



Department
of Industry

Office of the Secretary

DF17/207
Your ref: D17/08538

Mr Bruce Notley-Smith MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Notley-Smith

Response to Public Accounts Committee request for detail on public reporting of direct industry assistance

Thank you for your letter of 30 March 2017 seeking further details of public reporting on projects funded by Jobs for NSW in relation to the Auditor-General's performance audit – *Government Assistance to Industry*.

Please find a response to the Public Accounts Committee's request attached to this letter.

If you require additional information or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Ms Karen Borg, CEO, Jobs for NSW on (02) 9338 6991.

Yours sincerely

Simon A Y Smith
Secretary

Department of Industry – Response to Public Accounts Committee request

1. *The Audit Office noted that the Jobs for NSW 2015-16 Annual Report did not report any additional information on projects that have received assistance. The Committee would like an explanation of why Jobs for NSW considers information such as the company name, industry type and description of projects are considered to be commercial in confidence.*

The Jobs for NSW 2015-16 Annual Report set out the incentives paid from the Jobs for NSW Fund during the reporting year and the total amount of payments made from the Fund for proposals in rural and regional areas.

At 30 June 2016, Jobs for NSW had not launched any financial support products. The payments reported in the Annual Report were, therefore, for legacy programs from the previous State Investment Attraction Scheme and Regional Industries Investment Fund. The contracts underpinning these legacy projects, which were signed prior to the creation of Jobs for NSW, were commercial-in-confidence. Jobs for NSW was not able to publically report individual project details without breaching these agreements.

Jobs for NSW supports public accountability and transparency. New commercial agreements entered into by Jobs for NSW to provide financial support allow for the public reporting of project level information, such as the company name, project description, industry type and benefits and the amount of assistance provided.

2. *Is there any proposal to report project level information in future reports or making it available on the Jobs for NSW website?*

Jobs for NSW intends to report on projects in greater detail in its future annual reports, noting that this will require agreement from recipients, the Jobs for NSW Board and the Minister for Skills, who, under the *Jobs for NSW Act 2015*, may choose to release the Jobs for NSW Annual report in part or full.

A large amount of information on the provision of financial support to firms in NSW has been released on the Jobs for NSW website through news updates and media releases. This includes the company name, industry, project description, financial product and amount of support, and interviews with the recipient.

Clients supported by Jobs for NSW have participated in public events where they have discussed the type of financial support provided by Jobs for NSW and how it enabled their businesses to grow and create jobs.

Case studies have been printed for public distribution which describe the company and detail the amount of support and jobs created. Examples include Endeavour Beverages and Gundagai Meat Processors.

Jobs for NSW has also published program level information. For example, in January 2017 Jobs for NSW released information on support provided through its Innovators Fund. This covered:

- The total quantum of funding provided (\$2.6 million)
- How many companies had been supported (107)
- Which industries were supported and the distribution of funding
- Whether the funding was metropolitan (80%) or regional (20%).

Jobs for NSW further disseminates information on firms it has supported through its social media channels.