provided a generator to complement the electricity system in Maraikobai and, early last year, provided \$500,000 for fuel. Could the Hon. Minister state why fuel has not been provided since and if, this year, fuel will be provided to the Maraikobai Village Council so that this generator will be operational?

Mr. Bulkan: I was advised that the arrangement whereby the generator was provided for the community of Maraikobai had provided for some form of cost recovery where the supply of electricity would be given to residents and the running cost would be paid for out of the supply

of electricity. I believe that there is some shortfall in that that is responsible for the lack of adequate supplies of electricity. The arrangement was that the capital investment would be borne by the State and that the operational cost would be borne by the residents who would be the beneficiaries of the electricity.

Mr. Dharamlall: As a follow-up, Hon. Minister, are you now saying that the region will not be providing any fuel support to the Amerindian village of Maraikobai?

Mr. Bulkan: I referred to what, I believe, was an arrangement that was in place when this generator was provided for that community and that arrangement remains in place.

Mr. Mustapha: A follow-up to that question: When we had the Budget debate in this Assembly, we heard from the Government side about that specific generator and we heard a Member from the Government say that the Government will provide fuel for that generator this year because the previous Administration did not provide any.

Hon. Members: Which Member?

Mr. Mustapha: I think the Hon. Carrington said that they will provide. When someone speaks, he or she speaks for his or her side.

Mr. Bulkan: I have no recollection of the statement that has been attributed to the Hon. Member.

Mr. Mustapha: Check the records.

Ms. Manickchand: In light of the fact that we have an ongoing drought, as is widely known, and that Maraikobai is heavily affected by that drought to the point where people cannot even be transported in by boat because of the low level of the river and in light of the fact that this was started and these residents now have a legitimate expectation that it will be continued by a government, could I ask if the local government is going to be subsidising fuel for the village of Maraikobai so that the villagers can enjoy electricity?

Mr. Bulkan: There are a number of emergency measures that have been undertaken by the central Government in response to the drought conditions. While it is that, when the Budget would have been prepared, funding would not have been provided for such emergency measures,

consideration will, of course, be given to vulnerable communities that are in dire need. Perhaps, this would be one such area that would be under consideration.

Programme: 751 - Regional Administration and Finance - \$139,264,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$139,658,000

Mr. Dharamlall: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under line item 6261 – Local Travel and Subsistence - could the Hon. Minister state if, as part of the monitoring of the agricultural sector in Region 5, with the Budget of \$550,000, that will be adequate to monitor the substantial agricultural region, including rice, cattle, sugar, and if the Hon. Minister is also aware, as part of the monitoring, that legitimate leases from farmers are being withdrawn by the current Administration?

Mr. Bulkan: With regards to the proposed budgetary allocations, the Hon. Member would note that the total funding for the entire Programme is a rather modest sum of just under \$140 million. The reason for this is that the budgetary allocations and for the provisions for the Agriculture Programme and D&I in Region 5 are largely channelled via Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary (MMA) under the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA). So this modest sum of \$550,000, of course, is not representative of the central Government provisions for monitoring of such activities as they relate to the agricultural programme in Region 5.

Mr. Dharamlall: A quick follow-up: Is the Minister therefore confirming that the regional administration will not be providing enhanced monitoring of the agricultural sector in Region 5, even though there is a substantial programme called “Agriculture” within the regional administration?

Mr. Bulkan: The lead agency for support to the Agricultural programme in Region 5 is the MMA Scheme for which funding is provided under.

Mr. Mustapha: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under line item 6115 - Semi-Skilled Operatives and Unskilled - could the Hon. Minister state the positions and salaries for the persons under this category?

Mr. Bulkan: There are three Sluice Attendants who receive a salary of approximately \$75,000 each and two Labourers whose salaries are approximately \$56,000 each.

Mr. Mustapha: Under line item 6251 - Maintenance of Roads - could the Hon. Minister provide the list of roads which will be rehabilitated under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: This sum would cater for maintenance of farm to market roads at Bush Lot, Catherine, Esau and Jacob, that is Burma Road, Belladrum, Abary, Champagne and Golden Fleece.

Mr. Mustapha: Under line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - could the Hon. Minister identify the other infrastructure which will be benefitting from maintenance and cost for each infrastructure?

Mr. Bulkan: This caters for maintenance to sluice doors at Ithaca, Rosignol, De Edward, De Kinderen, Mahaicony as well as Central Mahaicony. I have a more complete breakdown which I could lay over for the benefit of the Hon. Members.

Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$139,658 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

9.37 p.m.

Programme: 753 - Public Works - \$126,741,000

Mr. Dharamlall: Under line item 6116 – Contracted Employees - there is more than a 110% increase, in 2016, over 2014 and an almost 50% increase over 2015. Could the Hon. Minister please provide or state the last five recruited contracted employees and their dates of appointment and the five highest paid within line item 6116?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, there are three additional employees under this category in 2016. So, I am not sure that the details relating to the last five employees would be readily available but the information will be provided for the last three. These would be a Vehicle Driver with a salary of approximately \$54,000; an Equipment Operator with a salary of approximately \$58,000; and a Cleaner with a salary of \$50,000 monthly. The highest paid employee in this category is a Civil Engineer at a salary of approximately \$190,000 monthly.

Mr. Dharamlall: Mr. Chairman, a quick follow-up: Could the Hon. Minister therefore state if the three employees have increased the cost as much as by 50% with those salaries? It is approximately \$7 million?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the gross increase is an approximate sum of \$7 million so, in addition to the three additional employees, there is also the question of the annualisation as a result of the 5% increase for all 18 of the employees.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads - could the Hon. Minister provide the list of roads that would be maintained and the cost for each road?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time, I will read the areas where these road works will take place and a complete list will be laid over. The allocation caters for maintenance to roads in Bath, Smally Street, Ithaca, Hopetown, No. 28 Village, Bel Air, No. 9 Village and No. 30 Village.

Ms. Manickchand: Following up on that same line item, is there any provision for the access road into the Mahaicony Creek? Right now, there are 55 students who cannot access a bus service to come out. It is the only High School that they have access to because the bus cannot travel to pick them up?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that work is currently being undertaken on that very road and is being funded under the capital programme.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges - could the Hon. Member identify where these bridges are located and the cost and the type of bridges, if concrete or wooden?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, there are a total of five bridges. Four of them are timber bridges. The first one is at Blairmont No. 1; second one at Blairmont No. 2; also a timber bridge at No. 11 Village to benefit over 2,000 students as well as farmers and the final one is for a concrete bridge at third cross street, Bush Lot village to benefit over 400 students, farmers and residents.

Mr. Mustapha: One part there the Hon. Minister failed to give us. He did not give us the cost of these projects.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the first one at Blairmont No. 1 is \$1.5 million; the one at Waterloo is \$1.3 million; the rehabilitation to Blairmont No. 2 is \$3.6 million; the timber bridge at No. 11 Village is \$1.4 million; and the bridge at Bush Lot is \$1.5 million.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, under line item 6255 – Maintenance of Other Infrastructure - could the Hon. Minister identify the other infrastructure which will be maintained and the cost for each of these structures?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, they are repairs to the fences at the RDC compound as well as living quarters at Fort Wellington, a budgeted sum of \$4.7 million; rehabilitation to the tarmac and concrete drain at the very RDC compound for \$3.5 million; and provision for emergency repairs and maintenance works across the Region - that would be in relation to sanitary, electrical and plumbing for a budgeted sum of \$1 million - a total of \$9.2 million.

Programme: 753 – Public Works - \$126,741,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme 754 – Education Delivery - \$1,304,058,000

Mr. Gill: Line item 6116 – Contracted Employees: Mr. Chairman, the number of contracted employees remains the same 10, yet the budgeted amount has increased from \$8,856,000 to \$12,967,000, an increase of \$4,111,000. Could the Hon. Minister state the reason for this increase?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the reason for the increase is largely due to salary increases for those employees.

Mr. Gill: Line item 6111 – Administrative: Mr. Chairman, the administrative staff remains the same 166 from 2015. Could the Hon. Minister explain the difference in budgetary allocation from \$261,415,000 to \$267,448,000, a difference of \$6,033,000?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, that also would be the result of salary increases, albeit on a more modest scale.

Mr. Gill: A follow-up: Mr. Chairman, could the Hon. Minister say if there is some hidden cost in the \$4,111,000 increase allocated to contracted employees under line item 6116? For if both

increases are due to the 5% increase, how can 166 administrative staff receive an increase of only \$6 million when compared to \$4,111,000 increase for just 10? This sounds like voodoo Mathematics.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, what is the question? Have you asked a question already?

Mr. Gill: I did ask the question, Sir.

Mr. Chairman: The last comment I heard was voodoo Mathematics. I do not know whether that is the question.

Mr. Gill: Would you like me to ask the question again, Sir?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, ask the shortened version of the question so that the Hon. Minister will follow you.

Mr. Gill: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister explain if 166 members of the administrative staff received the 5% increase and they only got \$6 million increase, could there be some hidden agenda, some hidden charges...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you have asked the question; do not let us spoil it now.

Mr. Gill: Mr. Chairman, is there some other explanation why 10 contracted employees would have received \$4,111,000 as compared to the \$6 million received by 166 administrative staff?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, in the case of the contracted employees, why the percentage would appear to be greater is because those employees received a gratuity payment, which would be included in that sum, but the administrative staff, being on the fixed establishment, the pensionable scheme, the gross of the increase would be less on a yearly basis.

Ms. Manickchand: The school boat in the Abary River is not working. Children cannot access education there. Does line item 6264 – Vehicle Spares and Service - cater for the fixing of that boat?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the answer to that question is yes.

Ms. Manickchand: Thank you.

Line item 6222 – Field Materials and Supplies - or line item 6223 – Office Materials and Supplies: There is a severe shortage of science materials - things that are used in the science laboratories across the Region. Is this catered for - science materials, chemicals, *et cetera* - under either of these two line items?

9.52 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, that need that has been articulated and identified is recognised by the region. There is provision for the supply of such material even though the inherited situation might have been deficient.

Mr. Dharamlall: Under line item 6243, Janitorial and Cleaning Supplies, there is a shortage of toilet paper in the schools in Region 5 of which I am aware. Could the Hon. Minister state when would the toilet paper and other janitorial supplies stocked at the regional administration be distributed to the schools?

Mr. Bulkan: There is no stock of those materials but they are distributed directly to the schools as they are purchased.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you Hon. Member.

Mr. Dharamlall: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, you must not impute to me something I do not deserve. I have not given you the floor as yet. Now you may have the floor, Sir.

Mr. Dharamlall: Could the Hon. Minister state under line item 6231, Fuel and Lubricants, how many vehicles benefited and specifically whether the two yellow painted *David 'G'* buses benefited?

Mr. Bulkan: The allocation is to cater for fuel and lubricants for four outboard engines as well as three 30-seater buses which transport schoolchildren on a daily basis. In addition, there is a Land Cruiser which used to transport staff and a Canter truck to supply dormitories used for the hot meal programme.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Prime Minister, the hour of 10 o'clock is fast approaching. You may wish to move the motion.

Assembly resumed.

Suspension of Standing Order No. 10

First Vice-President and Prime Minister [Mr. Nagamootoo]: Mr. Speaker, I move that this House continues to sit until 11.30 p.m. this evening.

Motion carried.

In Committee of Supply.

Mr. Dharamlall: As a follow-up question to line item 6231, could the Hon. Minister state the pick up points for schoolchildren using the *David 'G'* recently acquired 30-seater buses in Region 5.

Mr. Bulkan: There are several pick up points to transport schoolchildren to and from school. The specific points can be provided to the Hon. Member subsequently.

Mr. Dharamlall: Could the Hon. Minister please provide the information to the Assembly?

Mr. Bulkan: Yes Sir.

Programme: 754 – Education Delivery – \$1,304,058,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 755 – Health Services – \$563,235,000

Dr. Anthony: Line item 6242, Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Minister tell which buildings at the region will be maintained?

Mr. Bulkan: It would be for maintenance and repairs to two hospitals, 15 health centres and the doctors' living quarters. These would be the Dundee Health Centre, the Fort Wellington Hospital, Ithaca Health Centre, the Strath Campbell Health Centre in Mahaicony, the High Dam Health Centre and Baiabu Health Centre. It is quite a fairly long list. I can provide this information in writing to the Hon. Member.

Dr. Anthony: Could the Hon. Minister say whether or not the Baiabu Health Centre would be repaired? In fact, it needed a supply of electricity. Would that be provided under this section?

I am aware that at the two hospitals, Mahaicony and Fort Wellington Hospitals, the theatres are not working. Would any of these expenditures be used to repair the theatres so they could be operational?

Mr. Bulkan: There is a budgeted provision for repairs to the Baiabu Health Centre, but it is not for electrical works. It is for general repairs mainly to the stairs and the sanitary works. With regard to the two hospitals at Mahaicony and Fort Wellington, provision is made under the capital programme. Those details would be forthcoming when we get to that.

Dr. Anthony: I heard the Minister said that provision was not made for electricity supply. My understanding is that the refrigerator at Baiabu Health Centre cannot work because the solar panels are not in order. Therefore the people from Baiabu, who need those services, would have to go all the way to High Dam. It is if the Minister could, perhaps, reprioritise so that that urgent matter is fixed?

Secondly, at line item 6282, Equipment and Maintenance, could the Minister say whether or not the recently opened health centre at Experiment would benefit from any equipment under this section? Could the Minister say whether the ambulance, which crashed sometime in the region, would be repaired and put back into operation?

Mr. Bulkan: With regard to the procurement of equipment at the Experiment Health Centre, this line item caters for maintenance so it would not be catered for under this heading. The answer is yes. It is to a portion of the allocation for repairs to the ambulance. With regard to the electricity supply at Baiabu, the information I am in receipt of is that there is no electricity there so the solar installation would have to be repaired.

Mr. Gill: Line item 6221, Drugs and Medical Services: Seventy-seven dollars million was unused and returned to the Treasury from last year's budget. It is reflected in this year's budget as being spent. Could the Hon. Minister provide some evidence that it was in fact spent?

Mr. Bulkan: The Hon. Member will recall that this very issue was dealt with extensively here with all the regions that have appeared before, and the explanation does not differ.

Mr. Dharamlall: Under Equipment Maintenance, line item 6282, could the Hon. Minister confirm whether the x-ray machine at the Mahaicony Hospital, which is inoperable at this point in time, would be repaired? Second, as soon as the solar system at the Baiabu Health Centre is back in operation would a refrigerator to store vaccines be made available, because the poor residents in Baiabu have to travel to the High Dam Health Centre to receive inoculation.

Mr. Bulkan: Could I ask the Hon. Member to repeat his question?

Mr. Dharamlall: The x-ray machine at Mahaicony Hospital is not in working condition. Could the Hon. Minister state when it will be repaired or if it will be repaired? Secondly, when will the Baiabu Health Centre be provided with electricity and the refrigerator to store vaccines, because the poor residents of Baiabu have to travel to High Dam to receive vaccines at terrible expenses to these poor people?

Mr. Bulkan: Neither of the two activities been outlined by the Hon. Member are provided for under this line item.

Dr. Mahadeo: Line item 6292, Dietary, \$7.8 million: Could the Minister give us the projection of how many inpatients will be catered for per day?

10.07 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: A perusal of the figures would show that the budgetary sum in 2014 was the same as the proposed allocations in 2016 and that the actual expenditure in 2015 was the same. I think that is a fairly reliable guidance to the needs for the dietary requirements of patients in the region.

Dr. Mahadeo: If I may, as a follow-up Hon. Minister, you did not answer my question. I am asking a specific question as to how many patients per day would this cater for.

Mr. Bulkan: It would cater for an average of about 15 patients daily.

Programme: 755 – Health Services - \$563,235,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$16,770, 000

Mr. Gill: Project 1400800 – Roads: Could the Hon. Minister be kind enough to provide us with a list of the roads to be done at all locations under this project?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Member is slightly ahead of the programme. We are actually at Programme 751 which is Regional Administration.

Mr. Gill: My apologies. Project 1208900, Buildings – Administration: Could the Hon. Minister identify the buildings to be rehabilitated?

Mr. Bulkan: It would be the regional administration building at Fort Wellington, projected cost of \$7.5 million as well as the boardroom at the RDC building at Fort Wellington for the remainder of \$6.5 million.

Programme: 751 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$ 16,770,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 752 – Agriculture - \$57,168,000

Mr. Gill: Project 2401900, Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicle will be purchased under this project with the \$7 million budgeted for? Is the Hon. Minister aware that Region 5 is in dire need of two large excavators and two smaller ones to facilitate the cleaning of drainage and waterways there?

Mr. Bulkan: Under the project, there is actually a zero budgetary allocation.

Mr. Mustapha: Under project 180090: Could the Hon. Minister describe the nature of each aspect of the project as outlined in the project profile and the cost attached to each project?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, forgive me, please. What I am looking at differs greatly from what the Hon. Member is looking at.

Mr. Mustapha: It is project 1300900.

Mr. Bulkan: I thought you said 18. The sum of \$57,168,000 is catered to fund drainage and irrigation works in the region. It is to impolder Grass Hook in the right bank of Mahaica sum of \$29.3 million, rehabilitate channels at Fairfield, Broomhall and Viva, the sum of \$5.8 million, installation of five drainage structures at Washcloths, Baiabu and Grass Hook a budgeted sum of

\$10.4 million, revetment at Washcloths outfall structure - \$2.8 million and construction and rehabilitation of accessing in the Mahaica/ Mahaicony area for a sum of \$8.868 million.

Mr. Dharamlall: Under project 1300900, Drainage and Irrigation, could the Hon. Minister please state why in such an important agricultural region with almost 80,000-plus acres of rice that the budget for drainage and irrigation has been reduced by more than 20% over 2014?

Mr. Bulkan: The Hon. Member has taken us way back to 2014. I thought his reference would have been the previous year 2015, but as previously explained the majority of allocations for drainage and irrigation activities in Region 5 are provided for under the Ministry of Agriculture via the Mahaica-Mahaicony-Abary (MMA) programme.

Mr. Dharamlall: As a follow-up, could the Hon. Minister therefore state whether his Ministry is in agreement that the Region 5 drainage and irrigation system up to date to meet the meet the agricultural requirements of Region 5?

Mr. Bulkan: The budgeted sum in 2016 is approximately just under 50% greater than it was last year. It caters for an upgraded expenditure in this area and programme.

Programme: 752 - Agriculture - \$57,168,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 753 – Public Works - \$120,583,000

Mr. Gill: Could the Hon. Minister say what type of vehicle will be purchased with the \$7 million budgeted under project 2401900, Land and Water Transport? Is the Hon. Minister aware that Region 5 is in dire need of two large excavators and two smaller ones to facilitate the cleaning of drainage and waterways?

Mr. Bulkan: The question is for land transport under the programme of Public Works and the budgeted sum of \$7 million is to facilitate the purchase of a 4x4 Double Cab pickup.

Mr. Dharamlall: Programme budget 753, Public Works, could the Hon. Minister please state whether under programme 753, Public Works, whether works will be done in Bath Settlement, Bush Lot and Cotton Tree to enhance street lighting in those villages, Number 30, Number 28, Kingelly, Yeoville, Number 5, Number 8, Hopetown and Belladrum?

Mr. Bulkan: There is no provision for funding for street lighting in the communities identified by the Hon. Member under this programme.

Mr. Dharamlall: Projects 110600, Bridges and 1400800, Roads: Could the Hon. Minister state whether the bill of quantities (BQs) of these projects would be placed in the villages and whether community monitors, which were started by the previous administration, will continue to monitor these projects within the villages?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman the execution of these works they will be subjected to public tendering process and the BQs would be available at the locations and it will be made available to the local authorities in the respective areas.

Programme: 753 – Public Works - \$120,583,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

10.22 p.m.

Programme: 754 – Education Delivery – \$103,945,000

Mr. Gill: Project 2401900, Land and Water Transport: Could the Hon. Minister advice who will benefit from the vehicle to be purchased and what type of vehicle will this be? It is whether the boat and engine to be purchased under this project is earmarked to replace the one that is disabled that the children from Abary depend on.

Mr. Bulkan: The beneficiaries for this allocation would be schoolchildren in the region. It is for the purchase of a 15-seater minibus at a budgeted cost of \$3 million and for a 30-seater boat with a 150 horsepower (h.p.) at a budgeted sum of approximately \$10.8 million for students in the Mahaicony River.

Mr. Dharamlall: A follow-up to the last answer of the Hon. Minister. Could the Minister state whether that bus estimated to cost \$3 million will be a bus older than 2008 or is it going to be new?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the acquisition of vehicles would be in conformity with the public procurement policies and the laws of our country.

Programme: 754 – Education Delivery – \$103,945,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members Mr. Nandlall and Ms. Manickchand, you are interrupting the train of thought of the Chairman.

Ms. Manickchand: We apologise.

Mr. Chairman: I accept your apology. I will not say, by their deeds we shall know them. I did not say that.

Programme: 755 – Health Services – \$91,534,000

Dr. Anthony: Project 2504000, Furniture and Equipment – Health: Among the things listed is a fog machine. Could the Minister say whether or not this singular, or this one fogging machine, would be adequate in the light of the ongoing exercise of killing mosquitos across the country?

Mr. Bulkan: Currently there are two fogging machines in use for the region. The provision is made here for an additional one to bring that number up to three fogging machines.

Dr. Ramsaran: With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I notice under project 2504000, Furniture and Equipment – Health, there is the purchase of an ultrasound machine. Could the Minister indicate where it would be deployed? It is a very good thing. It is if at that location there is someone who is being trained to use that piece of equipment. Under the same head, I notice printers. How many and where would they be deployed?

As I am on my feet, the other project 1203700, Buildings – Health, the Minister is referring to the rehabilitation of the theatre at Mahaicony and Fort Wellington Hospitals. When this is done at Fort Wellington, is there the surgical capacity at Fort Wellington to exploit that investment? Would there be a surgical team there?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the ultrasound machine is for the Fort Wellington Hospital, and the answer is yes, that there will be trained personnel to operate that particular machine. Also, in relation to the theatre at the Fort Wellington Hospital, the investment is to be able to provide increased health facilities to residents in the region. It is expected that effective and adequate use will be made of the facility for the benefit of residents in that region.

Dr. Ramsaran: A follow-up with your pleasure, Mr. Chairman. Now, it is good to have capacity but the question was more specific. The investment will have to be supported by a team at Mahaicony and a team, a few minutes down the road, at Fort Wellington. Does it make sense? This is the question: The surgical support team at Fort Wellington, would it be there? The Minister is speaking to the nation through this Assembly. It is for clarity. Would the Minister be following for that investment or would he locate better to concentrate his efforts surgically at Mahaicony? Fort Wellington is a few minutes away from Mahaicony. It is just being logical. That was the question and in spite of the bubbling up at the back the Minister should answer it more professionally. The question is: Would the Minister still pursue...? Or the specific question is...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, let us not throw barbs now.

Dr. Ramsaran: I saw that the Hon. Member was being distracted and he was not hearing my question. The specific question is: Is the Minister still going to put surgical full-fledged capacity at Fort Wellington and Mahaicony? It does not only mean a theatre; it means a full-fledged service, otherwise the theatre will be wasted.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the theatre would be at the Mahaicony Hospital and not at Fort Wellington.

Dr. Ramsaran: Sir, with your permission again, a follow-up. It is clearly stated here that it will be repair of theatres at Mahaicony and Fort Wellington Hospital. I was just cautioning. Is that what the Minister intends to? He has just contradicted that and I am happy with that contradiction. I hope he will make that a reality now.

Programme: 755 – Health Services – \$91,534,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 76 Region 6: East Berbice/Corentyne

Current Expenditure

Programme: 761 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$146,374,000

Mr. Mustapha: Line item 6116, Contracted Employees: Could the Hon. Minister provide this Assembly with the number of employees, the designation and emoluments, as of 30th May, 2015? It is if there were any new employees who were contracted as of 30th May, 2015.

Mr. Bulkan: That detail would not be available at mid-year, but the number of employees remains the same in 2016, as it was in 2015.

Mr. Mustapha: Just a follow-up to that. If the number of employees remains the same, I see there is an increase here about \$4 million. Could the Hon. Minister explain this increase because for this year the public servants have not had an increase as yet? I do not know how this increase came for 2016?

Mr. Bulkan: As was explained earlier, it is the annualisation of the increases that would be responsible for the higher figure in 2016.

Mr. Anamayah: Could the Hon. Minister confirm that the REO, seated next to him, is a contracted employee?

Mr. Bulkan: Would the Hon. Member be kind enough to state which line item the enquiry is made under?

Mr. Anamayah: My apologies. It is line item 6116, Contracted Employees.

Mr. Bulkan: Provision for that is made at the central Ministry and not under this line item.

Mr. Anamayah: Is the Hon. Minister aware that the no confidence motion has been moved against the REO at the level of the RDC? Do you intend to ask for his resignation, sir?

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, let us try not to expand the opportunities we have beyond this purpose tonight. We have less than an hour to complete our work. If you have a second question that relates to the line item, please do so. If you do not, let me hear someone else.

10.37 p.m.

Mr. Anamayah: Line item 6116 - Contracted Employees: Does the Hon. Minister's Community Liaison Officer fall under this heading?

Mr. Bulkan: I am unaware as to which employee the Hon. Member is referring to.

Mr. Anamayah: Your Community Liaison Officer, Mr. Corlette.

Mr. Bulkan: No. Mr. Chairman. That would also be an employee by the Central Ministry.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, if I could just refer to line item 6116...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member, this is the last question. Please proceed. We must complete this tonight. I would prefer to do it with the cooperation of Hon. Members.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, under this same line item – 6116, there are a number of Community Development Officers (CDOs) employed in Region 6. Could the Hon. Minister say the Terms of Reference (TOR) of these officers are? Are they under this line item?

Mr. Bulkan: Funding for the Community Development Officers is not provided for under this line item.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6116: I would like to return to the explanation provided by the Hon. Minister for the increase. The information provided to the House was because of annualisation in 2015. The increase in salaries in 2015...

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member...

Mr. Croal: Yes I am asking the question, but I must give an explanation before I ask the question.

Mr. Chairman: That is what takes up the time but proceed Hon. Member.

Mr. Croal: An increase in the allocation in 2015 for salaries would be reflected as at December 31, 2015. If the complement of staff remains the same in 2016, then the explanation provided by the Hon. Minister cannot be plausible.

Mr. Chairman: Do you have a question for the Hon. Minister?

Mr. Croal: The question is and I repeat, as asked earlier, could the Hon. Minister account for the increase in salaries for Contracted Employees?

Mr. Bulkan: The increased figure would allow for payments for gratuity and vacation allowances annually, sums that would have been paid by the Ministry of Finance and which are now being programmed under Budget 2016 allocations.

Programme: 761 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$146,374,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 762 - Agriculture - \$646,097,000

Mr. Mustapha: Line item 6231 - Fuel and Lubricants: Could the Hon. Minister identify the new agricultural programme, if any, which has contributed to the increase in this budgetary allocation of over \$20 million?

Mr. Bulkan: The new locations that would be receiving funding under this allocation would be for the new drainage pumps, one at Eversham, one at No. 43 Village, and one at Gagaram.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, just a follow-up under that line item. Could the Hon. Minister say what systems are in place to secure fuel in the region because there is a lot of pilfering of fuel taking place in the region?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Member has identified what is indeed a problem that is not only unique to those communities, that of stealing and theft, but security is being provided for to ensure that that phenomenon is reduced and that its incident is not as high. In fact, right now, I am being advised by the REO that there is a truck being held by the police with persons engaged in stealing fuel which was the property of the RDC of Region 6.

Mr. Anamayah: Line item 6231: Is the Hon. Minister aware that there seems to be an acute shortage of fuel in Berbice at present and that the REO is informing farmers that they have to purchase fuel for themselves?

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the budgetary allocation in the sum of \$270 million is to ensure that there is an adequate supply of fuel and lubricants to the Administration for 2016.

Mr. Mustapha: Under line item 6253: Could the Hon Minister indicate where these drainage and irrigation projects will be executed and also how many kilometres of drainage will be maintained under this programme? Where are these drainages located in the region?

Mr. Bulkan: One moment please, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Yes, Hon. Minister.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, the budgetary allocation is for the execution of works in many areas across the region. In the interest of time, I can undertake to lay over the complete list for the benefit of the Hon. Members.

Mr. Mustapha: A follow-up: Could the Hon. Minister say how many kilometres of drainage will be maintained across the region?

Mr. Bulkan: That sum total would have to be tabulated from this list. We can undertake to have that information at the same time with the breakdown. There is a total length for each individual location but the sum total of that would give totals of all of the maintenance to the D&I activities.

Programme: 762 – Agriculture - \$646,097,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 763 - Public Works - \$198,816,000

Mr. Mustapha: Line item 6242: Could the Hon. Minister indicate which building would be maintained and the cost for each building?

Mr. Bulkan: There are almost 40 locations across the region. Again, in the interest of time, the complete list can be provided to the House.

Mr. Mustapha: Mr. Chairman, line items 6251 and 6252 because of time, I will put these two questions together. Could the Hon. Minister provide a list of all these roads and the cost for each; and also, for the bridges across the region - where are these bridges located and the cost for each bridge.

Mr. Bulkan: Mr. Chairman, a break-down will be provided for the benefit of the Hon. Members.

Programme: 763 – Public Works - \$198,816,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 764 - Education Delivery - \$2,729,733,000

Mr. Mustapha: Because of time, I would just ask a few questions so that the Hon. Minister could provide the answers.

Line item 6242 - Maintenance of Buildings; line item 6252 - Maintenance of Bridges; and line item 6255 - Maintenance of Other Infrastructure: Could the Hon. Minister provide a list of these projects and the cost associated with these projects.

Under line item 6281 - Security Services: Could the Hon Minister say which security company has been contracted, the number of security personnel and if all the schools in the region will be secured?

10.52 p.m.

Mr. Bulkan: I would take the last question first. The security provider is Home Safe Security and Domestic Services and the budgetary allocation is to cover a total of 253 guards and that covers for all of the schools in the region. The complete breakdown in relation to line items 6242, 6252 and 6255 would be provided for the benefit of the House.

Programme: 764 – Education Delivery - \$2,729,733,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 765- Health Services - \$1,578,012,000

Dr. Mahadeo: It seems as if I will be asking all my questions so can the Minister please take note.

Line item 6302 - Training (including Scholarships), \$8 million was budgeted last year, \$3,580,000 was spent, and yet \$8.3 million is budgeted for this year. Could the Hon. Minister provide us with a list of what training will be provided and an explanation as to why the moneys were not spent last year?

Line item 6292 – Dietary: I would like from the Minister - \$92.3 million - how many patients per day are we catering for here since with \$7 million we catered for 15 patients?

Line item 6291–National and Other Events: Could I have a list of the events that will come up to \$4 million?

Line item 6282 - Equipment Maintenance: About \$12 million was returned last year. From July to August last year at the Skeldon, Port Mourant and New Amsterdam Hospitals there were equipment that were down, but moneys were returned at the end of the year.

Line item 6264- Vehicles Spares and Services: How many vehicles do we have that are functioning and how many are down and would be repaired?

Line item 6261 - Local Travel and Subsistence: The moneys were not spent last year, over \$4 million was returned, yet there is an increase for this year.

Line item 6221- Drugs and Medical Supplies: I have a print out from the region's Integrated Financial Management Systems (IFMAS), and as of the 7th December, it still had \$165 million in its account. So, I am asking if this year systems would be put in place and that if the money has to be warranted to the Ministry of Public Health that it be done early, so that we could get the benefits from the moneys.

Mr. Bulkan: The answer to the last question in relation to drugs and medical supplies, if there is any likelihood that any moneys have to be warranted that that would be done in early time, but anticipation or expectation is that that would not be necessary.

At line item 6264- Vehicle Spears and Services: The budgeted sum of \$11 million is almost similar to the revised expenditure in 2011. There is not much of a difference. The fleet of vehicles that are catered for under that heading are two ambulances - one water ambulance. The two ambulances are going to be new and will be acquired this year.

Line item 6282- Equipment Maintenance: The breakdown will be provided subsequently.

Line item 6291-National and Other Events: Those events will be consistent with what was outlined earlier for the other regions, namely: Mashramani, the Independence celebrations, National Tree Planting Day, National Day of Villages, Immunisation Day, Tuberculosis(TB) & Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Day, Nurses' Week, Midwives' Day, and Doctors' Week, are some of the activities.

At line item 6302 –Training: This would be for continuous training as well as an upgrade and refreshers training for staff in areas of pharmacy, labiate, psychiatric patient care, psychiatric nursing assistants, triage [*Inaudible*] and a number of other areas in the medical field.

At line item 6292 – Dietary: The provision is for dietary needs at the National Psychiatric Hospital as well as the Skeldon Hospital, the New Amsterdam Hospital and the Port Mourant Hospital.

Dr. Mahadeo: A follow up Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Unfortunately, Hon. Member, I am putting the Question.

Dr. Mahadeo: Mr. Chairman, the Minister did not answer my questions.

Programme: 765 –Health Services - \$1,578,012,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 761- Regional Administration and Finance- \$14,041,000

P000rogramme: 761 –Regional Administration and Finance - \$14,041,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 762- Agriculture- \$106,120,000

Programme: 762 –Agriculture - \$106,120,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 763- Public Works- \$161,091,000

Programme: 763 –Public Works - \$161,091,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 764- Education Delivery- \$90,325,000

Programme: 764 –Education Delivery - \$90,325,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 765 – Health Services - \$118,442,000

Dr. Mahadeo: At Project Code – 2402000 - Land and Water Transport: Last year, \$24 million was budgeted for ambulances and they were not bought. Is this the same money here? Why were the ambulances not bought last year?

Secondly, project code 1204000– Buildings – Health - Construction of a High Dependency Unit (HDU) and an Outpatient Building at the New Amsterdam Hospital. I would like to know where would the High Dependency Unit be constructed and if it would be attached to the New Amsterdam Hospital because there are specifics where the New Amsterdam Hospital and its construction are concerned?

At project Code 25004800 - Furniture and Equipment – Health: I would like the Hon. Minister to provide us with a list of the furniture and the equipment, and the cost and where they will be placed?

Mr. Bulkan: The provision for the two ambulances is the very allocation that was made in the 2015 Budget, but which, unfortunately, was a victim of the bottlenecks and was not purchased in 2015, so this allocation caters for that. The HDU Unit at the New Amsterdam Hospital will be detached from the main building. The complete list of the furniture and equipment that is to be acquired will be made available to Hon. Members.

Dr. Mahadeo: A follow-up. I just want to caution that a High Dependency Unit should not be far away from the theatre. So I think, Hon. Minister that a High Dependency Unit...

11.07 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member you should ask the question. We are getting close to the time when we have to finish, so please assist by asking the question.

Dr. Mahadeo: Would the High Dependency Unit be attached to the hospital?

Mr. Bulkan: The observation is noted and I thank the Hon. Member for that.

Programme: 765 – Health Services – \$118,422,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Agency: 77 – Region No. 7: Cuyuni/Mazaruni

Current Expenditure

Programme: 771 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$183,093,000

Dr. Westford: Line item 6272 – Electricity Charges: Could the Hon. Minister explain what is responsible for this large increase for 2016.

Minister within the Ministry of Communities [Ms. Hastings-Williams]: Could the Hon. Member please repeat the question.

Dr. Westford: Line item 6272 – Electricity Charges: There is an increase of more than \$10 million for 2016, could the Hon. Minister explain to this House what is responsible for that?

Ms. Hastings-Williams I am advised that is because the Ministry of Finance will not be paying the electricity bills, but that it will be paid by the region.

Dr. Westford: Could the Hon. Minister please state what are the installations that are going to be provided with this electricity.

Ms. Hastings-Williams: Installation at the RDC Office at Bartica, Amerindian hostel, regional guest houses, State House, garage, regional stores, day care centres, President’s Youth Choice Initiative (PYCI) building, the REO quarters, the Deputy Regional Democratic Council (DREO) quarters, Regatta pavilion and street lighting.

Mr. Croal: Line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings: Could the Hon. Minister indicate what buildings are to be maintained and the allocations.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Under line item 6231 – Fuel and Lubricants: I notice that there is \$7 million budgeted under this line item. Could the Hon. Minister inform this House how much of this would be for Bartica, at the Regional Administration Office there, and how much of this amount will be provided for the regional sub-office in Kamarang.

Ms. Hastings-Williams: I am going to answer the Hon. Member, Mr. Croal’s question first. Maintenance works to be undertaken under line item 6242 – Maintenance of Buildings will be the Sport Officers’ quarters – Bartica; duplex living quarters at Kamarang; Amerindian hostel at

Kamarang; Administrative Office and living quarters at Kamarang; Administrative Office at Bartica; and Amerindian Hostel – Bartica.

For the Sport officers' quarter in Bartica it will be \$5.5 million; duplex living quarters - \$2.5 million; Amerindian Hostel at Kamarang – \$3.5 million; Administrative office and living quarters at Kamarang - \$4 million; and Amerindian Hostel – Bartica – \$2 million.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member your question was not answer?

Ms. Campbell- Sukhai: No Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Would you repeat the question for the Hon. Minister?

Ms. Campbell- Sukhai: I was inquiring from the Hon. Minister to tell this House, of the \$7 million budgeted for Fuel and Lubricants, what amounts will be for the Bartica Regional Office and what amounts would be assigned to the Kamarang Regional Sub-District Office.

Ms. Hastings-Williams: Thank you for your question Hon Member. Sixty per cent of the \$7 million will be for Kamarang - Upper Mazaruni and 40% for Bartica.

Programme: 771 – Regional Administration and Finance – \$183,093,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 772 – Public Works – \$145,745,000

Dr. Westford: Line item 6251 – Maintenance of Roads and line item 6252 – Maintenance of Bridges: Could the Hon. Minister inform this House which roads and bridges are going to be maintained.

Ms. Hastings-Williams: Sections of West Bartica Secondary School, Housing Scheme Road, Kalakun Access Road, Agatash Main Road and the Seventh Avenue Government road.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister you have answered the question. Is there a second question you have to answer Hon. Minister?

Ms. Hastings-Williams: Yes, I have the second part to answer with the bridges. Repairs to culverts on First Street and Third Avenue, Bartica; we are going to do a water landing at

Waramadong; a bridge at Filipe and one at Paruima; and we are going to also to some works on the bridge at Warawata and that is at Kamran.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Minister, are you through with the answers?

Ms. Hastings-Williams: Yes Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: I only have one question under this programme, Education Delivery and that has to do with the line item 6292 – Dietary...

Ms. Hastings-Williams: No, we are at Public Works.

Mrs. Campbell-Sukhai: Sorry, I will hold my question.

Mr. Chairman: I would hear that you have treated with the Education Delivery so you would not come back again, would that be correct?

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: I will await the time when it is put to the House.

Programme: 772 – Public Works – \$145,745,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 773 – Education Delivery – \$1,091,516,000

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Line item 6292 – Dietary: I see here that \$236.6 million is budgeted. Could the Hon. Minister tell this House how much of this amount would be spent on the Bartica Secondary School and how much is for the Upper Mazaruni Waramadong School and whether this amount is adequate, since I have noticed that it mirrors the 2014 amount. There has always been a criticism from the Opposition annually.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Member just ask the question.

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: I will complete my question. My question is, is this amount adequate in the light that it mirrors the 2014 amount.

Ms. Hastings-Williams: Seventy per cent of that money will be spent in the Upper Mazaruni, approximately \$180 million, and the rest of the money will be spent between Three Miles and Bartica Secondary School.

Programme: 773 – Education Delivery – \$1,091,516,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 774 – Health Services – \$476,585,000

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: With respect to line item 6221 – Drugs and Medical Supplies: Could the Hon. Minister state whether the amount budgeted for is adequate and whether the Upper Mazaruni region, under this line item, would now be adequately supplied drugs and services.

Ms. Hastings-Williams: The answer to that question would be yes.

Programme: 774 – Health Services – \$476,585,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

11.22 p.m.

Capital Expenditure

Programme: 771 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$10,400,000

Mr. Croal: Project code 1204300 – Buildings – Administration – “Completion of living quarters”: Could the Hon. Minister indicate who will be accommodated in the living quarters?

Ms. Hastings-Williams: An allocation of \$4 million is to be provided for living quarters for administrative staff.

Programme: 771 – Regional Administration and Finance - \$10,400,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 772 – Public Works - \$51,524,000

Mr. Croal: Project code 1402100 – Bridges: There is construction of a bridge at Paruima. Could the Hon. Minister indicate the type and size of the bridge?

Ms. Hastings-Williams: It is the construction of two wooden bridges at Paruima. The size would be provided.

Programme: 772 – Public Works - \$51,524,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 773 – Education Delivery - \$70,898,000

Ms. Campbell-Sukhai: Under project code 1204100 – Buildings – Education – could the Hon. Minister inform this House whether, in the sum allocated, the construction of a secondary school at Jawalla, as promised during the election campaign, is catered for?

Ms. Hastings-Williams: The answer is simply no.

Programme: 773 – Education Delivery - \$70,898,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Programme: 774 – Health Services - \$82,178,000

Programme: 774 – Health Services - \$82,178,000 agreed to and ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: Hon. Members, we have completed the work for today and I thank you. Let the Assembly be resumed.

Assembly resumed.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Nagamootoo: I move that this House be adjourned to tomorrow, Thursday, 18th February, 2016 at 1.00 p.m.

Adjourned accordingly at 11.29 p.m.