

High-powered spin costs \$3m

MATT SMITH

EXTERNAL consultants were paid almost \$3 million to give advice on key power projects despite the State Government having its own Energy Unit, new figures show.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet spent the cash on lawyers, marketing professionals, consultants and contractors to both establish and maintain their ambitious energy plan.

The costs have come under

attack after it was revealed one of Australia's largest energy retailers, Energy Australia, warned the State Government its plan to introduce an Energy Security Target would not drive down retail power prices as promised.

The SA Auditor-General's Annual Report shows supplies and services expenses in DPAC rose last year because of spending that included:

PROMOTION and marketing expenses of \$3.7 million "as a result of an increased

number of campaigns including energy and promoting South Australia nationally and internationally".

CONTRACTORS for the Energy Plan Implementation Taskforce worth \$1.4 million.

CONSULTANT costs of \$2.7 million for advice on "energy market transition and electricity generation projects".

LEGAL fees of \$1.1 million for Electricity Reform Project. Opposition Treasury spokesman Rob Lucas has ac-



used the Government of "throwing good money after bad" at its energy plan.

The criticism comes as controversial diesel generators, that are set to cost about \$100 million to help keep the lights on this summer, were tested last week.

Mr Lucas said diesel generators, at a cost of \$110 million to hire and run this summer, were about to be fired up.

"These exorbitant fees come on top of taxpayers forking out \$40 million last year for Labor's Energy Unit and Energy Team to provide advice on power," Mr Lucas said.

"By way of contrast, the mere \$8 million needed to keep the Northern Power Station running this year was a very, very good deal indeed."

Mr Koutsantonis said the government sought extensive expert advice during the formulation and implementation of its energy plan.

"That advice has paid off, with new private-sector investment in gas power plants and solar thermal announced since the plan was launched," Mr Koutsantonis said.

Jump on board and shout out for literacy



EARLY START: Mike Dumbleton reads his book to daughter Nicole and granddaughter Imogen. Picture: MATT LOXTON/AAP Image

DEBORAH BOGLE
BOOKS EDITOR

CHILDREN will be encouraged to run, jump, wave and swing through the pages of Adelaide author Mike Dumbleton's *Jump and Shout!*, in the 2018 Little Big Book Club free reading pack for toddlers.

Jump and Shout! is among

four books in this year's packs published by Raising Literacy's Little Book Press, launched this year.

Dumbleton, a former teacher and literacy educator and the author of more than 40 books, said he had a strong attachment to the Little Big Book Club. "I think they're heading in the right direction

in terms of trying to impact and improve literacy by doing things really early on," he said.

More than 500 volunteers are packing more than 500,000 books for babies to preschoolers for distribution across the state from this month. Since 2006, more than 370,000 bags have been given to SA families with children aged up to five.

Sue Hill, CEO of Raising Literacy Australia, which runs the Little Big Book Club reading programs, said this was "a bumper year" with more than 65,000 packs destined for families and carers.

Packs are available from Monday November 13. Visit thelittlebigbookclub.com.au/readingpacks

CAMERON ENGLAND
BUSINESS EDITOR

ENERGY retailers are being asked to find further discounts for concession customers in return for being marketed as the retailer of choice by the State Government.

The Government has put out a tender for an Energy Discount Offer which it hopes to extend to eligible customers such as concession or seniors card holders by mid-December. The Government isn't tipping any money in and expects the retailer to wear the cost of the discount. In return they will receive preferential marketing from the Government to the state's 180,000 concession customers.

Communities and Social Inclusion Minister Zoe Bettison said extra benefits sought included better prices, bill smoothing "and any other

value-adding opportunities for customers.

"Once a supplier is chosen, the State Government will write to concession holders encouraging them to take advantage of the offer," she said.

"Energy companies will need to show how they will implement the new offer while maintaining customers' existing state government energy concession."

Ms Bettison said the Government provides concessions worth \$170 million to more than 180,000 households across energy, water, sewerage costs and the Emergency Services Levy.

The bid documents envisage a bidder being selected in early December with the program to be offered by mid-December. The Government also prohibits bidders from talking to the media about the procurement process.

Convict to die sitting up

COLUMBUS, Ohio: Allowing a condemned killer with health problems to partially sit up during his execution next month would be a "reasonable" accommodation, according to a doctor.

Death row inmate Alva Campbell became agitated when officials tried lowering him to a normal execution position in an October 19 test, ac-

ording to a medical review by Dr James McWeeney.

Dr McWeeney said that given Campbell's distress, he could, during the execution process, be permitted to lie in a "semi-recumbent position".

Campbell is scheduled to die on November 15 for fatally shooting teenager Charles Dials during a 1997 carjacking.

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Apology

We're sorry.

You might've noticed we made a mistake in the Woolworths catalogue, on sale Wednesday 1st of November 2017. The Oliana Dairy Free Parmesan 125g on page 16 was incorrectly advertised.

The correct save is 50c.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused

Woolworths



Government of South Australia
Department of Planning,
Transport and Infrastructure

SOUTH ROAD TEMPORARY CLOSURE

The Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure advises that rectification works on the South Road Tram Overpass shared use path will impact South Road motorists on Wednesday 1 and Thursday 2 November 2017.

Wednesday 1 November

- South Road will be reduced to one lane in each direction below the overpass between the hours of 8pm and 5am

Thursday 2 November

- South Road will be closed to all through traffic below the overpass between the hours of 11pm and 5am (Adelaide Metro buses and emergency service vehicles excepted).
- Road users will be detoured via Cross Road, Marion Road and Anzac Highway during this time.

Access for local businesses and residents will be maintained either side of the overpass. Adelaide Metro tram and bus services will not be affected.

Works are scheduled for completion and the path re-opened by the end of this year.

Thank you for your patience whilst these important works are undertaken.

For further information: call 1300 794 880 or email dpti.communityrelations@sa.gov.au