



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

2023-24-25

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 512

THURSDAY 5 JUNE 2025

(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. 497 (Including Question Nos 3846 to 3854)	5 June 2025
Q & A No. 498 (Including Question Nos 3855 to 3858)	6 June 2025
Q & A No. 499 (Including Question Nos 3859 to 3872)	10 June 2025
Q & A No. 500 (Including Question Nos 3873 to 3878)	11 June 2025
Q & A No. 501 (Including Question Nos 3879 to 3880)	12 June 2025
Q & A No. 502 (Including Question Nos 3881 to 3885)	13 June 2025
Q & A No. 503 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 504 (Including Question Nos 3886 to 3890)	17 June 2025
Q & A No. 505 (Including Question Nos 3891 to 3905)	18 June 2025
Q & A No. 506 (Including Question Nos 3906 to 3921)	19 June 2025
Q & A No. 507 (Including Question Nos 3922 to 3929)	20 June 2025
Q & A No. 508 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 509 (Including Question Nos 3930 to 3937)	24 June 2025
Q & A No. 510 (Including Question Nos 3938 to 3943)	25 June 2025
Q & A No. 511 (Including Question Nos 3944 to 3944)	26 June 2025
Q & A No. 512 (Including Question Nos 3945 to 3945)	27 June 2025

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(Paper No. 497)

* 3846 GAMING AND RACING—REVIEW OF THOROUGHBRED RACING ACT—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Transport, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast—

- (1) Why has your promised review of the NSW Thoroughbred Racing Act been delayed?
- (2) When do you expect the review to commence and be completed?

Answer—

A review of the *Thoroughbred Racing Act 1996* has not been delayed, I committed to a review of the *Thoroughbred Racing Act 1996* at Budget Estimates in March 2025. Further information about the review, including its scope and timing, as well as confirmation of an independent person to conduct the review, will be announced in due course.

* 3847 HEALTH—ACCOUNTABILITY OF NSW AMBULANCE—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast—

- (1) What rules and protocols are in place for NSW Ambulance cooperating with Local Health District Clinical Incident Investigation Reports?
- (2) Are you aware of cases where NSW Ambulance has failed to cooperate, even in cases where it is alleged to have been culpable for inadequate services in the circumstance of a fatality being investigated?
 - (a) If so, what have you done about this problem?

Answer—

I am advised:

NSW Ambulance and local health districts manage incidents in line with the NSW Health *Incident Management Policy Directive* (PD2020_047) which provides direction for consistency in managing and responding to clinical and corporate incidents.

* 3848 HEALTH—COMMUNITY OLDER PERSONS INTERVENTION AND LIAISON OUTREACH TEAM—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast—

- (1) What success has the Community Older Persons Intervention and Liaison Outreach Team (COPILOT) program had in reducing low-acuity presentations to emergency departments and preventing hospital admissions for persons over 65 years of age?
- (2) Has the COPILOT been formally reviewed?
 - (a) If yes, what do the review outcomes show?

Answer—

I am advised:

The model of care has contributed to the avoidance of emergency department presentations.

Monthly COPILOT performance reports are completed in a routine manner.

* 3849 HEALTH—AMBULANCE WAITING TIME AND COMMUNITY X-RAYS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast—

- (1) What performance indicators does the Government collect and publish for NSW Ambulance?
- (2) For the last available 12-month period, broken down geographically across New South Wales, what has been the average ambulance waiting time, that is, time taken in responding to call-outs, from first contact with the operator to ambulance arrival at the patient's location, for transporting patients to:
 - (a) hospital emergency departments?
 - (b) other hospital services by ambulance?
- (3) For each Local Health District, how many community mobile X-ray machines are available?
 - (a) Are these under the control and management of NSW Ambulance?
- (4) In the past 12 months, how many instances have there been, via Health Department reports, of community X-rays being promised to home-based patients when, in fact, none were geographically available?

Answer—

I am advised:

The *2024-25 Service Agreement* between NSW Health and NSW Ambulance establishes NSW Ambulance's key performance indicators for 2024-25 and is publicly available on the NSW Ambulance website at <https://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/>. Clinical and operational service agreement indicators are also published on the NSW Ambulance website.

NSW Ambulance activity and performance data is publicly available on the Bureau of Health Information website at <https://www.bhi.nsw.gov.au/>. This includes breakdowns by 91 geographic areas.

Data on community x-rays is not held centrally by the Ministry of Health.

* 3850 ENVIRONMENT—KOALA COLONIES ALONG APPIN ROAD—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage—

- (1) Have you or any of your senior officers driven along Appin Road recently, on the stretch from Appin to Rosemeadow, and seen the extraordinary extent of residential development, housing construction, tree removal and road-related works?
 - (a) If so, did you conclude that it would still be feasible to sustain a koala colony in this construction zone?
- (2) While everyone wants to protect the Appin, Kentlyn, Wedderburn and Georges River koala colonies, it needs to be feasible in practice, and now that the extent of residential development from Rosemeadow to Appin has become clear, will the Government review its plans along Appin Road regarding:
 - (a) fencing?
 - (b) underpasses?
 - (c) all other koala protection measures?
- (3) Is it possible to move the koala fencing to safe locations east of Appin Road, to ensure the koalas are distant from the vast residential development destroying their habitat and also the road kill along Appin Road?

Answer—

- (1) Yes.
 - (a) Yes.

- (2) This question should be referred to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, the Hon Paul Scully MP and the Minister for Roads, the Hon Jenny Aitchison MP.
- (3) This question should be referred to the Minister for Roads, the Hon Jenny Aitchison MP.

* 3851 PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACES—KOALA COLONIES ALONG APPIN ROAD—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage representing the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces—

- (1) Have you or any of your senior officers driven along Appin Road recently, on the stretch from Appin to Rosemeadow, and seen the extraordinary extent of residential development, housing construction, tree removal and road-related works?
 - (a) If so, did you conclude that it would still be feasible to sustain a koala colony in this construction zone?
- (2) While everyone wants to protect the Appin, Kentlyn, Wedderburn and Georges River koala colonies, it needs to be feasible in practice, and now that the extent of residential development from Rosemeadow to Appin has become clear, will the Government review its plans along Appin Road regarding:
 - (a) fencing?
 - (b) underpasses?
 - (c) all other koala protection measures?
- (3) Is it possible to move the koala fencing to safe locations east of Appin Road, to ensure the koalas are distant from the vast residential development destroying their habitat and also the road kill along Appin Road?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) Yes.
 - (a) Previous and current NSW Governments has sought advice from the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer in relation to growth in Western Sydney and the long-term viability of koalas in the region. This advice has been adopted and is being implemented through relevant planning controls and associated programs. In recognition of the development already underway, continuous koala exclusion fencing is being installed on both sides of Appin between Rosemeadow and Appin township to keep koalas out of the road corridor. Five dedicated koala crossings will also be constructed at key locations to support safe koala movement across the landscape.
- (2) The Government's approach to separating koalas from residential development and major roads in the Greater Macarthur Growth Area and the Wilton Growth Area is based on the advice of the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer. Koala exclusion fencing in combination with connectivity structures, forms part of a broader strategy to support the long-term viability of the koala population. This population is monitored under the NSW Koala Monitoring Framework to support adaptive management. There are no plans to revise this approach at this stage.
- (3) This is a matter for the Minister for Roads.

* 3853 RECOVERY—RECYCLING STANDARDS OF RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY—Ms Sue Higginson to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast—

- (1) What constitutes "recycling" or "reuse" under the Reconstruction Authority's reporting standard for demolished homes?
- (2) What proportion of the claimed 70 per cent of "recycled" material is composed of:
 - (a) material reused intact, for example, timber beams reused as beams?

- (b) material repurposed into other products, for example, hardwood timber chipped for mulch or used in engineered wood?
- (c) material diverted from landfill but incinerated or otherwise downcycled?
- (3) Does the Reconstruction Authority consider the chipping of old hardwood timber for mulch or landfill cover as "recycling"?
- (4) What independent verification or audit mechanisms are in place to confirm the 70 per cent recycling rate?
- (5) Has the Authority developed material tracking protocols or contractor reporting standards to substantiate this figure?
 - (a) If not, how was the 70 per cent recycled materials claim substantiated?
- (6) Are contractors required to provide receipts or disposal dockets to demonstrate compliance with recycling requirements?
- (7) What facilities in any jurisdiction are currently authorised to receive demolition products under the program?
- (8) What percentage of demolished material has gone to landfill to date under the Resilient Homes Program?
- (9) What measures are in place to ensure high-value, salvageable materials are prioritised for reuse rather than downcycling or waste?

Answer—

I am advised that:

Under the NSW Reconstruction Authority's reporting standard, 'recycling' or 'reuse' refers to the recovery of materials from demolished homes that can be lawfully and practically diverted from landfill.

As of May 2025, the typical breakdown of recycled materials from a property is approximately:

- 75-85% concrete, brick, and rubble
- 5-10% organics and timbers
- 5-10% metals
- 1-5% reclaimed timber
- <1% other recyclables

The NSW Reconstruction Authority operates in accordance with the regulatory framework established by the NSW Environment Protection Authority and in compliance with the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 and relevant Resource Recovery Orders and Exemptions.

Monitoring and verification of recycling outcomes are conducted through NSW Public Works' accredited contract management systems. Contractors are required to submit waste summaries for each property, detailing the tonnage and categorisation of materials removed. These summaries, along with evidence such as weighbridge dockets from licensed facilities, are used to substantiate reported recycling outcomes and verify lawful disposal in support of payment claims.

Facilities receiving demolition waste under the program are licensed and regulated by the relevant environmental authorities, such as the NSW Environment Protection Authority and Queensland Department of Environment, Science and Innovation.

The exact percentage of demolished material sent to landfill varies and is largely dependent on the type and composition of properties being demolished. Overall, the landfill rate typically falls within a range of 20 per cent to 40 per cent, which aligns with standard industry practice for demolition waste management in New South Wales.

The NSW Reconstruction Authority supports the responsible reuse of materials and works within established regulatory frameworks and in collaboration with delivery partners to identify practical opportunities for reuse.

* 3854 RECOVERY—DEMOLITION STANDARDS OF RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY—Ms Sue Higginson to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Small Business, Minister for Recovery, and Minister for the North Coast—

- (1) What is the average cost paid by the NSW Reconstruction Authority to demolish a residential home under the Resilient Homes Program?
- (2) What is the range of demolition costs, from lowest to highest, recorded under the program to date?
- (3) What factors contribute to the claimed average demolition cost of \$60,000 per home?
- (4) What are the procurement guidelines that are used for this program?
 - (a) How many contracts have been issued under this program?
 - (i) What are the names of the contracting businesses that are being used under this program?
 - (b) What was the range of cost assessments that were acquired by the Reconstruction Authority during the tender process?
- (5) How does the Reconstruction Authority's claimed average cost compare with standard commercial demolition costs in New South Wales?
- (6) Has the Reconstruction Authority benchmarked these costs against regional or national data?
 - (a) Did the result show a higher-than-average cost?
 - (i) If so, what is the cause for the higher-than-average cost?

Answer—

I am advised that:

The most recent analysis of actual cost data demonstrates the average price of demolition is close to \$75,000 per property. The cost of demolishing a residential home generally falls within a range of approximately \$40,000 to \$125,000 per property.

Demolition costs under the program reflect the complex and varied conditions of flood damaged residential properties in regional NSW. These figures account for a range of influencing factors including property size, location and site conditions, construction materials, the presence of hazardous substances such as asbestos and lead paint, waste transport and disposal costs, and logistical considerations such as access, safety and site security.

Procurement for the demolition works is managed by NSW Public Works in accordance with the NSW Government Procurement Policy Framework and all works are competitively tendered to specialist demolition contractors. Following a competitive tender process, three contracts have been awarded - to TCDE Asbestos and Demolition P/L, Byron Bay Demolitions P/L (Trading as Leez Group), and Fletcher Patterson P/L (Trading as Ballina Demolitions).

Average demolition costs have not been directly compared with standard commercial demolition rates in New South Wales, as such benchmarks are not uniformly defined for disaster affected regional residential properties. Instead, cost estimates were informed by recent and historical data from similar disaster recovery contexts, incorporating applicable allowances for hazardous material handling, regional logistics and environmental considerations.

5 JUNE 2025

(Paper No. 512)

3945 POLICE AND COUNTER-TERRORISM—ALLEGED FRAUD IN COAL TESTING AT ALS LABORATORY—Ms Cate Faehrmann to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales representing the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter—

- (1) In 2020, the Australian Laboratory Services (ALS) laboratories reported a matter of allegedly fraudulent coal quality testing at its laboratories under Section 316 of the New South Wales Crimes Act to the NSW Police Force. Is this matter under investigation by the NSW Police Force?
 - (a) If the case is closed, when was it closed?
 - (i) What was the outcome?
- (2) What was or has been the involvement of the NSW Police Force in the investigation of this matter?
- (3) Has the NSW Police Force notified victims of the alleged offence or offences?
 - (a) Has the NSW Police Force corresponded with any foreign power utility companies in relation to the matter?
 - (i) If so, which foreign power utility companies?

Steven Reynolds
Clerk of the Parliaments