

QUESTION ON NOTICE IN THE COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE VALUER GENERAL

OPEN SESSION

Question asked on 3 November 2022

Answer due on 15 November 2022

QUESTIONS

- 1. The Hon. Scott Farlow:** With respect to the current arrangements, how many staff does the Valuer General have that he can have direct contact with within the Office of the Valuer General? That was increased from what it was previously?
- 2. The Hon. Scott Farlow:** 130 staff is what you should have within the Office of the Valuer General?
- 3. The Hon. Adam Searle:** Can you give us any insight—you mentioned there were three investigations over the period of 27 months. That seems a long time. Can you step us through why it took that length of time? Were there different matters that arose or were uncovered?

ANSWERS

I am advised:

- 1.** Eight, including members of the Office of the Valuer General. That number has varied up and down since Secretary Betts first issued the direction and people have moved in and out of select roles, most notably with the addition of the Executive Director role in VGNSW currently filled by Stewart McLaughlin.
- 2.** There are 129 roles in the VGNSW Change Management Process structure approved for implementation.
- 3.** Over the course of 27 months, the Department undertook two investigations into Dr Parker's conduct and one WHS inquiry into VGNSW. These considered the effect of Dr Parker's conduct on that workplace.

The Department has an obligation to act where a formal complaint is received, or where concerns are informally raised with a degree of frequency or implying seriousness.

Once each review and investigation was completed, the Department took time to assess whether Dr Parker's conduct had been modified in response to the findings. The Department, in investigating and responding to Dr Parker's conduct, also sought to balance the need to ensure Dr Parker was treated appropriately, ensuring there could be no suggestion that Dr Parker was being investigated or 'targeted' baselessly, and showing appropriate regard for Dr



Parker's position as a statutory appointee and the exercise of his statutory functions.

From copies of the review and investigation reports held by the Committee, it is evident that although the nature of Dr Parker's conduct remained consistent, the specific incidents in need of investigation did change, thereby requiring further time to execute the process.

The second investigation was completed and published by the Department on 19 August, 2022. The Valuer General subsequently sought and was granted leave by the Minister for Lands and Water on 11 October and so no action has been taken in response to the findings of the second investigation to date.

Leon Walker

Deputy Secretary – Homes, Property & Development
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