

[Chairman: Mr. Pashak]

[8:31 a.m.]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'd call today's meeting of the Public Account Committee of the province of Alberta to order. This morning I'd like to personally welcome the Hon. Norm Weiss, Minister of Career Development and Employment, to this session. In a moment, Mr. Weiss, I'll give you an opportunity to make an opening statement and introduce your associates. The Auditor General, Don Salmon, is with us again as usual.

The first item of business on our agenda is to approve the committee meeting minutes of May 2, 1990. Is there a motion to adopt the minutes as distributed? Ms Laing. Are there any errors or omissions? Hearing none, are you agreed that we adopt the minutes as distributed? Agreed.

We're pleased to have you here, hon. minister. If you'd care to make a statement, we'd be delighted to hear it.

MR. WEISS: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'd like to provide some highlights of the '88-89 fiscal year and review in general the activities of the Department of Career Development and Employment.

Before I begin, I'd like to introduce the staff members who've joined me here this morning. I have to my immediate right Dr. Earl Mansfield, the acting deputy minister. Next to Earl is Mr. Dave Chabillon, the assistant deputy minister of field services; and to my left, Mr. Reid Zittlau, the executive director of finance and administrative services. Behind us we have Mr. Schubert Kwan, director of finance. Accompanying Schubert in the back row as well is Mr. Geoff Anderson, acting assistant deputy minister of the policy and program development division. A lady who is my support person and very supportive of our department as well, of course, is Mrs. Carole Shields, my executive assistant. I certainly appreciate their participation in this process because as you know, while the minister is ultimately responsible for the actions of his or her department, it is truly the combined efforts of many staff personnel that inevitably make the difference in the success or failure of any government program or activity. Consequently, they will be prepared, Mr. Chairman, and to members of the committee, to directly answer any question as appropriate once we get to that part of the process.

I must say as well - I'm not sure if you're aware, Mr. Chairman - that this is the first time the Department of Career Development and Employment has been asked to appear before the committee, so many of the members will have not had an opportunity and they share some anxiety. I might indicate that Mr. Schubert Kwan, who is director of finance, wasn't sure whether he should buy new black shoes to appear before the committee or not this morning, so we said that he was welcome to come with his old shoes.

I'd like to highlight some of the more significant developments that took place in the department during '88-89 that we believe combine fiscal responsibility with both the maintenance and effective delivery of a consistently high level of essential programs and services to those Albertans who are in need of our services. Fiscal '88-89 began with the department facing a generally favourable situation. Employment levels had risen to a then all-time high of 1,199,000, which was an increase of some 17,000 over March of 1988. In seasonally adjusted terms unemployment had then shown a continuing decline, from 10.2 percent in March '87 to some 8 percent in March '88 and 7.4 percent in March '89. As well, Mr. Chairman, Alberta presently

enjoys some 6.3 percent level of unemployment, with some 1,215,000 Albertans working.

Other positive indicators included a significantly reduced number of Albertans recorded as unemployment insurance claimants, fewer numbers of unemployed individuals receiving social assistance, and the highest level of labour force participation in Canada, which incidentally exceeded some 72 percent, along with the highest proportion of women in the labour force in Canada, at some 43 percent.

At the same time, however, a series of emerging trends required careful consideration by the department. I think it's important to reflect on those trends, so we're all aware: increased competition resulted from the continuing globalization of markets; new opportunities created by diversification in forestry, tourism, and advanced technologies; the changed demographic patterns, which showed a maturing of the population, more women, native, visible minorities, and the disabled attempting to enter the work force; as well as declining birth rates and fluctuating sources of immigration. Now, each of these trends, Mr. Chairman, clearly pointed to the fact that Alberta's labour force was undergoing a significant transformation. In order to meet the needs of this new labour force, and indeed anticipate its long- and short-term future demands, the department shifted gears and established a number of new objectives and initiatives that took place during 1988-89. Perhaps the most significant development was the shift in emphasis from job creation to job and career training. That is a very key point and one that I would hope the hon. members in the committee would address as well.

In total, Mr. Chairman, the department transferred some \$8 million from job creation programming to programs devoted to training. These changes include the addition of some \$2.7 million to the Alberta vocational training allowances to cover increases in tuition fees and living allowances. A further some \$2.2 million was added to the youth employment and training program, certainly a segment of our society that continues to experience higher unemployment levels than the provincial average and one that we certainly wanted to try and address. And tailor-made training received an additional some \$3.5 million. Additionally, our job creation programs were reduced by a further \$10 million to more accurately reflect the stable nature of the job market in Alberta.

In keeping with the move towards the need for training, the department also focused its attention on anticipated increased demand for skilled tradespersons in this province. Consequently, we began the process of developing major apprenticeship awareness and promotional programs. This initiative was designed to improve both the awareness and image of trade occupations and apprenticeship training, with the longer term goal aimed at increasing participation in the apprenticeship system, and we're going to continue to work in that direction. I'm pleased to say that response to this initiative has been very positive, and we plan to launch phase 2 this fall as well.

Recognizing that further changes in the marketplace were inevitable, we began to develop a labour market strategy that would be sensitive to the emerging issues of the '90s. This paper is now known as Alberta Work Force to the Year 2000. We believe it summarizes the major trends we've talked about that are expected to affect the labour market during this decade and examines the policy implications as well. The document, which will act as the blueprint for our future activities, outlines the major initiatives the Alberta government could undertake to respond to these trends. We believe it will help ensure that the

high calibre of the Alberta work force is maintained into the 21st century. It is safe to say, Mr. Chairman, that this is essential if we're to remain competitive in the global marketplace, and it's truly a changing marketplace.

As I mentioned earlier, declining birth rates and the maturing of our population also will have significant implications for our future work force. As a result, we have continued to place great emphasis on our immigration settlement services. I am pleased to say that we have maintained our strong support for the various settlement agencies throughout the province. This has been demonstrated through our continued and significant funding for English as a Second Language, or ESL as it is commonly called. We've done this through assessment centres in both Edmonton and Calgary. We have continued to vigorously support our business immigration program.

I should also point out that our efforts to diversify the work force and provide expanded employment opportunities have not been restricted in any way solely to new Albertans. In 1988-89 our programs for the disadvantaged were restructured and renamed access initiatives. The new name reflects the expanded mandate of the program, which now includes not only assistance to apprentices with special needs but policies and programs aimed at removing barriers outside the apprenticeship system itself which prevent full participation in the trades by women, the disabled, natives, visible minorities, and immigrants. The priorities for access initiatives included addressing the barriers which prevent the acquisition of employment, promoting awareness and providing orientation to the trades, as well as ensuring individuals with special needs within the apprenticeship system so that they, too, have the support they need to be successful.

Mr. Chairman, committee members, Alberta truly is entering a new and exciting age. The world is indeed becoming a smaller place, where competition will be fierce, flexibility will be rewarded, and a well-trained and available and skilled work force will be essential. The challenges are there for us. We have clearly identified them, and we are endeavouring to work that way and believe we are well on our way to, hopefully, successfully meeting them as well.

I thank you for your time and attention, and I would be pleased, as I said earlier, along with our staff present, to try and answer any of your questions. As well, we'll undertake and commit, Mr. Chairman, for any we're unable to provide today, to report back to you and to your members.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for that statement and that willingness, hon. minister.

I'd like to recognize Bonnie Laing first.

MRS. B. LAING: Thank you. On page 3.24 and vote 2.6.2. why were there no funds expended on Employment Counseling and Relocation Services under the Opportunity Corps?

MR. WEISS: I'm sorry; would you please repeat the vote?

MRS. B. LAING: Page 3.24, and vote 2.6.2.

MR. WEISS: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman; I can't find it. A good start.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister, while you're looking for that reference, perhaps I should just indicate to you and members of your department that we do try to restrict questions to either the

public accounts or the Auditor General's report. We find that it helps our proceedings if we give a line-by-line reference to an item that we're asking questions about.

MR. WEISS: So you're referring to page 3.24, item 2.6.2.

MRS. B. LAING: Item 2.6.2.

MR. WEISS: All right. You're looking at the portion unexpended. I apologize to the member, Mr. Chairman, for not being as alert as I should have been, and now I'm with you in that regard. Sorry. Perhaps I could ask one of our members to respond, because I feel they should be participating. I'm well aware of it but would welcome the opportunity for them. Would you like to respond?

Mr. Dave Chabillon.

MR. CHABILLON: During the course of this given budget cycle the employment counseling and relocation program was in the process of being phased down. Over the history we found the program had moved from being one of relocation of people, primarily native people, from isolated, remote communities into communities where the economic base supported employment. We found that over the period of time the program had evolved from being a relocation program for economic reasons to more of a housing program. So we did in fact bring the program to a close the following budget year, and this year was a phasing-out year of that program.

The counseling support is still provided through our Opportunity Corps and our career development centres to people who are in fact interested in career development, employment-related counseling, and support. The housing issue is now addressed through the ministry of Alberta housing.

MRS. B. LAING: What communities did it operate in? Basically just the northern, rural areas?

MR. CHABILLON: Yes, northern communities in Alberta. Slave Lake was one of the primary communities where we had a major housing and program impetus, but we were also in Bonnyville, Lac La Biche, Peace River, and so on.

MRS. B. LAING: Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Hawkesworth.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask sort of a clarification question before we begin. I note that vote 4 has to do with Lotteries and Financial Assistance to Major Exhibitions and Fairs. I notice also that at the back of our public accounts book, there's a statement of disbursements of net lottery proceeds made on behalf of the province of Alberta. It's page 8.22, very far back, virtually the last set of numbers that appear in the public accounts. I'm just wondering, because I take it that in that budget year responsibility for the lotteries fell in that department, is Mr. Weiss the minister we should be asking questions about that schedule if we have them? Is this the proper department to be raising questions to if we have them?

MR. WEISS: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, I could have an opportunity to try and respond to the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View. As you've correctly pointed out, sir, within it

there is an expenditure related to the major fairs in the fiscal year '88-89. At that particular time that was under the responsibility of the then Minister of Career Development and Employment. But under legislation that has followed an individual minister and is not the responsibility of Career Development and Employment. It's dealing with a past item, which if you wanted some detail on, we'd be more than pleased to try and provide. But I would think that in this particular case it should be best addressed through the minister who is responsible, the hon. Minister of Public Works, Supply and Services, if it relates to a fiscal responsibility and perhaps even directly to the Auditor General if there were some accountability question.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Okay. So for today, if I have questions about that schedule or if any member has questions about that schedule, you're not the minister that we should be directing those questions to.

MR. WEISS: Please don't interpret that we're trying to evade, and I welcome your frankness in that regard, sir.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Well, I was just trying to determine what the parameters were for questions this morning.

First of all, I'd just like to welcome the minister and his staff and congratulate him on having only a two-line entry in the Auditor General's report for 1988-89. I think the lack of comment from the Auditor General, if I could put it like that, is well worth pointing out and commending your departmental staff on.

MR. WEISS: If I could, I accept the thanks on behalf of the department as you've expressed it. But more important, if I can come back here next year and still retain only two lines, then I could say I've had some input into that.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the minister a few questions about employment programs. I guess most of the questions will be directed at page 3.24, and the line I'm looking at is 3.2.2. It's a considerable amount of money that is under this department's authority. I just want to know or have some idea from the minister if there's any kind of strategy for employment programs. My sense of it is that virtually anybody who comes down the pike and makes an application is more or less approved for assistance under this program. I wonder if that really is the strategy of the department or if there's more effort towards targeting programs towards certain kinds of industries, certain kinds of businesses, or certain kinds of jobs.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, in response to the hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View – and I certainly welcome the question because it's a very important area to address – as you're aware from looking in the elements, we are endeavouring to deliver many, many programs. What I've undertaken and directed through to the department is: well, a program may have been in effect and introduced 10 years or 15 years ago, and we're not trying to be complacent and say, "That's what's effective in today's market." So we're trying to adapt or change. We're demand driven within the Department of Career Development and Employment, and that's what actually accounts for some of the unexpended items. It doesn't mean that we're short-falling or not delivering the programs. What it means is that in general terms they're not taken up to the allocated or

estimated demand that was placed in the program in the initial stages. In some cases projects either were deferred or postponed or transferred into other areas.

Your direct question as it relates to anybody getting in: we certainly are working to ensure that we can help people. We don't turn people away, but we want to make sure there is more of a direct, one-to-one relationship through our career development offices, of which we have some 32 centres. I provided through to the Chair a small handout of material that identifies the centres as well. So career counselors, to the Member for Calgary-Mountain View, would individually work with a prospective client to try and address what areas they best can be working in or suited to and try and help them within that overall career counseling, not just somebody coming in and saying, "Hey, I want to do this." Because we don't believe that's matching them to their needs or to their skills. It's very important that we look at this to try and upgrade people so that in their future they can become strong, solid contributors to our society. We believe it's very, very much a learning process today for people wanting to go on and better themselves. In particular, as we find in our areas that we're looking at mergers or changes or loss of firms such as we've seen in some of the urban areas, we then work with these people in the career counseling field to see that we can get them suitably, gainfully employed for the future.

Now, I don't know if I've been specific enough for your answer, sir, but I'd be prepared to try and supplement it as well.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: If I could maybe draw on my own personal experience – and I think every member here in the committee has at one time or another or perhaps every year had a STEP placement and PEP people and so on coming into our offices – to my knowledge none of the people who have come in and worked in my office under either of those two programs have ever had any kind of follow-up evaluation to find out whether the experience was worth while: did they learn something, did the skills they get in the work prepare them, and were they able to get a job afterwards of a more permanent nature? I don't know whether we're unique in that or whether there is some kind of evaluation of people who do participate in these employment programs. Without an evaluation it suggested to me that there wasn't really any strategy to see whether you're meeting your goals, your guidelines, or your objectives. So I'm just wondering if the department does have an evaluation or monitoring process in place to ensure that jobs created under these programs are being effective or taking us in the direction that we want to go.

MR. WEISS: Well, I'll make a brief comment, Mr. Chairman, and then I would ask Mr. Geoff Anderson to supplement as well. First of all, we don't have a large enough component of staff that we can follow up on all cases. I would want to point out, though, that that's one of the areas we're looking at very carefully with regard to STEP and PEP, and this year we have changed STEP to ensuring that there is a strong career training component side of it rather than just all labour intensified.

May I use an example? If an urban community said that they want to hire 20 STEP positions and they're all going to be operating lawn mowers, I don't really think that's a specific training as such. So our direction and emphasis will be on the training side. I think there has to be some responsibility back, and I don't say to you individually, but to those employers to also ensure that there is a training component involved in bringing on that person. We believe that we can take corrective

steps in this, but we're not fully there as well. As I said, the evaluation can't take place entirely.

I'd ask Mr. Anderson to supplement as well because he's been working very closely in that area.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Chairman, for all of our programs there are surveys and evaluations carried out. It would vary depending on the nature of the program. For programs such as STEP and PEP, which are providing work experience and job creation over a finite period of time, we tend to survey a certain percentage of the people participating in the program – both the employer and the employee – to test the satisfaction with the program, how it relates to the education the person is taking, and so on. For other programs that are intended to have a longer term training or employment effect, we would carry out a larger evaluation as well as a survey, but we'd either do it through monitoring with our own staff or within the department, having staff carry out an evaluation, or in a number of instances contracting outside consulting firms to do the evaluation for us. So pretty well every program is surveyed each year at the minimum, and over a period of time or a cycle just about every program would have a more full evaluation carried out.

MR. WEISS: If I could just supplement that, Mr. Chairman, so the member would be aware and to all members of your committee. To date on STEP, which just completed the applications on the 20th, we have now committed and have accepted some 7,465 individual applications. So if you were to try and, say, monitor every one, 7,465 people in that program alone who would have to be contacted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm a little uneasy about this particular line of questioning because it's getting into the area of policy as opposed to an actual expenditure by the department in that year. But with that cautioning, if it's all right with the committee, I'd extend to the member an opportunity to ask yet another question because his first question really asked a clarification. Is that agreed, members of committee?

HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. HAWKESWORTH: Thank you, members of the committee and Mr. Chairman. My experience with STEP and PEP has been that the people coming through them have been able to get jobs afterwards. I understand that you can only do a spot evaluation. I just want to know if there is sort of a value-for-money review going on.

The minister talked in his opening comments about a shift in strategy from employment to training. Under vote 2, Training and Career Services, there's almost a \$20 million underexpenditure. I'm wondering if he could reconcile his earlier statement that this is now a priority with what appears to be a cutting back or a reduction in commitment to that area, just by looking at that \$20 million underexpenditure.

MR. WEISS: Certainly. Mr. Chairman, I'd refer it to Mr. Reid Zittlau.

MR. ZITTLAU: The underexpenditure that took place in vote 2, training – primarily the industry-based training programs – was as a result of the contracts that were put into place with employers that, in essence, did not materialize. The reason they don't materialize is that when employers attempt to recruit to a

particular position, they sometimes find either that they can't recruit someone to a particular position as quickly as they had intended or that individuals that were already in positions actually leave the position before the contract period that we have agreed to has completed. So as a result of that type of turnover that is natural in the marketplace, you end up with what we refer to as slippage. In this particular year it's a reflection of the strengthening economy.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, if I may supplement. As Mr. Zittlau has pointed out, strengthening of our economy certainly has changed our demand, but it doesn't mean that there is any less demand in particular areas. There's one element that we haven't brought out clearly, and that's the tailor-made training program, where funds would then be used to specifically work with industry to try and assist them in training and upgrading the special programs. One small example is the forestry training program, where there's some \$9.3 million being allocated to assist those in the forest sector.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mrs. Black.

MRS. BLACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to welcome the minister and say we're delighted to have him here today. My question relates to the Immigration and Settlement Services sector in vote 3, and it shows up on page 3.24. Specifically, I'd like to first of all talk about the reference 3.3.1, where we had estimates of \$138,107 for Administrative Support, but we actually spent \$248,675. I was wondering why the additional funds were needed in that area.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I'm going to ask Mr. Zittlau to also respond on that. I'm glad to see the hon. member out. I say "out" because I don't know if all members are aware that she was stuck in an elevator last evening for over an hour, so I'm glad you could join us.

Mr. Zittlau.

MR. ZITTLAU: Okay. That was page 3.24, item 2.3.1. The unexpended amount in there were as a result of the advertising . . .

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Have we got the right section?

MRS. BLACK: Item 3.3.1.

MR. ZITTLAU: I'm sorry; 3.3.1. That's the Administrative Support for Immigration and Settlement Services. The higher than anticipated costs incurred there were for administrative support relating to our Hong Kong office, which we supported out of that particular section, and some of the communication costs we had that were not anticipated. It was just relatively new at that period of time, and we had not correctly anticipated all the costs associated with the support of that operation.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, as well, there is another portion. The printing costs were increased substantially in view of our high demands for the immigration and settlement services brochures, an area that hopefully we're going to continue to provide assistance in. So there was a very high incremental cost in having to produce and print material for that.

I might add to Mr. Zittlau's comments about the Hong Kong office. It's one that we're not able to control, and I think that

will be reflected in many other various departments who are involved and associated with foreign offices. Because of the structures, where we're able to go in with fixed costs in relation to a lease cost or if that was relative to an expenditure, we're able to budget that, but when we're going in with unknown and dealing with unknown areas, it's very difficult. In those areas of such rapid growth and escalating costs factors, we're unable to accurately budget those expenditures.

MRS. BLACK: Mr. Chairman, how many foreign offices do you have?

MR. WEISS: We don't have any foreign offices, Mr. Chairman, through you to the hon. member. We do have a staff representative in the Alberta office in Hong Kong. The present position is filled by Mr. Jack Lee, whose contract will expire in August. We will then be reappointing a person to that facility.

MRS. BLACK: Okay. And lastly, I'd like to ask a question of: do you have any special programs that are set up through your department that assist refugees settling in Alberta?

MR. WEISS: Most certainly, Mr. Chairman, and we would be pleased to indicate what we're spending in those areas, if you'd like, and I'd ask Mr. Chabillon to respond.

MR. CHABILLON: Yes, Mr. Minister. Under Immigration and Settlement Services we do provide services to new Albertans, be they refugee or immigration status, through private agencies within the province. We fund the organizations. They in turn provide interpretive services and settlement services such as ESL - English language training - escort services, and assist the individuals to integrate into the communities, whatever community they might choose to become a resident in. We work very closely with our federal counterparts, Canada Employment and Immigration, in the interests of utilizing resources that Canada provides to the settlement and immigration program. The program we've been involved with has been ongoing for five or six years - I guess maybe beyond that and perhaps closer to 10 years - and the success rate of integration into the mainstream has been very successful.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, if I may supplement as well, it gives me an opportunity to expound on some of the programs, because they are very effective and very essential, especially to new people coming into Canada. I know that several members on both sides, and particularly yourself, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Chumir, are involved in working with different agencies. I would encourage hon. members, in particular the members from Calgary, to perhaps visit the Calgary settlement and immigration services, who have a fine facility and a really dedicated committed staff. I recently have been in part of their facilities on some of their programs, and encourage people to work with them. It's certainly a worthwhile effort, and they would appreciate all the help they can get.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I'd just like to again mention that, you know, I find the question encouraged a very interesting response on the part of the minister, but in Public Accounts I think what we're trying to do again - at least that's the sense I got from the members of the committee earlier this year - is to try to look at accountability

in the public sector. So if we drive towards actual expenditures, we may begin to complete that link.

Mr. Bruseker.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to return to page 3.22 and look at Employment and Agency Support; it's line 3.2. I notice there's a total of some \$7 million underexpended there, and I understand those are the STEP and PEP programs. I was under the impression last year that they were oversubscribed and that there were not sufficient funds, and yet we see a shortfall of some \$7 million in expenditures there. I'm wondering why that \$7 million was not expended in the last year for those programs.

MR. WEISS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, through you to the hon. member. His assumption is correct in that they're oversubscribed. Oversubscribed doesn't necessarily mean taken up, in that the initial applications would be far in excess of the numbers we would have budgeted or allocated for. In this particular case it's 22 and a half million dollars or whatever, but the final end result is as a result of several individuals perhaps not fulfilling the program or dropping out, or less people being involved. To speak to the exact details of it, Mr. Chabillon has worked very closely on the program, and I'd ask him to report to the hon. member as well.

MR. CHABILLON: Yes, Mr. Minister. Perhaps we can use PEP and STEP as two examples which typify what happens as it relates to this appropriation. In the case of both those programs, programs start and stop at a given time; they run for given periods. Given projects may not start right on time, and as a result there are some dollars that are unexpended. Or as you get to the end of a program, for example with STEP, some young people may decide to leave the job a week or two weeks early, and as a result there is some slippage. In '88-89, in the budget year we're discussing, PEP, for example, had unexpended dollars of \$324,539, and we in fact overspent STEP slightly, the equivalent amount. But within the whole appropriation that is not the case. The slippage or the unexpended dollars totaled, as you indicated, close to \$7 million, and that is reflected on the nature of the programs in that we fully commit the dollars; the dollars are fully committed to the agencies we're working with. However, they're not fully expended, given the nature of the programs and the nature of the client group that these agencies are working with.

MR. WEISS: In particular, Mr. Chairman, a supplementing as well. Several programs were not continued. But I want to emphasize and indicate that while it would appear that we've underexpended, we are not a delivery agency or department that just takes an allocated budget and spends it. We're providing career development, employment, and learning opportunities. So any funds that are not used are either put into other programs or are not committed, and so it's reported this way. We don't turn around and say, "Well, come March 31 we must go out and buy capital equipment." I'm not saying this is a practice, but I would think it would be in the minds of all hon. members. We would then not turn around and use those funds unwisely. Funds are used for program delivery, and that's the way it's reported.

MR. BRUSEKER: That's certainly a responsible viewpoint. I agree with that position. Further on that same line then. STEP,

I understand, was 22 and a half million; PEP was a similar amount. I notice a total of some \$80 million authorized for that year. Expenditures were \$73 million. I'm wondering what other programs fall under that or were to be covered by that authorization of \$80 million.

MR. WEISS: Certainly, Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased to provide it in writing for the hon. member as well. But there's the PEP, the STEP, the Alberta wage subsidy, Alberta business and community development, employment skills, special placement, employment alternatives under the Quebec/Alberta student exchange program, international marketing, and agency support. We have those all broken down, and I'd be pleased to provide it in writing. So the hon. member may wish to refer to specifically one program or ask any further questions of us, and we'd be pleased to respond.

MR. BRUSEKER: Thank you. My final question deals with sort of all four of the votes on page 3.23 with respect to the salaries, wages, and employee benefits section. Although this particular book doesn't give us the total number of employees, when I look at the total expenditures on salaries and compare it to the total number of employees and do a comparison between all government departments, Career Development and Employment has the highest average salary per employee of any department in the government: almost 50 percent higher on average than other departments. I'm wondering why that is.

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, that's an interesting observation and one that I wasn't aware of. I'm pleased the hon. member would point it out. I hope it reflects the capability of the staff and management and their worth. Interestingly, the unexpended amount – and it's next to our total authorized expenditure – really results from excess provisions for employer contributions, and we, of course, follow all guidelines by Treasury in the Treasury Board guidelines. I don't know whether there's any significant item or area that we could pinpoint. I'm going to ask Dr. Mansfield, the acting deputy minister, to respond, because it's one that I can't even hypothetically begin to realize an answer for. I would welcome your comments, sir.

DR. MANSFIELD: Well, first of all, of course, Mr. Chairman, I find that figure very gratifying.

I would just have to speculate on two points. One would be that certainly we have a considerable percentage of, if one could use the term, professional staff with respect to counseling staff and so on as well in that group. The other thing is, I guess, that we have a number of individuals who've been there for some time. I would think, particularly in the apprenticeship area, the trades qualified individuals are what would be described as up-range salary individuals, based on their skill area, and they've also been in those positions for some time. It's an area where those skills are hard come by, if you like, and once they have them, they stay in that area and apply their expertise for a fair length of time. There's really not much opportunity for them elsewhere in government; that is, they're highly specialized as it relates back to industry needs. So I think that a large part of that figure would come from the apprenticeship side of things.

MR. ZITTLAU: Well, if I may add to that. I think the aberration that you notice in the public accounts results from the

additional salaries, wages, and employee benefits accorded to the actual delivery programs that we have under the provincial government elements of PEP and STEP, whereby our department is actually required to pay a salary for the PEP, STEP, and a number of other programs: these employees that are scattered throughout the government departments. Does that answer your question?

MR. BRUSEKER: I guess it does. I'm not sure. Maybe I'll explain to the minister later on how I came up with the figure, and he can have a look at it.

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think it's a very valid point and a concern. I can see now that, for example, those persons who are allocated in under those STEP programs – the salary is being reflected into our overall picture, and so that would distort the percentage or average.

DR. MANSFIELD: As well, if I might, Mr. Chairman. My colleague Dave Chabillon just noted as well, to supplement what Mr. Zittlau said, that the training dollars, the salaries that we pay in the Opportunity Corps, would also show up as departmental salary dollars the way those are disbursed. So those would also add to the kind of thing that Mr. Zittlau mentioned.

MR. BRUSEKER: But those individuals that are employed in the Opportunity Corps would also be included, then, in the total departmental . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is really a fourth question. I take it that it's by way of a clarification, and the minister's just answered it briefly. Fine, thank you.

Mr. Payne.

MR. PAYNE: Mr. Chairman, in their responses to the questions raised by the members for Calgary-Mountain View and Calgary-North West, the minister and his officials have more or less addressed the questions I had with respect to underexpenditure. So at the risk of disappointing my colleagues in the Assembly today, I'll pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right.

Mr. Ewasiuk.

MR. EWASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, want to extend my gratitude to the minister. I had occasion to deal with him when he was in other portfolios, and I appreciated the kind of response I always got from him. It's good to have him here today and be able to ask him a few questions in this department.

I'd like to make specific reference to vote 2, Training and Career Services. Almost the entire vote totals – at the end there is an underexpenditure of some \$20 million. I thought when I heard the minister's opening comments that the emphasis was in fact on training and programs, and yet that doesn't really reflect – at least I don't think it reflects – that in this particular vote. I wonder if there are any comments you would want to make relative to that.

MR. WEISS: Well, I appreciate the remarks, Mr. Chairman, expressed by the Member for Edmonton-Belmont, and would ask Mr. Zittlau once again to respond.

Mr. Chairman, if I might add, prior to Mr. Zittlau's response, that I would hope all hon. members would not feel I'm bypassing

their answers directly. I feel the department people should have an opportunity to be involved and be participants and be accountable and responsible for the delivery of the programs. I work very closely with these people, and I'm very confident that they're as interested in the response as well. It's for that reason I'm asking them to be involved in this session this morning. So, Mr. Zittlau.

MR. ZITTLAU: Thank you. The \$20 million unexpended amount in vote 2 again, as mentioned earlier, relates to what we refer to as the slippage in the programs, in that we've established budgets that reflect the anticipated level of expenditure. We then accept the applications from the various clientele we are trying to serve. Not all of the commitments that we've put into place do in fact materialize, and as a result of that we end up with some unexpended amounts, which, as I mentioned earlier, in this particular year the volume . . . When the budget was set into place at the beginning of the year, the actual economic recovery that took place during the year was stronger than we had anticipated, and as a result we had greater slippage than we had anticipated in that.

MR. EWASIUK: Okay. Well, just following up on that, Mr. Chairman. Because I think there was more activity in the economy, it would suggest to me, then, the requirements and needs for increased apprenticeship programs, training programs, and so on, because we need the work force. Yet that hasn't happened. But I want to particularly speak to – I was interested and quite pleased that there's this special needs program in apprenticeship programs. Does that come under this particular vote? I wonder if the minister can maybe just expand on this program. What kinds of numbers are we looking at to date? What are the projections in terms of including the special needs people – the disabled, minorities, and so on – into the apprenticeship program to ensure that those people are placed in trades and other occupations in which they could contribute to the economy?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I apologize that my remarks will probably not be dealing exactly with the past again, because it's dealing with what we're looking at into the future. But I feel I must respond partially to the hon. member and then be more detailed as well. In particular our emphasis will be on those visible minorities and special groups, as indicated by the hon. Member for Edmonton-Belmont, and also our emphasis will be . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, can I interrupt?

MR. WEISS: Certainly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Edmonton-Beverly, I think. It's easy to make this . . .

MR. WEISS: My apologies through the Chair to the member. I certainly well know that it's the Member for Edmonton-Beverly.

Our emphasis will be in the apprenticeship and awareness areas, and perhaps he, too, has recently seen some of the advertisements and promotions as we're working in those areas. A lot of our promotional advertising dollars in forthcoming years will be directed into there, as I've indicated, in the phase two

part of the program. Dr. Mansfield will deal with it directly as it relates to the past expenditure.

DR. MANSFIELD: Well, the area at that time was an apprenticeship program particularly for the disadvantaged. As it functioned then, it primarily focused on the assistance to native individuals in the province. It was a relatively modest program at that time, as a part of that area of apprenticeship. During '88-89 was the commencement of changing it to a much broader based program and was when the title was changed to access initiatives. The intent then was to broaden the scope of that program for others who were having difficulty accessing apprenticeship. Again, the intent was to provide preapprenticeship training, bridging programs, orientation programs, provide linkage to employers, more information to employers in that area. It meant a good deal of policy work had to be done in preparation for that and looking at the linkage with apprenticeship generally, because it is a partnership program with industry. So it had to go back through discussions with the apprenticeship board and to the subcommittees in that area. I don't know if this is responding to the specific concern you had.

MR. EWASIUK: I'd just make the comment that I think it sounds to me like an excellent program, and I'd certainly encourage that you get more and more involved in it. I think it's the right direction certainly.

Do I have one more question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Paszkowski.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to take this opportunity to compliment the minister and his whole department for the lack of presence in the annual report of the Auditor General. I think that's very, very commendable, and I wish you continued success in your efforts.

I want to go back to page 3.24, vote 2.5.2, where there's a \$13 million underexpenditure. You have somewhat explained that the upturn of the economy has created this surplus or underexpenditure, and I guess I have to ask the question, even though it's a future type of question: was there not the opportunity to perhaps diversify somewhat and utilize this money because of the industrial upbeat that is coming about within the province? You mentioned that unemployment was down, but could there not have been some form of diversification that could have taken place?

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, once again it's an interesting analysis to look, first of all, and say, well, the funds were unexpended in relation to industry-based training programs. But I'd like to go back to the words "industry-based." As the hon. member has pointed out, it's working with industry, and we're certainly not going to just spend money for the sake of spending money. We're going to buy industry in and be part of it. That's a responsibility I accept and our department is very committed to: that these are two-way streets. In this particular case the shortfall was that industry was not working to a full 100 percent maximum on a demand-driven basis. The underexpenditure is due to a lower than anticipated utilization of the programs.

I'm pleased to say that there are some industry participants who are very keenly committed and want to have the opportunity to share. Some that we're currently working on in the forestry areas, for example, are being taken up to the full level. But in this particular area it was not. Some of the areas I think

the hon. member should be alerted to, Mr. Chairman, I would ask Mr. Chabillon to directly outline, because there are specific ones he should be aware of.

Mr. Chabillon.

MR. CHABILLON: Well, the Alberta training program and the Alberta youth employment experience program are two programs that generated the \$13 million that you make reference to, and the minister has answered the question. I guess I would only underline the fact that the department did commit the dollars; we did enter into contracts with employers to, in fact, utilize these dollars to employ Albertans through these programs. However, the dollars were not expended by the people we entered into contracts with, and as a result the slippage was generated.

As to your question of why didn't we reallocate the dollars, we do monitor programs and projects, and if dollars are not being used by employers, we do cancel projects or revise contracts with them to reflect their utilization. But given the nature of the programs and the fact that employers will say to us, "We're not using it today, but we'll use it tomorrow," creates a challenge for us to update contracts and enter into new contracts. We do ensure that we follow the letter of the Financial Administration Act in the sense of committing dollars and cannot overcommit our budget in the event that everybody utilizes it. So we get caught with the reality of the parameters in which we manage.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I have to supplement one portion of it as well and outline to all hon. members of your committee that our department is also very tough in that while we perhaps would make a contract with an industry-based firm for a commitment, if that commitment has not been honoured – when I say "not honoured," in that it hasn't met the full degree of the contractual obligations – we as a department will go back and collect those funds if they're not expended in the appropriate manner. We don't allow the dollars to be spent and just say, "Fine, we buy in, and there they are." We actually go back. A large part of our program reductions are as a result of making a contract with a company, say for \$100,000, and finding that a portion of those funds are not being used to hire or train the people specifically as was part of the contractual arrangements. We then, in turn, will charge back and collect those moneys. We sometimes receive flak and representation from hon. members saying, "Well, gee; why don't we waive this?" I don't believe we waive anything. If any two parties enter into a contract that's mutually agreed upon and understood, I think we all have to honour the intent of that contract.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you. I guess just as a comment: you're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't, type of thing. If you spend too much, you're condemned; if you underspend, you're condemned as well.

My second question is basically along the same lines. What kinds of industry-based training programs does the department offer for individuals and for businesses under this particular vote? Just what kinds of programs are offered?

MR. WEISS: Certainly, Mr. Chairman. I would make a few remarks and ask Mr. Chabillon to respond again as well. In particular I relate to a forest industry training program where we would go out and work with groups and with industry to assist in the training of persons for those jobs who have not been familiar, say, in a local rural area, where they've not had an

opportunity to learn the skills that are necessary to better their degree of employment, and as well, in several cases, to work with industry where they're looking for a specialized trade or skilled people. It may be a program such as the heavy truck driving program, where we'll have taken people from all areas, brought them in and run them through the programs, and know that they'll then be gainfully employed.

In the forestry one I just referred to, we recently had 11 graduates from the community of Grouard in northern Alberta. These individuals had never worked in the forest projects at all. When I talk about worked in the forest projects, I'm not referring to just working in the bush, the cutting of trees. I'm referring to highly skilled in operating tree fallers and equipment. It is a specialized field.

The programs are available to all industry proponents. In most cases – and this is another part of it that's very essential, Mr. Chairman, and all members should be aware – we work with matching dollars. It's not our dollars that we're buying in with. We want industry to be a part of it, but if they're not going to share or accept part of the responsibilities, we don't think it's the government's responsibility alone. We can't do it alone.

To perhaps deal in more detail, Mr. Chabillon, you may expand on one or two areas.

MR. CHABILLON: Thank you, Mr. Minister. The prime programs are the Alberta training program, the Alberta youth employment experience program, and the tailor-made program. To supplement the programs, the types of industries that we work with reflect, as the minister has stated, the forest industry, given the development that's before us right now; the garment manufacturing industry, which is using, particularly, our tailor-made program; and the hospitality industry. We work in co-operation with the Tourism Education Council and support their initiatives through our program base. Also, the Alberta service industry base is growing dramatically, and as a result of technology and innovations in that industry, major use is made, particularly, of our Alberta training program by that industry as well.

MR. PASZKOWSKI: Thank you. My last question, basically. Do you have any measure as to the economic diversification this provides to the province regarding each specific type of program that you have? Are there certain programs that contribute much more dramatically than other programs? Do you have any measures that you use to determine the successes of the various programs towards economic diversification within the province?

MR. WEISS: Well, Mr. Chairman, through to the hon. member, we're continuing to monitor and evaluate all programs. They're demand driven, and as the economy shifts and diversification itself shifts in specific areas, we too feel that we have to be flexible to adapt. It was indicated previously in other programs and in STEP as well that we will have ongoing monitoring processes in place. As far as being specific, I don't know of any percentage that I might speak to, or say it reflects that this is an 87 percent factor in one area or not. I couldn't be any more specific in that.

DR. MANSFIELD: To date the programs have not been particularly set out as industry sector specific. They've been essentially aimed at particular employers as they surface their needs and with respect to the needs of individuals. We had them looking at the pattern of expenditures and how they'll

shake out in these different sectors, but we haven't targeted so much for Tourism and so much for this and so much for that. Typically, we work very closely with Economic Development and Trade, with Agriculture, with the telecommunications department and so on to look at where the economy appears to be going and to ensure that we don't put any barriers in our programs that would prevent those kinds of employers or individuals from accessing our program. But I don't believe . . . I think it's fair to say, Dave, that we try to make them sector specific.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Chumir.

MR. CHUMIR: I'd like to echo the words of welcome to the minister and his staff, Mr. Chairman, and I have a general question perhaps I might direct to the chairman. I'm interested in inquiring about a specific expenditure referred to in the supplementary information to the public accounts. That, I take it, is quite appropriate then? I'm looking at page 3.36 of the supplementary information, and on that page a grant given by the department to Dashmesh Culture Centre in the amount of \$160,122.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Repeat the page number.

MR. CHUMIR: Page 3.36 of the supplementary information to the '88-89 public accounts.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I apologize. I don't have that specific detailed expenditure here. I realize it's relating to grants that the Department of Career Development and Employment had specifically expended at that time. I would have to undertake and commit to provide it in detail for the hon. member, and apologize that I don't have it here. Unless one of our members can respond, and I'm not sure they can . . . No, I'm sorry; we can't.

MR. CHUMIR: Well, I appreciate that undertaking, and I wonder whether I might then get a similar undertaking with respect to a group on page 3.45 called the Ethnic Canadian Association of Alberta.

MR. WEISS: Once again, Mr. Chairman, I'd certainly apologize to the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo and would not wish him to read into anything that we're trying to evade or hide from, but would undertake to provide it for him. I'm sorry; we don't have that detail here. It is grants. It's under public accounts and certainly has been scrutinized by the Auditor General. We'd be pleased to provide the details to the hon. member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I just would like to say to the hon. minister that there's no need to apologize. No one is going to suggest that there's any attempt here to obscure information or whatever. I think that all members of the committee, hon. minister, might appreciate it if you'd send the information to me, and I'll make sure it's distributed to all members of the committee.

MR. WEISS: Certainly. Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that those grants refer to a program that is no longer in existence, the ABCD program, and that would be probably MLA-driven or a request at that time. Working with the hon. member, who has a keen interest in that area, we'll be pleased to provide it to him.

MR. CHUMIR: Thank you. That would be very fine, Mr. Chairman.

Final question. I'm going back to the main book with respect to the public accounts, page 3.24, and there's a line item, 2.3.5, relating to Private Vocational Schools Support in which \$1,664,709 was expended. I wonder whether the minister or members of his staff could perhaps just tell us a bit about that program: what the program entails and what types of institutions get it and the criteria; just a general explanation of what's going on there.

MR. WEISS: Certainly. We'd be pleased to, Mr. Chairman, but I'd ask Mr. Geoff Anderson to respond to the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. ANDERSON: The private vocational schools is an element of the Alberta vocational training program. It's basically designed to provide support, both program or tuition support, and training allowances for individuals who are taking a training course in a private vocational school. It's done pretty well on the same basis as it would be purchased from any provincially administered institution or board of governor institution. It's just an element under the Alberta vocational training program.

MR. WEISS: We buy those folders.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Mr. Cardinal.

MR. CARDINAL: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to welcome the minister and staff, staff that looks very familiar to me: some of my former bosses and co-workers. I spent over 10 years in the department, and I, too, commend the department for not showing up in the annual report of the Auditor General. I personally know in the department - I always use the department as a department that's very efficient and effective in management. Because I spent so many years in the department, it's a bit tough for me to find a question that I wouldn't know the answer to, except maybe the high salaries.

But I do have a question. There's a gray area because of the present problem and past problem we had with high caseloads in social services. I know you have programs that assist social assistance recipients in making a transition from social assistance to the labour force and training. I would like the minister to advise what votes would cover those programs. I believe 2.2.4, no doubt, on page 3.24 of the public accounts booklet. Are there other areas that would cover that? Because it's kind of gray; it doesn't really stand out. I know you do that, but it doesn't stand out here.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, through to the hon. member, I recognize his past involvement and experience, certainly, within the department, and perhaps he should have deferred his question.

Seriously, the alternatives employment program is one area where we have committed an awful lot of personal staff resource as well as the financial commitment of some \$17 million expended through this program and is one that we're looking at to try and improve. As the hon. member is aware from the representation that he's made within his constituency and others within the province, we're trying to create more tailor-made programs and delivery of these. In particular, I also would like

to indicate through to the Chair that the programs in Calgary, for example, through the Columbia Institute, which many hon. members are familiar with, work very closely with our department and I believe are very strong support people within the communities of the overall programs. Once again, then, Mr. Chairman, we'd be dealing with current programs, which this isn't the opportune time to respond to, but I would like the opportunity to work with the hon. member in the future direction that we're going. But in dealing with the past, I would ask our staff members to comment to the Member for Athabasca-Lac La Biche as to the specifics when he asks what other programs there are and where they are. Mr. Anderson, would you be responding to that, sir?

MR. ANDERSON: Specifically, although we expended last year in the neighbourhood of \$40 million in respect to social allowance recipients – that includes money under the Alberta vocational training program – the two particular items that cover the employment alternatives program are item 2.5.2, Industry Based Training Programs, which provides the front-end support or pre-employment training for individuals on social assistance, and item 3.2.2, Employment Programs, which provides the work experience component for the employment alternatives program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Supplementary?

MR. CARDINAL: Yeah. I just have one final supplement. Looking back in the '88-89 public accounts, I know you're involved some, and have been in the past, in joint delivery with social services. Could you identify the areas where you are involved in joint co-ordination and delivery with Family and Social Services?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, could I ask the member to be more specific when he says "what areas?" Our areas, of course, are related to job and career training and learning and skills enhancement. I'm not familiar with just exactly what he's . . .

MR. CARDINAL: Mr. Chairman, I was referring to my first question on programs, which Mr. Anderson identified: that they are involved in assisting social assistance recipients make a transition from social assistance to employment. The second question is related to that, the final supplement. Is it done in co-ordination with the other department? That's all the question is.

MR. WEISS: I once again would ask Mr. Anderson to respond. I now understand the question more thoroughly: in relation to our overall involvement and participation level, and to what degree do we work in concert with the department? So, Mr. Anderson, perhaps you'd respond in detail to the member.

MR. ANDERSON: There are two particular answers to this question. There is a Canada/Alberta agreement called the Canada/Alberta Accord on Employability Enhancement to Social Assistance Recipients. That is signed jointly, from Alberta's perspective, by the departments of Family and Social Services and Career Development and Employment. Those programs were the ones that I mentioned earlier and were covered under 2.5.2 and 3.2.2. It commits Alberta to matching the federal government expenditures of \$16 million. Additionally, the one other co-operative program that's run, and has been over an extended period of time, is the employment skills

program, in which case Family and Social Services identifies positions within government and community organizations and with hospital and school boards for the placement for work experience of individuals in receipt of social allowance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.
Ms Laing.

MS M. LAING: [Not recorded] question in regard to Private Vocational Schools Support. We sometimes hear reports of the inadequacy of programs provided by private vocational schools. I'm wondering a couple of things: one, if we could have a list of the recipients of grants under this or from whom services are purchased under this program, and also whether there's an evaluation of the standards of the programs being purchased prior to that or subsequently in terms of the level of skill developed by participants in those programs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There are really two questions there.

MR. WEISS: Very important as well, Mr. Chairman. We're working very closely with the Minister of Advanced Education and continue to see that while the programs may be demand-driven, most important is that they address the needs and reflect the current needs. I think the hon. Member for Edmonton-Avonmore is on a very delicate point here: to ensure that our dollars are being spent wisely and that we're getting the best value for our dollar. I'd ask the assistant deputy minister, Dr. Mansfield, to respond.

DR. MANSFIELD: The minister made the point that I wanted to ensure was made with respect to the way we in fact function with Advanced Education and the Advanced Education licensing of the private vocational schools and the standards that relate to that. Geoff Anderson, if I might, could give you the specific detail that you asked.

MR. ANDERSON: The Department of Advanced Education I believe has two classes of private vocational schools that are registered with the department, a class B and a class A. The class A is one that has to have submitted a track record showing what happens to the graduates, the number of graduates they have, and there has to be a certain percentage that receive employment, and the standards have to be maintained. We will only fund through the private vocational school element those that have a class A certificate. In other words, those that are in the first year and have no track record are not funded through that element.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I believe the hon. member also asked if that could be provided, the breakdown? Is this possible, hon. minister? Could we distribute that as well to all members?

MR. WEISS: Yes, we'd certainly undertake that. I want to re-emphasize the point to the hon. member that you have to be in the game for one year; you have to have a track record and be proven.

MS M. LAING: A track record that's been proven to be not so great. But, anyway . . .

Another area I'd like to move into is the area of ESL and the commitment that you have stated towards women in your department. One of the concerns that is raised by particularly

immigrant women is that if they're sponsored immigrants or if they are in the work force in what we would call job ghettos, where there isn't a language skill particularly necessary or there is a group of them from the same language grouping, they cannot access ESL, which is necessary for them to advance in their career – I don't know that they're careers – or to advance in terms of the kinds of jobs they can obtain. Has any consideration been given to targeting funds for this particular need?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, before I ask one of the members to supplement the answer as well, I'd like to indicate to the Member for Edmonton-Avonmore that I have met with most agencies to date. I apologize that I haven't been able to meet with them all, but collectively at various functions have had the opportunity to speak to most as well.

We deal with two issues here, and I want to indicate what's within the expenditure itself and that we have expended over \$6 million to English as a Second Language programs. Dealing in the present, we are going to be continuing those programs, but, as well, as it deals with the women's issues, I'd like to indicate we're working very closely with the Minister of Labour. If one were to look very closely at our overall development within those visible minorities – the disadvantaged, disabled, and others, as the hon. Member for Edmonton-Beverly had indicated – the hon. member will find that we are spending perhaps more dollars than any other department towards direction and assistance for women and other groups. I call that, if I may, the 10 percent group. The 10 percent group are not being given the attention or the advantage, and I believe that they are fully qualified and capable. But for detail I would ask Mr. Anderson once again to respond.

MR. ANDERSON: I think just two quick comments. One is that over the past several years and with increasing emphasis we have looked at the issue of workplace ESL, and we have in both Edmonton and Calgary several situations in which we are running classrooms in ESL in a worksite and in areas that could be defined as job ghettos; for example, garment manufacturing or hotels.

MS M. LAING: That's what I was thinking of.

MR. ANDERSON: Yeah. And we have a number of projects and are developing a more coherent policy, I guess, in terms of doing more of that. The other thing that we have attempted to do is put into place a capacity to determine the ESL requirements, particularly in Edmonton and Calgary where a substantial number of refugees and other immigrants are located, to define the particular requirements of the people needing ESL. One of the things we've tended to do in the past is run traditional classes in traditional institutions, and we are beginning to develop a pretty clear knowledge of the types of requirements for English, much clearer than we did in the last 10 years or so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
Mr. Jonson.

MS M. LAING: Well, I have another one.

MR. JONSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member has, I guess, got . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Her first question contained two parts to it.

Mr. Jonson.

MR. JONSON: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to refer, as many members have, to page 3.22, vote 2, but I'd like to go a little bit further down the list than some have, to 4, 4.1, 4.2, concerning funding for fairs and exhibitions.

I was waiting, Mr. Chairman, because it seems like they're looking up my reference.

Anyway, this is a question both for the minister and then possibly the Auditor General would want to respond. When funding for capital items is transferred to a fair or exhibition, is there any follow-up to see that that money is in fact spent within a reasonable period of time for that purpose?

MR. WEISS: Certainly, Mr. Chairman. In view of time, I'd ask Mr. Schubert Kwan to respond to the hon. member.

MR. KWAN: The nature of some of these grants is that the grants are made on a claim basis after the expenditures are incurred. On the operating grant, there are two types of operating grant. There's a straight operating grant that's based on the number of eligible activity days that are agriculturally related. The grant is given after the calendar year, so it's like a reimbursement. There's another type of operating grant that's a pari-mutuel rebate. On all pari-mutuel wagers the fairs are charged a 5 percent tax, and then we reimburse them on a formula basis, which is about 1 percent of the tax. The other grant is the capital grant, which is again an after-the-fact grant based on the population of the city or town where the fair is. The exhibition is required to submit actual invoices of expenditures incurred, and we reimburse after the fact. So there is evidence that the money has been spent.

MR. WEISS: Mr. Chairman, I hope that's clear. The expenditure from us is made only after the expenditure is made on the front end, with official receipts being provided.

MR. JONSON: Well, let me try a different tack with my supplementary, Mr. Chairman. What I'm getting at is that, generally speaking, fair and exhibition societies are very busy, very active across the province. But in some cases that I'm aware of, it seems the organization is not operating at full speed, yet there are needs in the community. I'm coming back again to the question about capital grants. The capital grants are provided, but they're not spent. My question is: do you have a follow-up procedure whereby within a reasonable period of time they have to come up with their reporting of how they applied that capital money?

MR. WEISS: Mr. Kwan?

MR. KWAN: I'm sorry, I'm not sure if I understand the question, because in the capital grants they have to submit receipts or invoices that they've spent the money before we make our grant, so it's a reimbursement of what they've already spent. I'm not sure if I really understand your question.

MR. JONSON: That's interesting.

Mr. Chairman, I'll leave it at that, and I'll provide some documentation to the department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

In view of the hour, I'd just like to point out that at least three members who were here at the time the committee meeting started weren't able to get into question period, and two others are on the list. If you have questions that you'd like to put to the minister, maybe you could do that either informally or by way of a letter, and I'm sure he would be very pleased to get back to you.

I'd like to thank the minister and members of his department for coming this morning. The committee found your answers, I'm sure, very informative and interesting, judging by the number of questions they put to you.

I'd now like to call upon Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: I'm sure the minister's door is always open, and those members that didn't get their question in . . . The minister is very co-operative, and he's there, willing and ready,

so they'll get their questions in.

I move we adjourn till next week at 8:30.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps before I hear that motion, I should mention that next week we'll meet at 8:30 a.m. again here in the Assembly Chamber, and the minister that will be before the committee next week will be the Hon. Ken Kowalski of Public Works, Supply and Services.

So, Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE: I move we adjourn.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those in favour? Agreed? Agreed. We're adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 9:56 a.m.]