

PUBLIC WORKS AND SERVICES BILL 1971.

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM.

NOTES ON ITEMS IN TABLE.

Item 1 (School Buildings—\$48,000,000).

Expenditure under this item covers the building of primary, secondary and junior technical schools and teachers' colleges ; provision of residences for caretakers and other non-teaching staff ; the purchase of sites for new schools and for expansion of schoolgrounds ; the provision of furniture and equipment ; and special grants towards the cost of assembly halls, craftrooms, library rooms and other special projects at schools.

A record allocation exceeding \$41½ million has been made this year for expenditure under this item for these purposes. Expenditure on teachers residences which has previously been met under Item 1 has been included in the Table as Item 50—advances and grants to the Teacher Housing Authority.

In accordance with the undertaking given in the Government's Policy Speech of May, 1970 the Works and Services allocation for 1971–72 includes the second instalment of the special injection of funds for the general building programme. An amount of \$800,000 has been allocated this year towards the improvement of facilities for staff accommodation at schools in line with the promise to spend an additional \$2 million on such facilities over the current three-year period.

The Works and Services programme of the Education Department this year provides an amount of \$1,770,000 towards the expanded direct grant scheme which gives School Advisory Councils and School Committees greater responsibility and flexibility in their school improvement and maintenance programmes.

Expenditure in 1971–72 from the Works and Services Account in the field of primary and secondary education will be concentrated on housing additional enrolments, on the provision of additional classroom space to permit further reductions in the size of classes, on replacing old buildings, on the restoration of fire damaged properties and improvement of facilities for staff.

As outlined in the Budget Speech for the current financial year total primary school enrolments are now almost at a stationary level, whereas secondary enrolments are still steadily increasing. Thus in this year's building programme a greater emphasis will be placed on the needs of secondary and technical schools.

Amongst major projects being undertaken or planned to commence during the financial year are Primary Schools at Fitzroy North, Carlton, Wattle View, Knox Park, Thomastown West and Moreland, Secondary Schools at Albert Park, Geelong North, Donvale and Upfield, and Technical Schools at Knox, Clayton, Wangaratta, Oakleigh, Mitcham and Macleod. In addition, plans have been prepared for three special schools to be located at Dandenong, Watsonia and Burwood and it is expected that construction should begin during this financial year.

Item 2 (Victoria Institute of Colleges and Colleges of Advanced Education—\$7,500,000).

This year, \$5,500,000 is being provided under this item as the State's contribution towards the approved capital programme in the advanced education field during the current triennium.

The schedule of approved projects in the total advanced education programme for the 1970–72 triennium totals \$30 million and at 30th June, 1971—which is halfway through the triennium—expenditure on these projects from funds being provided equally by the State and Commonwealth Governments has totalled nearly \$10½ million.

The largest single project in this three year programme is the new North Western building at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, costing some \$5·8 million. Good progress was made on this building during 1970–71 and it is expected to be virtually completed during the current financial year.

Works are also being carried out at 18 other institutions, the largest being at the Institutes of Technology located at Ballarat, Bendigo, Caulfield, Footscray, Geelong, Preston and Swinburne, and the Victorian Institute of Pharmacy. The major part of these building works will be completed during the current financial year.

Item 3 (University of Melbourne—\$3,000,000).

and

Item 4 (Monash University—\$3,000,000).

Items 3 and 4 provide for the State's matching share of the funds approved for capital expenditure by the University of Melbourne and Monash University. The funds approved for La Trobe University are currently provided under an initial appropriation in the Act establishing that University.

Amounts totalling \$6 million have been allocated this year to meet the State's matching payments for University capital purposes in accordance with the agreed arrangements with the Commonwealth Government following the recommendations of the Australian Universities Commission. The State's share of the approved works programmes for the three Universities for the 1970–72 triennium totals some \$18 million, covering expenditure of a capital nature on buildings, furnishings and equipment as well as provision for planning costs and siteworks.

Item 5 (University Residential Colleges—\$200,000).

On the recommendation of the Australian Universities Commission, the Commonwealth Government makes available grants on a \$1 for \$1 basis to residential colleges affiliated with the Universities towards the cost of approved building works. To assist the residential colleges in matching these Commonwealth grants, the Victorian Government has made available over the years special grants equal to one-half of the amount provided by the Commonwealth Government. Under these established arrangements, the colleges are left to find one-quarter of the cost of approved building projects.

Item 5 of the Schedule covers the expected grants which will be made to residential colleges during the currency of this Act. Expenditure under this item is tending to decline because of the changing emphasis in the newer Universities from affiliated but independent Colleges to Halls of Residence under the direct control of the Universities themselves. These halls of residence come within the general university building programme and the costs are shared equally by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

Item 6 (Parliament House—\$200,000).

Funds totalling \$87,000 have been allocated in the Works and Services programme this year for expenditure at Parliament House. Renovation work will continue on toilet facilities and other areas in the building.

Item 7 (Government House—\$80,000).

This year, \$46,000 has been allocated towards the continuation of the programme of renovations and minor works on the buildings and grounds at Government House.

Item 8 (Soil Conservation Authority—\$60,000).

Funds allocated under this Item are for expenditure by the Public Works Department on the construction or renovation of office buildings for the Soil Conservation Authority and residences for its staff.

A total amount of \$43,000 has been allocated for these purposes in 1971–72, and most of this allocation will be spent on renovations and improvements to the Authority's Head Office.

Provision for expenditure by the Authority itself on soil conservation works, &c., is covered by Items 41, 42 and 43 of the Table to Clause 2 of the Bill.

Item 9 (Fisheries and Wildlife Branch—\$375,000).

An allocation of \$276,000 has been provided from the Works and Services Account in 1971–72 for expenditure on the programmes and activities of the Fisheries and Wildlife Branch.

The current year's allocation covers the purchase of a new research vessel costing \$70,000 for research into the fishing, scallop and prawn industries in Victorian waters, and works and equipment at research stations, wildlife reserves and the Arthur Rylah Research Centre.

Item 10 (Police Department—\$2,100,000).

The allocation for the works programme of the Police Department this year is \$1,600,000—a significant increase over last years expenditure of \$1,048,000. The allocation provides for an expanded building programme and additional expenditure on equipment.

Five new police stations are at present under construction—at Portland, Marysville, Mortlake, Mitta Mitta and Mooroolbark, where a 24 hour station is being provided. New police stations will also be commenced at Axedale, Maffra and Nunawading and funds have been allocated for a new station at Greensborough when site arrangements have been finalized.

The new Nunawading Police Station will be a 24 hour station with accommodation for the headquarters of the proposed new District to be set up to supervise the Police Stations in the surrounding district and thus improve the effectiveness of the Police Force over quite a wide area. The new building will house the Police Station Uniform Staff, a C.I.B. Division, Policewomen, Crime Car Squad, the Eastern Division of the Mobile Traffic Section and the District Headquarters administrative staff. The total estimated cost is \$533,000 of which it is estimated that \$336,000 will be required this financial year.

In addition to the above major works, provision has been made for the renovation and improvement of accommodation at a large number of police stations and residences throughout the State.

Item 11 (State Library—\$350,000).

Item 11 provides for a continuation of work on the alteration and renovation of space previously occupied by the National Gallery for the Institute of Applied Science. Expenditure on this project, together with other minor works and equipment, is expected to total \$235,000 during the current financial year.

Item 12 (Social Welfare—Family Welfare Division—\$800,000).

As outlined in the Budget Speech, expenditure on the Works Programme of the Social Welfare Department this year is estimated at \$1,895,000 or \$558,000 higher than last year.

An amount of \$489,000 has been allocated for the Works Programme of the Family Welfare Division.

In recent years the facilities of this division have been under great pressure because of the ever increasing numbers of children being admitted to departmental care through the Children's Courts. The most suitable form of care for young children, particularly those from the same family, is in the small family group home, and an expanded programme of family group homes is planned during 1971–72. Sites have already been reserved at Geelong and at Kilmore for the first of these homes this financial year. The Department already has 23 family group homes in operation.

Minor works will also be carried out this year at Allambie including the construction of additional class-rooms, and at Sutton Grange, Baltara and other centres under the control of the Family Welfare Division.

Item 13 (Social Welfare—Youth Welfare Division—\$1,100,000).

The allocation from the Works and Services Account for Youth Welfare has this year been increased by over 50 per cent above last year's expenditure to \$755,000 and the increased requirements in this field are reflected in the additional provision requested in this Bill.

Major projects which are involved this year include work at Turana where a new kitchen is under construction. When completed this will cater for a daily average of 400 persons and electrically heated food wagons will be used to distribute the meals as required.

Funds have been approved for extensions at Winlaton to provide accommodation for the increasing number of girls on remand. The Works involved will be carried out by day labour employees of the Public Works Department and will provide accommodation for an additional 20 girls. When this work is completed better segregation of different classifications of girls will be possible and there will be better facilities for schooling, occupational activities and indoor and outdoor recreation.

Provision of further accommodation at the Malmsbury Youth Training Centre will bring the total capacity there to 152 places for trainees committed to the custody of the Youth Welfare Division by adult courts. It is expected that the new accommodation will become available early in 1972.

Funds have also been provided for the many minor works which will be carried out at Youth Welfare centres generally and approval has been given for a continuation of planning for the major works required by the Division over the next few years.

Item 14 (Social Welfare Branch—Prisons Division—\$900,000).

An allocation of \$525,000 has been made from the Works and Services Account for works to be carried out for the Prisons Division in 1971-72.

In the past 15 years the prison population of the State has more than doubled and the greatest increase in prison population has been in the under 21 years group. At present there are approximately 500 prisoners in this age group in Victorian prisons. At Pentridge Stage 1 of a new Young Offenders Block accommodating 120 young prisoners, with facilities for employment in a new industrial section, has been completed and is now in use. Stage 2 of this project which will include an auditorium, class-rooms and other educational facilities will cost an estimated \$336,000. An allocation of \$23,000 has been made to cover initial expenditure on this project this year.

Renovation of the security and observation towers at Pentridge was commenced last year and 6 towers have already been completed or are nearing completion, giving improved conditions for officers and increased security for the prison. It is anticipated that work on the remaining towers will be completed in the current financial year by further expenditure totalling \$54,000.

Construction of a new kitchen at the Remand Section of "D" Division at Pentridge will commence shortly and it is anticipated that \$112,000 will be spent on this project this financial year. This is part of a programme to progressively increase and improve the accommodation and facilities of "D" Division.

Item 15 (Social Welfare—Training Division and Probation and Parole Division—\$350,000).

A total of \$126,000 has been allocated for expenditure under this item this year. This amount is required towards the construction of a new building in Batman Avenue to cost some \$250,000 which will provide accommodation for staff and for counselling sessions.

Item 16 (Attorney-General's Department—\$900,000).

An allocation of \$549,000 has been approved this year for this section of the works programme which is concerned with the construction and improvement of Law Courts throughout the State.

At Moonee Ponds it is proposed to replace the existing Magistrates' Court building, which has reached the end of its economic life and is inadequate in size for the present volume of cases, with a modern building containing two Court Rooms, a Magistrates' Room, a Justices of the Peace Room, and general office and interview facilities, at an estimated total cost of \$97,000. It is planned to spend \$23,000 on this project this financial year.

Provision has also been made in the programme for a start on a new Magistrates' Court building at Preston and for major renovations at court houses at Frankston and Bacchus Marsh.

Item 17 (Government Printing Office—\$60,000).

Provision is made under Item 17 for expenditure of up to \$60,000 during the currency of the Act on the provision of equipment and on minor works for the Government Printing Office.

Item 18 (Botanic Gardens—\$250,000).

The renovation programme at the Royal Botanic Gardens will be continued and work will be carried out on the buildings in the nursery area and on the shelter sheds and band rotunda. The amount allocated for these works this financial year is \$46,000. Planning is also proceeding for a suitable replacement for the kiosk which was destroyed by fire. Approval is sought in the Bill for a total expenditure of up to \$250,000 on works at the Gardens during the currency of the Act.

Item 19 (Public Buildings and Residences—\$5,500,000).

This year \$4,100,000 has been allocated from the Works and Services Account for expenditure on the construction and improvement of public buildings.

The largest single allocation of funds in the programme this year is for the completion of the remodelling, adaptation and furnishing of the former Income Tax Office at 436 Lonsdale Street. This building will be completed before the end of the calendar year and will provide accommodation for the State taxation branches, including the Stamps Office, and the Registry of Co-operative Housing and the Home Finance Trust.

A new Public Offices Block is being constructed at Korumburra and at Horsham the public offices which were severely damaged by fire will be reinstated.

In the metropolitan area the Hospitals and Charities Commission has recently moved to new leased premises in Queens Road, following the expiration of the lease in East Melbourne, and the programme for 1971-72 includes provision for the necessary expenditure which was incurred in setting up the new office accommodation involved. The extensions to the State Insurance Centre in Collins Street are now well advanced and it is proposed that the Local Government Department and sections of the Education Department will be accommodated in part of the new space on a rental basis. While the building works are being financed from Insurance Office funds provision is necessary in this item of the Table to cover the costs of partitioning, telephone equipment and other items necessary to prepare the space for occupation by the Departments concerned.

Item 20 (Weights and Measures Branch—\$60,000).

An allocation of \$39,000 has been made to the Weights and Measures Branch this financial year to cover the purchase of vehicles and equipment required for testing purposes.

Item 21 (Mines Department—\$400,000).

The provision of funds from the Works and Services Account for the Mines Department in 1971-72 is \$267,000.

Of this amount, \$185,000 has been allocated for equipment required for the Department's programme of drilling, geological and mining engineering and for laboratory use. In recent years the discovery of oil, gas and water has demonstrated the value of geological investigations and the present level of effort will therefore be maintained.

A further \$25,000 has been allocated for a continuation of the programme introduced by the Government for the restoration of Crown land affected by past mining operations in the vicinity of former major mining towns. This work is being carried out in conjunction with local municipal councils.

Item 22 (Explosives Branch—\$15,000).

An amount of \$5,600 has been allocated for expenditure under this item in 1971-72.

Two new explosives magazines will be installed at Altona for storing explosives and detonators received by the Branch either as a result of an emergency call from the Police or Fire Brigade, or a member of the public, or when seized upon detection of a breach of the Explosives Act or Regulations.

It is desirable to keep such explosives separate from the main magazines at Point Wilson, partly for security reasons and also for greater convenience to the Metropolitan area.

Item 23 (Agricultural Education—\$1,600,000).

The allocation for expenditure under this item this year is \$1,141,000 and most of this amount is required for the construction of the new agricultural college at Glenormiston.

Stage 1 of this project has been completed and is now providing residential accommodation for 60 students engaged on a two-year course in farm management, with approximately 20 per cent. of the enrolment being reserved for girls. The first enrolments have confirmed the Government's intention that students would be sons and daughters of farmers who, after completing the course, will return to assist in management of the family property.

Work has already started on the second stage of the development of the College which comprises two dormitory blocks to accommodate a further 60 students and work is about to commence on a farm engineering technical block.

Item 24 (Research Farms and Stations, &c.—\$2,200,000).

Item 24 provides authority for expenditure on building and construction works and on improvements at research farms and research stations operated by the Department of Agriculture throughout the State.

The new Regional Veterinary Laboratory at Hamilton has been completed and it will serve as a centre in which advanced laboratory techniques will be employed in the diagnosis and investigation of diseases of livestock, particularly sheep and cattle, in order to form a basis of measures to treat, control, eradicate and prevent diseases and to increase the efficiency of livestock production.

Specialist highly trained veterinary officers will be available at the Laboratory for consultation by district veterinary staff and veterinary practitioners. Outbreaks of disease will be investigated on grazing properties in the region and research will be carried out into livestock problems throughout the Region and officers will be engaged in providing information on animal health to livestock owners. This building will also accommodate officers of the Department who are at present located at the State Public Offices in Hamilton.

Three new projects at the S. S. Cameron Laboratory at Werribee will provide additional research facilities and accommodation for the research staff which has more than doubled in number since the laboratory was established in 1959. This laboratory provides central facilities for research work for the sheep, cattle, pig and poultry industries. A new wing is being constructed at the Laboratory at an estimated cost of \$290,000. This project is being financed partly from the Works and Services Account, partly by the Australian Wool Board and partly through the Commonwealth Extension Services Grant. The new wing will relieve overcrowding of the research staff and will also provide space for a joint development with the University of Melbourne for research and training of post-graduate students. The other two projects which are being financed mainly from Trust Funds involve a workshop, store and animal house for nutritional research with sheep and young cattle and a building in which raw materials will be stored and mixed together as required for feeding experiments.

A new insectary will be constructed at the Burnley Plant Research Institute. Here, agricultural insect pests will be reared in specially designed environment rooms and their biology studied, so that control methods can be developed. Parasites and enemies of particular pest species will be imported, studied, and if suitable, reared in large numbers for release and control of particular insect species.

Citrus growers in the Murray Valley have already benefited greatly from this approach following the introduction of wasp parasites for the control of red scale of citrus. It is planned to bring similar benefits to other fruit growers, pastoralists and to other branches of agriculture.

Item 25 (Government Cool Stores, Victoria Dock—\$200,000).

An allocation of \$27,000 has been approved this year for the Government Cool Stores at Victoria Dock to cover expenditure on minor improvements and equipment.

Item 26 (General Health—\$200,000).

An allocation of \$83,000 has been approved for expenditure by the Health Department in 1971-72 on the provision of equipment required for its scientific and medical functions and for renovations and other works at the Government Clinic.

Item 27 (Bush Nursing Hospitals—\$450,000).

Grants to the Committees of Management of Bush Nursing Hospitals in 1971-72 towards expenditure on buildings and equipment will be \$330,000.

Grants are made on a \$3 to \$1 basis for approved building projects submitted through the Central Council of the Victorian Bush Nursing Association.

Item 28 (Cancer Institute—\$500,000).

An amount of \$100,000 has been allocated to the Cancer Institute Board in 1971-72 for expenditure on works and equipment. The Board is currently investigating the feasibility of further building developments on its present site and the provision of \$500,000 being sought under this item would enable a start to be made on a building programme after these investigations have been completed and considered by the Government.

Item 29 (Sanatoria—\$400,000).

An amount of \$215,000 will be spent on works at sanatoria this financial year. The major project in this year's programme is the new Chest Clinic at Geelong.

For many years the out-patient Chest Clinic at Geelong has been conducted in a very old sandstone building in Ryrie Street, adjoining the Police Department. It was not economical to renovate this building and accordingly it was agreed with the Commonwealth to construct a new chest clinic in Little Malop Street, complete with furniture and equipment, at an estimated cost of \$143,000 and this work is nearing completion.

Further expenditure will be involved in the completion of projects for the improvement of facilities for the treatment of tuberculosis patients at the Gippsland Base Hospital, the Ballarat Hospital and at Heatherton Sanatorium.

Item 30 (Mental Health Authority—\$6,000,000).

Item 30 provides for the expenditure of up to \$6,000,000 during the currency of the Act on buildings and equipment for the Mental Health Authority.

Work is continuing on the improvement of conditions at Kew Cottages and this year provision has been made for a number of jobs, including a new ward to replace old buildings and improvements to toilet and bathing facilities.

Work will commence on a new Clinical and Administrative Block for the Kew Cottages estimated to cost some \$500,000. The Children's Cottages were originally administered as part of the Kew Mental Hospital but were separated from that institution in the mid 1950's. However, to date this 900 bed training centre has had no proper provision for clinical services or administrative services. The effectiveness of care and training at the Cottages will be greatly improved through the use of the new building which is planned to be completed next financial year.

At Sunbury, \$135,000 will be spent on the continuation of the programme for the heating of wards and for upgrading toilet and bathing facilities.

At Ballarat \$237,000 has been provided to cover the final stages of the contract to build a new kitchen and staff mess.

In view of the waiting list for admission to training centres for the retarded it has been decided to transfer long term mental patients from a section of Larundel Hospital to other institutions. This block of four wards, together with a central recreational and office block will then be remodelled at a cost of \$200,000 to form a new training centre for the retarded, to be known as the Kingsbury Training Centre. Funds have been provided for a start on this project during the current financial year.

Funds have also been earmarked by the Government to cover a start on work at the proposed training centre at Colac and it is expected that the content of the first stage of the building programme will be determined at an early date.

\$279,000 has been provided for expenditure this year on buildings and equipment for the treatment of alcoholics. Two new wards have been completed at Pleasant View and work will commence on an Admission and Clinical Block which will cost an estimated \$225,000. This new building will provide an admission unit for patients referred from the courts, social service agencies and elsewhere and, in addition to providing accommodation for professional staff will contain facilities for the diagnosis and assessment of the patients referred. It will be a key unit in the total assessment centre complex which is being developed at Pleasant View.

The Authority's building in Smith Street, Fitzroy, in conjunction with the alcoholism unit at St. Vincent's Hospital, will provide facilities for the treatment of alcoholics and drug-dependent persons who need urgent attention and a period of drying out prior to their move through diagnosis and assessment.

Item 31 (Dredging and Blasting Operations—\$1,600,000).

An amount of \$1,312,000 is being provided this year towards the cost of dredging and blasting operations carried out by the Public Works Department in maintaining and improving ports and harbors throughout the State. A large proportion of the expenditure on dredging and blasting is involved in dredging the shipping channels in Port Phillip Bay and at the entrance to the Bay.

Item 32 (Piers, wharves, jetties and harbors—\$800,000).

A total allocation of \$702,000 has been approved for expenditure in 1971-72 by the Ports and Harbors Branch of the Public Works Department on a variety of harbor projects provided for under this item.

Reconstruction of the main high level wharf at Port Albert was commenced last year and provision has been made for this work to be continued.

A mooring jetty will be constructed at Hastings to provide pen moorings for 30 vessels up to 60 feet in length and to allow better use to be made of a basin which was dredged last year. This anchorage is used by professional fishing vessels, by vessels associated with construction within the Port of Westernport and by numerous pleasure craft.

The provision under this item also includes some \$85,000 to cover a marine model study of foreshore works involved in the St. Kilda Action Plan.

Item 33 (Navigation Aids—\$120,000).

This item provides authority for expenditure on the installation and improvement of navigational aids on the main shipping channels. An amount of \$89,000 has been allocated for expenditure on these purposes this financial year.

Item 34 (Foreshore Protection Works—\$300,000).

Item 34 covers expenditure by the Public Works Department on works for the protection of the foreshore at many points around the Victorian coast. An amount of \$200,000 has been allocated for these works during this year.

Item 35 (Depots, Storage Compounds, Plant, &c.,—\$350,000).

\$188,000 has been allocated for works and equipment associated with the depots and storeyards and for the marine laboratory of the Public Works Department.

Construction of a new depot complex at Queenscliff was commenced in May, 1970. During this year it is planned to construct the main depot building, where maintenance will be carried out on navigation buoys and other navigational aids for the main shipping channels in Port Phillip Bay and outer Victorian Ports.

Item 36 (Floating Plant—\$500,000).

An amount of \$121,000 has been allocated this year for expenditure under the authority of this item on the floating plant requirements of the Ports and Harbors Branch.

Item 37 (Harbor Facilities at Westernport, Act No. 7652—\$712,000).

Acts Nos. 7652 and 8024 provided for the expenditure of up to \$6,050,000 on harbor facilities to be utilized primarily by Esso-Hematite for the shipment of crude oil and liquid petroleum gas originating from the Bass Strait oil fields. The works have been completed and an allocation of \$460,000 has been provided this year to meet outstanding claims.

Item 38 (Harbor Facilities at Westernport, Act No. 7950—\$1,500,000).

An amount of \$1,338,000 has been allocated for expenditure on harbor facilities at Westernport under the authority of this item in 1971-72.

The Westernport (Steel Works) Act No. 7950 ratified an agreement entered into on 19th December, 1969, between the State of Victoria and John Lysaght (Australia) Limited in relation to the establishment of a steel mill complex at Westernport. The agreement provides that the State will undertake the dredging of the berthing channels and the berthing and turning areas. A contract has been entered into for the first stage of these works and the appropriation sought under Item 38 provides for the completion of this stage. The cost of the works will be recouped through wharfage charges.

Item 39 (Provision of Port Facilities at Westernport, General—\$225,000).

The Public Works Department has been allocated \$176,000 this year to cover expenditure on improvements to, and other works associated with, the jetties, buoys and other harbour facilities at Westernport not covered by the two preceding items.

Item 40 (Advances to Officers—Cars for Official Duties—\$60,000).

Funds from the Works and Services Account will again be made available this financial year to continue the Government's policy of making available short term loans to public officers in order to assist them to purchase motor vehicles which are essential for their official duties.

Item 41 (Soil Conservation Authority—Works—\$550,000).

and

Item 42 (Soil Conservation Authority—Loans, etc.—\$50,000).

and

Item 43 (Soil Conservation Authority—Plant, etc.—\$60,000).

In the past five years almost \$2½ million has been spent under the authority of these three items, which provide the capital funds available to the Soil Conservation Authority for the purpose of carrying out its statutory functions. The Authority's normal programme of soil conservation control works and development of rural water supplies is to be financed from an increased allocation of \$367,000 under Item 41. Its programme of grants and loans to landholders and municipalities for soil conservation projects is covered by Item 42 and as already announced a more generous basis of assistance is now available to farmers for soil conservation projects. Item 43 provides moneys for the purchase of vehicles and equipment required by the Authority.

The Authority's works programme again includes a special allocation of \$100,000 for erosion works at Eppalock and other Water Catchment Areas which provide water for irrigation and town water supplies. Including the \$70,000 which it is proposed to spend at Eppalock this financial year \$1 million will have been spent at this Area on erosion control since 1960. The \$30,000 balance of the allocation will be used to carry out works in the catchments to Lake Eildon and Lake Merrimu.

This year a further \$244,000 has been allocated for Group Conservation projects, and this will be spent in some 30 areas scattered throughout Victoria. These works are undertaken by the Soil Conservation Authority as a joint conservation project for a particular area following representations by landholders in that area. At present the Soil Conservation Authority is working in 52 such areas involving over 575 square miles and 739 landholders.

Item 44 (Zoological Board—\$125,000).

The allocation of \$100,000 to the Zoological Board this year will assist the Board in carrying out a further stage of its master plan for major improvements at the Zoo. \$65,000 of this amount will be made available by way of non-repayable grant, and \$35,000 by way of loan. Since 1966-67 \$332,000 has been made available to the Board, and the capital works undertaken in accordance with the reconstruction programme are progressively resulting in more and more attractive displays for the visiting public.

The proposed works for 1971-72 include renovations to the Great Flight Aviary which will enable larger birds, such as pelicans, to achieve full flight, the building of an enclosure as part of the Great Cat Reserve to enable Cheetahs to be displayed, and a new take-away food centre.

Item 45 (Country Art Galleries—\$200,000).

Since 1966-67 \$227,000 has been spent in accordance with the Government's policy of assisting, by way of capital grants, approved projects for the construction and improvement of Art Gallery buildings in country towns where there are substantial art collections worthy of adequate housing. Major gallery projects currently in hand are located at Hamilton, Morwell and Geelong.

Item 46 (Subsidies for small Fire Fighting Units in Rural Areas—\$750,000).

The scheme introduced by the Government last year to assist primary producers with the provision of fire fighting equipment on farm vehicles has been particularly well received. The appropriation sought from Parliament in the Public Works and Services Bill about this time last year was \$200,000. In fact, subsidies paid to farmers last year totalled \$350,000. Provision is made in this item to cover this over-expenditure of \$150,000 in 1970-71 as well as for the continuation of the subsidy arrangements for the current financial year.

Item 47 (Youth Clubs, etc.—\$300,000).

The Government has this year increased from \$160,000 to \$200,000 the allocation from the Works and Services Account to the Youth Organizations Assistance Fund, which is covered by this appropriation. A further \$140,000 is paid to this Fund from Vote provision of the Social Welfare Department and the total amount of \$340,000 is made available to assist clubs in meeting expenditure on the erection and renovation of buildings, and on equipment, youth leadership and camps. It is anticipated that some 450 clubs or organizations will benefit this financial year from grants allocated from this Fund.

Item 48 (Youth Hostels—\$80,000).

The approved works and services programme for 1971-72 provides an amount of \$50,000 to cover payments in accordance with the established policy of making grants to various voluntary organizations for capital works, renovations and furnishings in connection with hostels under the supervision of the Social Welfare Department which provide accommodation for young people in employment. Subsidies are made available to such organizations on a \$2 for \$1 basis up to a maximum of \$20,000 per hostel for building purposes, \$2,000 for furnishings and a maximum of \$4,000 over the life of the building for maintenance.

In 1971-72 the recipient organizations are expected to include the Burwood Boys Home, the St. John's Homes at Mont Albert, the Harbour Hostel for girls in Brunswick and the Harrison House Hostel for boys at Hawthorn.

Item 49 (Grants to Welfare Organizations and Institutions—\$150,000).

As from 1st July the Social Welfare Department has taken over the major responsibility for the making of grants to organizations, institutions, and persons operating childrens homes which are caring for wards of the State—a responsibility formerly administered in part by the Hospitals and Charities Commission.

An allocation of \$90,000 has been made from the Works and Services Account to the Social Welfare Department this year for this purpose and Item 49 provides the necessary appropriation for these grants.

Item 50 (Advances and Grants to the Teacher Housing Authority—\$1,500,000).

This item is to provide Parliamentary Authority for the payment of advances and grants to the new Teacher Housing Authority, which was established under the provisions of the *Teacher Housing Act 1970*.

The function of the Authority is to provide and maintain adequate and suitable housing for teachers, and the Authority has power to purchase land and houses, to erect new houses, and to let or otherwise dispose of its land or houses. It has taken over the responsibility for some 1,700 houses which were previously controlled by the Education Department.

The necessary financial arrangements for the Authority's operations are currently being finalized.

Item 51 (National Art Gallery and Cultural Centre—\$3,000,000).

As already announced the Government has agreed to assist with the construction of the North End of the Victorian Arts Centre on the basis of a revised proposal submitted by the Building Committee and estimated to cost \$22½ million over a 5 year period. Tenders are expected to be called early in the 1972-73 financial year.

Provision is made under Item 51 for further contributions to the National Art Gallery and Cultural Centre Trust Fund during the currency of the Act to cover expenditure on the initial work involved on the North End development.

Item 52 (Alexander Miller Memorial Homes Trust—\$30,000).

In 1963, and again in 1968, the Government approved of total grants of \$150,000 being paid to the Alexander Miller Memorial Homes Trust, which controls homes in a number of country centres throughout the State. These grants have been made available to the Trust on the basis of \$30,000 per annum towards the improvement and modernisation of the Trust homes.

Item 53 (Grants to Life Saving Clubs—\$50,000).

In the last five years the Government has spent over \$130,000 assisting 56 Life Saving Clubs by way of grants towards club building and improvement projects. Grants are made on a \$2 Government to \$1 Local basis on the recommendations of the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia and the Royal Life Saving Society of Victoria, subject to a maximum grant of \$6,000 to any single club. The appropriation of \$50,000 under this Item provides for continuation of this policy during the currency of the Act.

Item 54 (Grants to Non-departmental Teachers Colleges—\$100,000).

The provision of funds under this item will enable the Government to continue its established policy of making grants on a \$1 for \$1 basis towards the cost of approved capital projects of institutions which are training teachers for the registered schools system. In 1971-72 assistance will be provided towards the cost of completion of a building programme at the Mercy Teacher Training College, Ascot Vale, covering a two-storey building incorporating class and common rooms, an Assembly hall and other basic facilities.

Item 55 (Hobson's Bay Main Sewer—\$60,000).

Since 1967-68 the Government has been making annual contributions towards the cost of lowering the Hobson's Bay Main Sewer where the sewer passes under the River Yarra. This project is being carried out by the Board of Works as a work complementary to major port developments in the River Yarra being undertaken by the Melbourne Harbor Trust. The revised total cost of the project is estimated at \$3,300,000 and this is being borne equally by the Government, the Board of Works and the Melbourne Harbor Trust. The Government has contributed \$1,058,000 to date towards the cost of this work, which is expected to be completed later this financial year.

Item 56 (Installation of Boom Barriers—\$150,000).

This appropriation provides the necessary finance to meet the Government's share of the programme for the elimination of railway gate crossings and the substitution of boom barriers. In the current financial year a barrier has been completed at Keon Parade, Keon Park, and work is presently under way or negotiations are proceeding on a further eleven projects. These are located at North Melbourne, Macaulay, Royal Park, Clayton, Boronia, Cheltenham, Greensborough, Hughesdale, Hampton, Rosanna, and Glenhuntly. Two-thirds of the cost of approved works is found from Government sources and the other one-third is provided by the local Municipality.

Item 57 (Municipal Subsidies—\$6,100,000).

An amount of about \$4½ million is expected to be spent during 1971–72 on the wide range of subsidies to municipalities and other bodies for purposes which are covered by this appropriation.

Grants to municipalities for drainage, private street construction, swimming pools, beach cleaning works, public halls, saleyards, and country sporting centres are all charged against this item.

The appropriation for municipal subsidies also includes the annual payment of \$600,000 to the Municipalities Assistance Fund. From this Fund subsidies are paid to Councils outside the Metropolitan area on a \$2 for \$1 basis for the construction and improvement of recreational facilities, including the provision of pavilions and toilet blocks.

Item 57 also includes grants to municipalities towards the cost of elderly citizens clubs, pedestrian overpasses, historical museums and the construction of fire access roads.

Item 58 (Municipalities Forest Roads Improvement Fund—\$50,000).

The Government has approved of further contributions totalling \$50,000 being paid into this Fund during the currency of the Act to assist Municipal Councils in the improvement and protection of roads adjacent to State Forest areas in order to facilitate the extraction of forest produce. These are unclassified roads under municipal control, as distinct from classified roads which are the responsibility of the Country Roads Board, and roads within State Forests which are the responsibility of the Forests Commission. Since the Government took office just on \$500,000 has been made available by way of special assistance to Councils through this Fund.

Item 59 (Grants for Little Athletics—\$40,000).

An allocation of \$35,000 has been approved this year to cover the payment of grants to the Little Athletics Association and its affiliated centres. This movement has spread rapidly throughout Victoria and now has approximately 40,000 members linked with centres in most parts of the State. The Government is pleased to be involved in the encouragement of this very worthwhile activity.

Following negotiations with the Victorian Little Athletics Association the Government agreed to make available grants to affiliated Clubs towards the purchase of certain specified athletic equipment. Grants of up to \$725 on a \$2 for \$1 basis are provided for new centres, and up to \$400 per annum on a \$1 for \$1 basis for existing centres.

Item 60 (Victorian College of Optometry—\$10,000).

An amount of \$10,000 has been allocated from the Works and Services Account again this year as a further capital grant to the Victorian College of Optometry towards the cost of library premises and equipment at the College.

Item 61 (Contributions to the Industrial Development Fund—\$250,000).

This year contributions totalling \$150,000 will be made available from the Works and Services Account to the Industrial Development Fund established under the *State Development Act 1970*, supplementing the \$100,000 provided under the annual appropriations of the Department of State Development.

The fund will be used in accordance with the provisions of the Act to assist in the establishment and expansion of secondary industries situated beyond 50 miles of Melbourne or within a 5 mile radius of the towns of Bacchus Marsh, Broadford, Gisborne, Kilmore, Kyneton and Woodend.

Item 62 (Grant to the Ballarat Amateur Basketball Association—\$10,000).

This grant was met from Treasurer's Advance in 1970-71 and was made available to assist the above Association in erecting a new stadium costing over \$100,000 in Ballarat. Item 62 provides the necessary Parliamentary Authority to cover this grant.

Item 63 (Grant to Old Colonists Association of Victoria—\$20,000).

The Old Colonists Association is currently undertaking major capital works at its Leith Park and Rushall Park establishments. This item gives the necessary authority to cover the payment of a contribution of \$20,000 which was made to the Association in 1970-71 for its Centenary Year Appeal for funds towards this programme in recognition of the very worthwhile service it has provided the community over this period.

Item 64 (Grant to the Howard Florey Institute of Experimental Physiology and Medicine—\$200,000).

During its last Session Parliament passed an Act which established the Howard Florey Institute of Physiology and Medicine as a Body Corporate, and the \$200,000 appropriation provided by this Item covers the payment of a Government grant made in 1970-71 to assist in the development and scientific work of the Institute.

Item 65 (Grant to National Trust of Australia (Victoria)—\$100,000).

This item provides the necessary authority to cover special grants to the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) towards its Capital Expenditure Appeal. The Government has undertaken to contribute a total sum of \$240,000 to the Trust over the next five years on a \$2 for \$1 basis towards an agreed works programme, and it is proposed to make an initial contribution of \$50,000 during the current financial year. Proceeds of the Trust's Capital Expenditure Appeal will be applied towards the following programme of projects :—

- Beechworth Powder Magazine—further development.
- Beechworth—Black Springs Bakery—restoration.
- Echuca, Paddle Steamer "Adelaide"—refurnishing.
- Chiltern, "Lake View"—restoration and development.
- Castlemaine Market—restoration.
- Bendigo—Chinese Joss House—restoration.
- McRae—McRae Homestead—restoration.
- Antwerp—Ebenezer Mission Station—restoration.
- Warrnambool—Wollaston Bridge—Endowment Fund.
- Portarlinton—Mill—restoration.
- Prefabricated Iron Houses—South Melbourne and Moe.
- Old Melbourne Gaol—restoration, etc.
- Geelong—Barwon Grange—purchase and restoration.
- Toorak—"Illawarra"—restoration.
- Lonsdale's Cottage—re-erection and restoration.

Item 66 (Grant to Geelong and Western District Ladies Benevolent Association—\$14,000).

The Geelong and Western District Ladies Benevolent Association controls the Austin, Haines and Baxter Homes in Geelong which are almost exclusively occupied by pensioners. It is proposed to allocate to this Association \$7,000 in each of the 1971-72, 1972-73 and 1973-74 financial years to assist in meeting the cost of electrical, sewerage, drainage, fencing and roofing works which are now required to be carried out on these homes. This item provides the necessary appropriation to cover these grants for the first two years.

Item 67 (Grant to Young Women's Christian Association—\$20,000).

The provision of funds under this item will enable the Government to make a capital grant of \$20,000 to the Young Women's Christian Association to help in the rebuilding of the Doery House Hostel at Richmond. Completion of the rebuilding project will increase accommodation at the Hostel from the present 81 to over 200.

Item 68 (Loan to Dental Board of Victoria—\$6,000).

The Government has made available a short term loan of \$6,000 to the Dental Board of Victoria to assist the Board's liquidity position pending the increase in dentists registration fees proposed in the Dentists Bill. This loan is repayable not later than 31 December, 1973, and any principal outstanding as at 1 January, 1973 will bear interest at the rate of 6 per cent per annum. The amount made available is equivalent to the Board's anticipated administration costs until December, 1971, when fee income should again allow the Dental Board to remain solvent for a number of years.

Item 68 provides the necessary Parliamentary authority to cover this loan.

Item 69 (Rural Finance and Settlement Commission—Agency Department—\$1,250,000).

This appropriation covers advances from the Works and Services Account to the Agency Department of the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission for approved purposes coming within the provisions of Section 35 of the Rural Finance Act.

Item 70 (Vermin and Noxious Weeds Destruction—\$3,000,000).

This year, an amount of \$2,504,000 has been allocated from the Works and Services Account for expenditure by the Vermin and Noxious Weeds Destruction Board on the control of rabbits and other pests, and on the spraying of noxious weeds throughout the State.

Summer and autumn rainfalls have been above average in many parts of the State and this has resulted in the rapid growth of noxious weeds, aggravating the control problem.

An amount of \$58,000 will be spent on further works and on the provision of equipment at the Board's Turnbull Research Station. Research at this Station on the use of Rabbit Fleas as part of the programme for the control and elimination of rabbits appears quite promising and small batches of fleas have been released at a number of places in Victoria. Results to date have indicated that the Rabbit Flea can be established in Victoria and can be used to spread myxomatosis. Research will be continued into the flea itself, as well as the biology of the rabbit, with a view to conducting a large scale experiment in some district where a difficult rabbit problem exists.

Item 71 (Survey equipment, etc., Department of Lands and Survey—\$90,000).

An amount of \$70,000 has been allocated for 1971-72 for the provision of photographic and survey equipment and vehicles which are required for the aerial, field survey and general photographic work of the Survey Branch of the Department of Lands and Survey.

Item 72 (Purchase and supply of wire-netting—\$5,000).

This appropriation authorises the making of advances to farmers to finance the supply of wire netting in certain circumstances as provided in the *Wire Netting Act 1958*.

Item 73 (Buchan Caves—Improvements etc.—\$20,000).

During the past five years expenditure amounting to \$145,000 has been incurred on improvements to the facilities provided for visitors to the Buchan Caves. This year a further amount of \$5,000 has been allocated for the improvement of toilets and other facilities.

Item 74 (Road Construction—Crown Lands—\$15,000).

This item covers expenditure on the provision of access roads to Crown Lands in the process of being subdivided and settled in various areas throughout the State. An amount of \$5,000 has been allocated to cover likely requirements for this purpose in 1971-72.

Item 75 (Purchase of Land and Improvement of Crown Lands—\$20,000).

Item 75 provides Parliamentary Authority for expenditure from the Works and Services Account on the purchase of areas of land and on the improvement of Crown Land which is not covered by specific appropriations for Departments and purposes listed elsewhere in the Table incorporated in the Bill.

Minor purchases of land to be met from this Item this year include the acquisition of surplus Commonwealth land at Queenscliffe which will allow extension of the foreshore reserve, freehold land at Cape Schanck for use as trig points, and the purchase of land at Eastern View in connection with the Ocean Road Planning Scheme for the preservation of flora and fauna.

Item 76 (Tostaree Pilot Farm—\$5,000).

Provision is made under this item for minor expenditure associated with the experimental project located on Crown Lands between Nowa Nowa and Orbost, which is being conducted as a joint project by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey, the Forests Commission, the Department of Agriculture and the Rural Finance and Settlement Commission.

Item 77 (Advances to Water and Sewerage Authorities—\$25,000).

This appropriation of \$25,000 is required for possible advances to water and sewerage authorities towards the cost of providing services to buildings such as schools and mental hospitals in areas which are ahead of normal development of services by the authorities concerned. These advances are recovered from the authority concerned at an agreed future point in time when these works would otherwise normally have been carried out.

Item 78 (Payments to Agricultural and Pastoral Societies—\$50,000).

This Item provides for payments to Agricultural and Pastoral Societies in accordance with the Government's policy of assisting in the provision of facilities at country showgrounds.

A sum of \$20,000 has been allocated for this purpose for 1971-72.

Item 79 (Grants to Young Farmers Clubs—\$10,000).

An allocation of \$5,000 has been made from the Works and Services Account this year for the payment of grants for the erection of club rooms for Young Farmers Clubs on Agricultural Society Showgrounds. These grants are made available by the Government on a \$2 for \$1 basis for approved projects.

Item 80 (Hospitals and Charities—\$18,000,000).

This year the amount allocated from the Works and Services Account for expenditure on buildings and equipment at hospitals and other charitable institutions supported by the Hospitals and Charities Commission is \$13,621,000.

In this year's hospital programme \$1,000,000 has been allocated as a further payment towards the cost of the completion of the main block of the Mercy Public Maternity Hospital and \$2,200,000 will be paid for the new main ward block under construction at the Alfred Hospital.

An amount of \$250,000 has been allocated for expenditure on approved projects at the teaching hospitals and a matching grant will be available from the Commonwealth Government for this purpose.

As announced in the Budget Speech the Social Welfare Department has now taken over the major responsibility for assistance to children's homes which are caring for wards of the State. Capital grants previously paid to these homes by the Hospitals and Charities Commission and which have averaged some \$90,000 per annum over recent years will now be approved and paid by the Social Welfare Department.

Item 81 (Loans to Public Cemeteries—\$50,000).

Each year an appropriation is sought to enable loans to be made to the Trustees of Public Cemeteries towards meeting the cost of approved developmental and improvement schemes for cemeteries under their control.

Item 82 (Subsidies to Infant Welfare Centres, etc.—\$500,000).

This recurring appropriation makes funds available to cover expenditure under the Government's established policy of subsidizing pre-natal, infant welfare and pre-school centres. Since 1966-67 the Government has spent nearly \$2 million on subsidies in this field and an allocation of \$500,000 is available for expenditure in 1971-72. Based on the experience of recent years it is anticipated that approximately two-thirds of the sum allocated will be spent on pre-school projects.

Item 83 (Mentally Retarded Children's Centres—\$700,000).

In recognition of the important community service performed by voluntary organizations in providing day training centres, kindergarten units, sheltered workshops and similar facilities for mentally retarded children, the Government makes provision each year for capital grants to these organizations on a \$4 for \$1 basis.

The allocation in the Works Programme this year is \$500,000, an allocation of this magnitude being necessitated by the large number of new workshops or major extensions at existing centres which have been planned and the number of completely new centres for which proposals have been submitted to the Department of Health.

Item 84 (Baker Medical Research Institute—\$21,000).

Last financial year the Government approved a grant of up to \$85,000 to the Baker Medical Research Institute to assist the Institute with the purchase and installation of an electron microscope for use in current research projects in the field of clinical medicine.

Item 84 gives the necessary authority to meet the unpaid balance of this grant.

Item 85 (Grant to National Fitness Council—\$63,000).

The National Fitness Council of Victoria has four camp centres in Victoria located in attractive bush or beach surroundings which are used almost continuously through the year in accommodating youth groups and parties from schools. In these centres many thousands of young people have the opportunity of enjoying healthy outdoor recreation under trained supervision.

In order to assist the Council the Government has approved the payment of a grant of \$63,000 towards the reconstruction of its camp at Howmans Gap in the Victorian Alps. The Commonwealth Government will contribute \$1 for each \$2 made available by the State towards the cost of this project.

Item 86. (Contributions to National Parks Fund—\$500,000).

This year an allocation of \$315,000 has been approved from the Works and Services Account for the improvement of facilities at National Parks.

Of this amount, \$75,000 is for the acquisition of land and for special fire protection works in the Dandenongs and the balance is available towards the cost of works and services such as park management, provision of water supply, picnic shelters and fire protection works.

A special allocation of \$100,000 has again been made to the Country Roads Board for expenditure on road works associated with National Parks. Details of these works are determined by consultation between the National Parks Authority and the Country Roads Board.

Item 87 (Tourist Fund—\$300,000).

Item 87 provides the necessary appropriation for contributions to the Tourist Fund to assist with projects and with works and services associated with tourist development in the State.

A major project under way is the installation of a new switchboard at the tourist headquarters in Collins Street at a cost of approximately \$150,000. The present switchboard is overloaded and is regarded as one of the busiest boards in Melbourne. The new switchboard will greatly improve the facilities for handling the work load of telephone inquiries for country and suburban public transport, tourist information and general travel services.

The approved contribution to the fund for 1971–72 also covers a special grant to the Puffing Billy Preservation Society towards the cost of constructing a locomotive depot at Belgrave.

Item 88 (Aboriginal Affairs Fund—\$500,000).

An allocation of \$332,000 to the Aboriginal Affairs Fund from the Works and Services Account in 1971–72 will supplement the \$410,000 made available from the provision under Division 80 of the Estimates, and will be used by the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs towards the Government's programme for the improvement of housing, education, training and employment facilities for our aboriginal people.