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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 710

MONDAY 28 MARCH 2022

(The Questions and Answers Paper published on Monday to Friday of each week will contain, by number and title, all questions to which answers have been received the previous day and any new questions asked that day. Consequently, the full text of any question will be printed only twice: when notice is given; and, when answered.)

Notice given on date shown.

Publication of Questions	Answer to be lodged by
Q & A No. 695 (Including Question Nos 8395 to 8404)	28 March 2022
Q & A No. 696 (Including Question Nos 8405 to 8408)	29 March 2022
Q & A No. 697 (Including Question Nos 8409 to 8412)	30 March 2022
Q & A No. 698 (Including Question Nos 8413 to 8416)	31 March 2022
Q & A No. 699 (Including Question Nos 8417 to 8430)	1 April 2022
Q & A No. 700 (Including Question Nos 8431 to 8450)	4 April 2022
Q & A No. 701 (Including Question Nos 8451 to 8475)	5 April 2022
Q & A No. 702 (Including Question Nos 8476 to 8479)	6 April 2022
Q & A No. 703 (Including Question Nos 8480 to 8487)	7 April 2022
Q & A No. 704 (Including Question Nos 8488 to 8490)	8 April 2022
Q & A No. 705 (Including Question Nos 8491 to 8500)	11 April 2022
Q & A No. 706 (Including Question Nos 8501 to 8573)	13 April 2022
Q & A No. 707 (Including Question Nos 8541 to 8575)	13 April 2022
Q & A No. 708 (Including Question Nos 8576 to 8583)	14 April 2022
Q & A No. 709 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 710 (Including Question Nos 8584 to 8587)	18 April 2022

7 MARCH 2022

(Paper No. 695)

* 8395 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—PREMIER’S DEBATING CHALLENGE—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the choice of topic for the recent Year 11 and 12 Premier’s Debating Challenge, namely that “unvaccinated students should have to learn from home starting Term 2”?
 - (a) Can the Minister advise who chose this topic?
 - (b) What consultation was made in the process of this choice?
- (2) Is the Minister concerned that this choice of topic will provoke an already divided community into further polarising students on the basis of their personal health choices?
 - (a) If not, why not?
- (3) Does the Minister believe that the choice of such a topic is suitable in the current climate?
 - (a) If so, can the Minister explain how this is productive?
 - (b) Please advise how this helps unite the students and broader community?

Answer—

- (1) Debating topics for the Years 11 and 12 Premier’s Debating Challenge are chosen by the debating teams from three suggested topics. In this instance, the teams chose the vaccination topic. The topics were proposed by officers of the Department of Education.

The consultation process includes discussion with school-based coordinators and a panel of experienced adjudicators.

- (2) No. Student debaters are taught to develop the skills required to view arguments from different perspectives and to distinguish argument from personal opinion.
- (3) The most engaging and effective student debating topics relate to current events and the social and cultural environment the students live in. The vaccination of school students is relevant to their lives, and engaging with this topic expands their critical thinking skills and empathy for other perspectives.

The nature of debate is to argue two opposing sides. Having engaged with the arguments, students often come out of a debate better informed about the issue, as well as having a clearer understanding of views held by others.

* 8396 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—HIGH SCHOOL AT WENTWORTH POINT—The Hon. Anthony D’Adam to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) In regards to the proposed High School at Wentworth Point:
 - (a) Given that in correspondence dated 10 December 2021 regarding Stages 1 and 2 of Wentworth Point High School the Parliamentary Secretary for Education said that - “A site has been identified with funding for Stage 1 already confirmed” - can the Minister clarify why the Department of Education Project Update now states that: “Funding for expanded facilities were announced as part of the 2021/22 NSW Budget, increasing the number of students to be accommodated from approximately 850 to 1,500”?
 - (b) Has funding now been confirmed for Stage 2 of Wentworth Point High School?
 - (i) Will the new high school be completed in one construction phase before opening?
 - (c) What is the projected cost of the entire project?
 - (d) What is the timeline for the completion of the entire school for opening?

Answer—

- (1)

- (a) Approval of the Addendum Business Case for this second stage in early 2022 allows the high school to be delivered in a single stage, subject to planning approval.
- (b) Yes.
 - (i) Funding for expanded facilities was announced as part of the 2021/22 NSW Budget, increasing the number of students to be accommodated from approximately 850 to 1,500.
- (c) The cost of the project is commercial in confidence.
- (d) Subject to planning approval, it is currently expected the project will be delivered in a single stage, with a forecast delivery date of late 2023.

* 8397 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—MONA VALE PUBLIC SCHOOL UNISEX TOILETS—
The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) Further to the Minister's answer to Question on Notice 8290:
 - (a) If there was consultation about the new unisex toilet block:
 - (i) Why are parents saying the first they knew of it was when the Mona Vale Principal sent out a video of the finished toilets?
 - (b) What 'alternative facilities' at Mona Vale Public School are available for girls who do not wish to share a toilet block with males?
 - (c) In 2016 were parents at Mona Vale Public School notified of the alleged rape of a 6-year-old girl in the school toilets by two 12-year-old boys?
 - (i) Were the male students suspended from the school?
 - (ii) Were the charges laid against them in court by the police upheld?
 - (d) Why, given the matters in (b) and (c) above, would any school administrator believe that the answer to female safety at the school was to build a new unisex toilet block where boys interacted with girls more readily?

Answer—

- (1)
 - (a)
 - (i) Information in relation to the building works being conducted at Mona Vale Public School were provided in the Newsletters to the school community on 17 and 24 May 2021. The Principal also provided information at the Parents and Citizens Association meetings at the school. School Infrastructure NSW (SINSW) held virtual information sessions to provide details to the school community. Parents were also invited to direct any questions or comments to SINSW via email or telephone.
 - (b) There are other single sex toilet blocks on site which are available for students to use if they prefer. Additional single cubicles are available across the school in Block D, Block I, Block K and Block H. The students are aware of their location.
 - (c) Advice from the Department of Education's Legal Services regarding the 2016 matter, is that the Department took swift action to address the circumstances in conjunction with NSW Police and other agencies. Confidentiality has been maintained in respect of the individuals involved in this incident.
 - (d) The refurbished toilet block meets the Australian Standards and Educational Facilities Standards and Guidelines.

* 8398 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—SCHOOL TOILET BLOCKS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) What new design principles has the Department of Education adopted for the construction of new school toilet blocks?

- (2) Is the Mona Vale Public School model now the preferred one, where under the one roof, the boys and girls enter and exit the same door, with the only separation being girls' toilets on one side, boys' on the other, with unisex toilets at the end of the row?
- (a) If this is the new design model, why has this change taken place?
- (3) Why has the traditional design of school toilets, maximising female safety by denying male access, been abandoned?

Answer—

- (1) None.
- (2) No.
- (3) The Department of Education provides school infrastructure solutions in line with the current Educational Facilities Standards and Guidelines (EFSG).

Toilet facilities are provided based on a school's size. The Department understands that schools have different needs; facilities are designed to ensure these needs are adequately met.

Where facilities are shared by boys and girls, there are always alternative, single-gender facilities available onsite. This ensures students can access either type of facility.

The health, safety and wellbeing of students is the Department's top priority. The provision of new facilities always occurs in consultation with the principal and school community, including the project reference group.

- * 8399 ENERGY—CAPACITY - ENERGY SECURITY TARGET—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) The Government has published a list of capacity it claims will meet the Energy Security Target. How much of this capacity is currently considered 'committed' by Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO)?
- (a) What are the details?

Answer—

The Government has not published the list referred to in the question. AEMO publishes all committed projects as part of its Generation Information update, available at: <https://aemo.com.au/en/energy-systems/electricity/national-electricity-market-nem/nem-forecasting-and-planning/forecasting-and-planning-data/generation-information>.

- * 8400 ENERGY—ENERGY SECURITY TARGET—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) Concerning the extended wind droughts in Europe over the past year:
- (a) Does the NSW Energy Security Target (EST) factor in the possibility of wind droughts for weeks on end?
- (i) If so, with what type of forecasts?
- (2) With the more traditional Australian water droughts, does the EST factor these in for the capability of pumped-hydro?
- (a) If so, with what type of forecasts?
- (3) In consideration of (1) and (2) above, does the EST factor in the impact of wind and water droughts on battery capacity, where less electricity is being generated?
- (a) What type of forecasts does the EST use?

Answer—

There is a national reliability standard which requires at least 99.998 per cent of forecast customer demand to be met each year. It is reviewed by the independent Reliability Panel, which includes large energy users, consumer groups, industry and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO).

If the national reliability standard is breached, AEMO has a list of tools to respond, including the Retailer Reliability Obligation (RRO) and the Reliability and Emergency Reserve Trader (RERT) which considers the impact of wind or water droughts.

In addition to this, the Energy Security Target (EST) requires more firm rated dispatchable capacity than the national reliability standard.

* 8401 ENERGY—ENERGY STANDARDS AND PROJECTS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) In regards to the Minister's claim that the Energy Security Target (EST) is a higher standard than the reliability standard:
 - (a) How is this the case when the Minister is including projects that the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) does not consider sufficiently advanced to include in the Electricity Statement Of Opportunities assessment (which provides advice on Unserved Energy Risk)?
 - (i) Isn't this a lower standard in practice?
- (2) Which New South Wales projects have been included in the EST that are not committed projects, as per the AEMO website, updated as of this month?
 - (a) What is the total generation capacity of the projects?

Answer—

- (1)
 - (a) Clause 14(2)(c) of the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Regulation 2021 states that calculations for the Energy Security Target (EST) firm capacity must include 'generating units that will be constructed under funding programs run by, or on behalf of, a NSW or Commonwealth government agency'. This means that there can be some projects included in EST calculations that are not included in the AEMO Electricity Statement of Opportunities calculations.

These are included in the EST as they are projects that have a signed contract with the NSW or Commonwealth Government and are proceeding against grant milestones. As such, these projects are assessed as highly likely to be commissioned.

 - (i) No.
- (2) Three projects have been included in the EST calculation that are not listed as committed by AEMO:
 - UPC/AC Renewables Solar Farm Battery – 50 megawatts
 - CWP Sapphire Battery Facility – 30 megawatts
 - Darlington Point BESS – 200 megawatts

All of these projects are reported to be under construction.

- (a) The total generation capacity of these projects is 280 megawatts.

* 8402 ENERGY—LARGE COAL-POWER-PLANT OUTAGES—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) There were several incidents in the period May to August 2021 when there were large coal-power-plant outages in New South Wales (planned and unplanned) coinciding with low generation from renewables and constraints on the interconnector from Queensland due to the incident at Callide:
 - (a) Does the NSW Energy Security Target factor in a confluence of events such as these and the impact this would have on meeting peak electricity demand?
 - (i) What are the details?

Answer—

I am advised that since the NSW Energy Security Target (EST) is not a stochastic model (like AEMO's Electricity Statement of Opportunities), it does not explicitly model random outages of power stations and interconnectors. However, it does use highly conservative deterministic assumptions which are reflective of these types of events.

The EST forecast is calculated using a number of conservative assumptions, including:

- use of a 10 per cent Probability of Exceedance (POE10) summer peak demand forecast (representing more extreme conditions that could be expected 1 year in 10)
- summer capacity deratings for thermal plant (where applicable) to represent typical availability during peak demand periods.
- deratings for intermittent generation including wind and solar to represent minimum probable availability during peak demand periods.
- interconnector flow limit deratings and sub-regional transmission constraints
- a reserve margin equal to the two largest generating units in the region (essentially a buffer of two unplanned coal unit outages)
- excludes most non-scheduled generation capacity (equal to roughly 580 megawatts)

* 8403 ENERGY—TOMAGO ALUMINIUM SMELTER—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) How does the NSW Energy Security Target (EST) treat the capacity of large energy users to go offline during periods of peak demand and load shedding?
- (2) In the case of the Tomago aluminium smelter, does the EST factor in offline periods of less than two hours, which cannot be repeated for days or weeks without damaging potlines?
- (3) What are the EST assumptions for offline periods at Tomago?

Answer—

- (1) Where large energy users with the ability to go offline are regular participants in demand side participation (DSP), as described in AEMO's DSP forecasting methodology, they will be included in the total DSP capacity calculated as part of the EST. Load shedding on the other hand is only required in situations where the available generation and demand response is insufficient to meet the current demand. Unlike DSP, this is not scheduled market participation, so it is not counted in the EST.
- (2) Any Emergency Reserve Trader (RERT) agreements Tomago may have with AEMO or contractual arrangements with its electricity suppliers to provide demand response are not included in the EST calculations.
- (3) The EST is a calculation of firm supply. If there is any regular participation by Tomago in DSP, it will be captured in the total DSP value used in EST calculations. If Tomago only reduces load when participating in RERT, it will not be included in EST calculations. In all cases, there are no EST assumptions specifically relating to the operation of Tomago.

* 8404 LANDS AND WATER—CEASE-TO-PUMP PROVISIONS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Regional Youth representing the Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing—

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the high level of community concern regarding the release of the Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022 and its potential impact on families and businesses in the tidal pool of the Lower Hunter?
- (2) Is the Minister aware a major stakeholder known as Lower Hunter Agricultural Water Users Incorporated has stated the new cease-to-pump provisions will “kill off farming in the Lower Hunter”?
- (3) Is the Minister aware that family farms have been managing salinity in the Lower Hunter for generations according to the sensitivities of their crops to salt in the water they draw from the river?

- (4) What specific studies were undertaken to determine the setting of the 4000 micro-siemens/cm level for cease to take provisions in the Hunter River, Paterson River and Wallis Creek tidal pools?
- (5) Has there been any modelling on how many businesses, including multigenerational family farms will be affected by the new cease-to-pump provisions with particular reference to the 4000 micro-siemens/cm setting for the Hunter River, Paterson River and Wallis Creek tidal pools?
 - (a) If so, what were the results of this modelling?
 - (b) If not, why not?
- (6) Will the Minister provide compensation to businesses that will no longer be viable because of the new cease-to-pump regulations in the Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022?
- (7) If a 'salt wedge' in dry periods is the problem environmentalists are said to be worried about, why are the new rules being introduced during the wettest period in New South Wales history?

Answer—

The Draft Water Sharing Plan for the Hunter Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2022 (the draft Water Sharing Plan) was on public exhibition until 27 February. The Department of Planning and Environment – Water is currently reviewing the extensive submissions provided. The Department's consideration of public submissions will inform any resultant amendments to the draft Water Sharing Plan before concurrence is sought from the Minister for the Environment and Heritage and the Water Sharing Plan is finalised.

9 MARCH 2022

(Paper No. 697)

* 8410 ENERGY—CENTRAL-WEST ORANA RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations representing the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—

- (1) In regards to the Minister's statement in the preface to the Energy Corporation NSW strategy for the Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zones (REZ), "The NSW Government is committed to preserving the State's social licence":
 - (a) What is this Social Licence?
 - (i) When was it issued?
 - (ii) What is in it?
 - (iii) What is the process by which it's renewed?
- (2) If the NSW Social Licence is committed to community consultation and grassroots decision-making (as the Minister also states), why at Page 13 of the document does it state that, "If an agreement can't be reached through negotiation, EnergyCo has the authority to acquire land"?
- (3) How much privately owned land will the Government acquire for the:
 - (a) Solar farms of the Orana REZ?
 - (b) Wind farms of the Orana REZ?
 - (c) Transmission corridors of the Orana REZ?

Answer—

- (1) Fostering local community support for investment in new generation, storage network and related infrastructure is central to the NSW Government's Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap and an object of its enabling legislation, the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020.
- (2) The Energy Corporation of NSW (EnergyCo) will continue to consult landowners and communities potentially affected by the proposed Central-West Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) Transmission Project. If a transmission line easement is required to be built on privately owned

land, EnergyCo will work with the landowner to negotiate the acquisition of the land or an easement in accordance with the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991.

- (3)
- (a) Solar farms that form part of the Central-West Orana REZ will be developed by private sector proponents.
 - (b) Wind farms that form part of the Central-West Orana REZ will be developed by private sector proponents.
 - (c) The land required for developing the Central-West Orana REZ Transmission Project has not been determined as it is subject to further community consultation and assessment, including the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

28 MARCH 2022

(Paper No. 710)

8584 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—PERIOD PRODUCTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS—Ms Abigail Boyd to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) With regards to the roll out of free period products in public schools, has the Government considered sourcing products which are environmentally friendly?
- (2) Will the period products provided be 100 per cent organic, cotton, biodegradable, compostable, and/or plastic free?
- (3) Will the period products provided have biodegradable, plastic free and/or recyclable wrappers?
- (4) Will there be ingredient disclosure for the products provided?

8585 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—LGBTQIA+ KITS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) Is the Minister aware of Woolworths-sponsored, Minus18-produced LGBTQIA+ kits promoting gender fluidity, sent to 1250 schools?
- (2) If gender fluidity is not part of the school curriculum, what action has the Minister taken to ensure schools either return the kits to their authors or bin them?

8586 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) With teacher shortages in schools, what action has the Minister taken to streamline the professional standards for teachers who left the profession prior to 2011 and now want to return to teaching to fill the shortages?

8587 EDUCATION AND EARLY LEARNING—TEACHER ABSENCES—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Learning—

- (1) For each school day this year, how many Government school teachers have been absent with:
 - (a) COVID-19?
 - (b) Non-COVID-19 reasons?
- (2) Which Government schools have had more than:
 - (a) Five teacher absences?
 - (i) On which days did this occur?
 - (b) Ten teacher absences?
 - (i) On which days did this occur?

David Blunt
Clerk of the Parliament

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales