

On June 24, 2002 Ms Patricia Forsythe placed the following questions on the General Purpose Standing Committee No 1, Question and Answer Paper.

AMOUNTS ALLOCATED TO REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

Question 1: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

In relation to the Minister's advice that \$72.5 million has been allocated to registered training organisations in 2001-2002:

- (a) what amount was allocated between July and December 2001?
 - (b) what has been allocated since December 2001?
- (Hansard p23)

Answer:

The figure of \$72.5 million was an estimate that was prepared in April 2002. The actual allocation at the end of June 2002 was \$78.929 million.

- (a) A total of \$47.842 million in grants payments was provided to registered training organisations, between July 2001 and December 2001.
- (b) A total of \$31.087 million in grants payments was provided to registered training organisations, between January 2002 and June 2002.

2. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) (a) Does your Ministerial Office receive media monitoring services?
- (b) If so, what was the annual cost in 2001-02?
- (c) If the media monitoring services are sourced from other cost centres, which budgets are they allocated to and what is the annual cost?
- (d) How many different suppliers do you have contracts with, either directly, or indirectly through media monitoring services sourced from other cost centres?
- (e) Please list all suppliers.

Answers:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) All costs incurred were appropriate to the needs identified.
- (c) All expenditure is from the appropriate cost centres.
- (d) Please refer to answer for (c)

(e) Please refer to answer for (c)

- (2) (a) Does any agency in your portfolio receive media monitoring services?
- (b) If so, what was the annual cost in 2001-02, by agency?
- (c) If the media monitoring services are sourced from other cost centres, which budgets are they allocated to and what is the annual cost?
- (d) How many different suppliers do agencies in your portfolio have contracts with, either directly, or indirectly through media monitoring services sourced from other cost centres?
- (e) Please list all suppliers.

Answers:

- (a) Any decision to access media monitoring is determined by the agencies concerned and the need for monitoring of issues.
- (b) All costs were in accordance with identified needs.
- (c) All expenditure is from the appropriate cost centres.
- (d) & (e) The appropriate cost centres are utilised.
- (3) (a) In 2001-02, how much was spent on your Ministerial Office? Please provide a breakdown by expense.
- (b) What is the forecast amount to be spent in 2002-03 and what is the forecast number of staff?

Answer:

- (a) The Government has released the costs of Ministerial expenditure to the Opposition under an FOI application.
- (b) It is too early in the financial year to predict expenditure. Staff numbers will approximate those released under the FOI application.
- (4) (a) What is the total cost of your overseas trips in 2001-02?
- (b) Can you please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost?
- (c) For each trip, please provide a breakdown in airfare costs, hotel costs, car hire, and accompanying staff and officials.

Answer:

(a)to (c)

Nil trips.

- (5) (a) What is the estimate of money to be spent on your overseas trips in 2002- 03?
- (b) Can you please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost?
- (c) For each trip, please provide a breakdown in airfare costs, hotel costs, car hire, and accompanying staff and officials.

Answer:

(a)to (c)

No travel is planned at this stage.

- (6) (a) What is the total cost of your interstate trips in 2001-02?
- (b) Please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost and for each trip a breakdown in airfare costs, hotel costs, car hire, and accompanying staff and officials.

Answer:

(a)and (b)

Official travel was undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines and in a cost effective manner.

- (7) (a) What is the estimate of money to be spent on your interstate trips in 2002-03?
- (b) Can you provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost?
- (c) For each trip, can you provide a breakdown in airfare costs, hotel costs, car hire, and accompanying staff and officials?

Answer:

(a)to (c)

It is too early to provide an estimate at this stage of the financial year. However, expenditure will depend on the nature and scope of any travel in 2002-03.

- (8) (a) How many staff were employed as at 30 May 1999, 30 May 2000, 30 May 2001 in your Ministerial Office?
- (b) What was the annual salary cost of those staff in each of those years?

Answer:

(a)and (b)

Ministerial staff are employed by the Director General of the Premier's Department in accordance with the provisions of the Public Sector Management Act 1988.

All costs were in accordance with the expenditure necessary to facilitate the effective functioning of the office and within allocations to Ministerial Offices.

- (9) (a) Does your office contract consultants?
- (b) If so, what consultancies have been commissioned in 2001/2002, and at what cost?
- (c) What consultancy services will be commissioned from July 1 2002 - March 2003 and at what estimated cost?

Answer:

(a)to (c)

Expenditure on consultancies is reported in Annual Reports. All expenditure is in accordance with the appropriate guidelines.

It is not possible to predict so early in the financial year the likely expenditure on consultants in 2002-03.

- (10) (a) Were any legal costs incurred by your office in 2001-02.
- (b) If so, what was the cost and nature of each instance of legal advice?

Answer:

All legal costs were incurred after an assessment of the need to obtain external legal assistance. Legal professional privilege will be maintained in relation to advice and costs.

3. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

For each of your portfolio agencies in 2001-02:

- (1) (a) What was the total cost of public relations activities?
- (b) What is the forecast cost for 2002-03?

Answer:

(a)and (b)

Public authorities conduct a range of extension activities aimed at communicating to the public a range of regulatory, advisory, research and general information.

The question posed is too broad to identify an actual cost.

(2) How much was spent on public opinion surveys?

Answer:

The Premier issued Memorandum 2000-28 which specifically directed government agencies not to use surveys of government clients or NSW citizens to elicit questions on political issues.

(3) (a) How much money was spent on advertising? *Please provide a list of each campaign and cost.*

(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on advertising in 2002-03? *Please provide a list of each campaign and cost.*

Answer:

(a)and (b)

Details of total government advertising were published in the Sydney Morning Herald newspaper on Monday 29 July 2002 in an article by Paola Totaro, State Political Editor.

All requests relating to advertising must be approved by a Cabinet Sub-Committee on Government Advertising.

(4) (a) How much was spent on consultants? *Please provide a list of each agency and cost.*

(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on consultants in 2002-03? *Please provide a list of each agency and cost.*

Answer:

(a)and (b)

The cost of consultants is reflected in the annual report.

Expenditure depends on the need for consultancy services throughout the year.

For each of your portfolio agencies in 2001-02:

(5) (a) How much was spent on overseas trips in 2001-02 by officials? *Please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost.*

(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on overseas trips in 2002-03 by officials? *Please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost.*

Answer:

(a) and (b)

Details regarding official overseas travel are included in the annual report.

Expenditure depends on the particular issues requiring overseas travel.

(6) (a) How much was spent on inter-state trips in 2001-02 by officials? *Please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost?*

(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on interstate trips in 2002-03 by officials? *Please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost?*

Answer:

(a) and (b)

Interstate travel by portfolio agencies was undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines.

Expenditure depends on the particular issues requiring travel.

For each of your portfolio agencies in 2001-02:

(7) How much was spent on legal expenses?

Answer:

Expenditure on legal expenses followed appropriate review of the circumstances, the need for such expenditure and within appropriate guidelines.

In the case of core work for public sector agencies the Crown Solicitor meets these costs.

(8) (a) How much was spent on office fitouts and refurbishments?

(b) What is the estimated cost for 2002-03?

Answer:

All office accommodation fit-outs and refurbishments were undertaken in accordance with OH&S requirements and appropriate guidelines.

It is not possible to predict so early in the financial year the likely expenditure on accommodation and fit-outs in 2002-03.

(9) (a) How much was spent on the cost of leases in the Sydney CBD?

(b) What is the estimated cost for 2002-03?

Answer:

The Government Asset Management Committee (GAMC) monitors the leasing of the majority of government office space. Costs are kept to a minimum by virtue of the whole of government approach taken to leasing.

- (10) (a) Was there any vacant or under-utilised office space?
(b) What is the cost of such unused office space?

Answer:

The Government Asset Management Committee (GAMC) oversees the leasing of the majority of government office space. It monitors lease negotiations to maximise occupancy and avoid vacancies.

For each of your portfolio agencies in 2001-02:

- (11) (a) How much money was spent on performance pay for public servants in:
(i) 2000-01?
(ii) 2001-02?
(b) Did you personally approve these bonus payments?

Answer:

On 28 August 2001 Premier's Memorandum 2000-21 was issued indicating that performance pay was not to be made available to members of the Chief and Senior Executive Services.

Approvals for performance payments prior to 28 August 2001 as well as all other remuneration to members of the Senior Executive Service were made by the respective Chief Executive Officers.

- (12) (a) How much was spent on the salary packages for the Senior Executive Service?
(b) What is the estimated cost for 2002-03?

Answer:

(a) & (b)

Upon election, the Government inherited a Chief and Senior Executive Service of 1,434 positions. The Government reduced the number of Senior Executive Service positions in accordance with a commitment to do so. As at April 2002 there were 1,003. This is a reduction of 431.

Remuneration for the Senior Executive Service (SES) is determined by the Independent Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal (SOORT). It is not possible to predict so early in the financial year the likely expenditure on SES remuneration. However, expenditure will be in accordance with any determinations by SOORT.

For each of your portfolio agencies in 2001-02:

- (13) (a) Have any Departments or agencies been fined by a court or statutory or regulatory authority between July 1 2001 and June 30, 2002?
- (b) If so, detail each fine and amount, and the reason for each fine?

Answer:

Any penalties imposed by a court or statutory authority are on the record of that court or statutory authority.

- (14) (a) How many times were matters referred for independent investigation to ICAC?
Please provide a breakdown of these referrals?

Answer:

Section 11 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988 requires the principal officer of an agency to report any matter the officer suspects on reasonable grounds concerns or may concern corruption.

Disclosure of information may identify issues under investigation and therefore impede these investigations.

For each of your portfolio agencies in 2001-02:

- (15) (a) What fees were increased, and by how much?
- (b) What fees are expected to be increased in 2002-03?

Answer:

(a) & (b)

As was the case in the former Greiner/Fahey Government's any increases in fees are measured and take into account the specific fee, movements in the CPI and other related factors.

4. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) (a) In 2001-02, how many board appointments were made you, or by your portfolio agencies?
- (b) Of these appointments:
- (i) How many were women?
 - (ii) How many were of people from a non-English speaking background?
 - (iii) How many were of people with a disability?
 - (iv) How many were Aboriginal Torres Strait Islanders?
 - (v) How many were young people?

Answer:

- (a) The Government made a total of 1754 appointments to boards and committees in 2001/02.
- (b)
 - (i) Approximately 694 were female.
 - (ii) Due to the self-identifying nature of the nomination form no reliable figures are available for people from a non –English speaking background.
 - (iii) Due to the self identifying nature if the nomination form no reliable figures are available for people with a disability.
 - (iv) Due to the self identifying nature if the nomination form no reliable figures are available for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islanders.
 - (v) Due to the self identifying nature if the nomination form no reliable figures are available for young people.

TESTING AND TAGGING OF ELECTRICAL CORDS IN SCHOOLS

Question 5: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

Has the DET introduced a new regime of testing and tagging electrical cords and equipment in schools? If so:

- a) Why has this regime been initiated?
- b) Is there a written policy? If so, has it been provided to schools and where may it be inspected?
- c) Have costing estimates been prepared? If so, what is the average cost per school?
- d) Will schools be required to meet any of this cost out of their global budget?

Answer:

A trial program for portable electrical appliances is being undertaken by the Department.

- a) The testing program is to ensure compliance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001*, in particular *Australian Standard 3760: In-service safety and inspection and testing of electrical equipment*. This is a pilot testing program which is being undertaken in preparation for extension during 2002-03.
- b) Schools involved in the pilot program have been advised of the need to undertake testing.
- c) Contracts have been let for the pilot.
- d) No school is required to fund the cost of electrical testing.

Question 6: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

Has Transfield, operating as a contractor to DET, recently visited Evans River K12 School for the purposes of testing and tagging electrical equipment? If so:

- (a) Were there any items found to be non-compliant? If so:
 - (i) Were these items less than three years old?
 - (ii) Will these items need to be replaced? At what cost and to whom?

Answer:

See answer to (5).

IDENTIFICATION OF PRODUCTIVITY SAVINGS

Question 7: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) How close is the Department of Education to identifying the 6% of productivity savings that the Government re-affirmed its commitment to on 10 December 2001 [Premier's Department Circular No. 2001-67]. In other words, do currently identified savings amount to 1%, 2% or?
- (2) What is the dollar value of the 6% target that the Department is pursuing?
- (3) How much of the target, both in terms of the percentage and dollar value, is likely to have been realised by 30 June 2002? At this stage, how much do you anticipate, again in terms of dollar value and percentage, will have been realised by 30 June 2003?

Answer:

(1)-(3) See Budget Paper No.2, 2002-2003, 5.4, pp.16-17 for details of the Government's wages policy.

INQUIRY INTO MALE TEACHER NUMBERS

Question 8: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) During 2001, did the NSW Department of Education commission an inquiry into male teacher numbers? If so:
 - a) Were written submissions sought from the public?
 - b) On what date did the submissions close?
 - c) What was the budget for the inquiry?
- (2) Has a report been produced? If so, what were the key findings, and where may the report be inspected?

Answer:

(1)-(2) The *Inquiry into Male Teacher Numbers*, chaired by the Member for Bankstown, commenced during 2001.

The inquiry included an extensive consultation program with 24 open public meetings and over 340 written submissions.

I am pleased at the interest that has been shown in this area by students, teachers, parents and professionals.

I look forward to receiving the report from the Inquiry in 2002.

APPOINTMENT OF MOBILE AND TEMPORARY TEACHERS IN SCHOOLS

Question 9: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) How many mobile teachers have been appointed to schools since the announcement at the end of term 1 2002 that mobile and temporary teachers would be appointed to address the casual teacher shortage?
- (2) How many temporary teachers have been appointed to schools since the announcement at the end of term 1 2002 that temporary teachers would be appointed to address the casual teacher shortage?
- (3) How many schools have been covered by these appointments?
- (4) Have all positions been filled? If not, how many vacant positions are to be filled:
 - (a) Mobile?
 - (b) Temporary?

Answer:

- (1) As at 2 August 2002, eighteen permanent mobile teachers have been appointed to schools through the *Teacher Relief Scheme*.
- (2) As at 2 August 2002, three hundred and ten temporary teachers have been appointed to schools through the *Teacher Relief Scheme*.
- (3) As at 2 August 2002, two hundred and sixty four schools have had teachers appointed through the *Teacher Relief Scheme*.
- (4) As at 2 August 2002, the School Staffing Unit is identifying a further eighteen teachers for appointment to schools in either a permanent mobile or temporary capacity.

TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Question 10: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) How much of the \$88.5 Million set aside for teacher professional development will be given to our schools?
- (2) On a per capita basis, how much will be provided to schools within their global budget for teacher professional development?

Answer:

- (1) An extra \$88.5 million was set aside for Teacher Quality and Supply initiatives over the next four years.
- (2) Schools receive funding as part of the global funding allocation for teacher professional development. This amount represents only a portion of the funding allocated for training and development activities in NSW government schools.

SCHOOL GLOBAL FUNDING ENHANCEMENT

Question 11: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

Does the budget provide for an enhancement of the global budget for each school? If yes, how much?

Answer:

An additional \$10 million has been provided as an enhancement to the 2002-2003 global funding allocations for schools.

NUMBERS OF CASUAL TEACHERS

Question 12: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) How many teachers does the Department have on its list of casual teachers?
- (2) When was the list last reviewed?
- (3) How many teachers in 2001-2002 advised the Department that they were no longer available to be on the list?

Answer:

As part of the Casual Teacher Plan 2002, a major survey is being conducted of all teachers currently employed as a casual or temporary teacher or seeking work in NSW government

schools. The first part of this exercise involved updating 18,500 teacher records from the data base of teachers seeking permanent employment.

Commencing in July 2002, a survey of casual teachers paid through the Casual Employee Payroll System is being undertaken. The objective of the survey is to update personal details, subject areas and preferred teaching locations of those casual teachers who are not on the employment database.

FORMULA FOR ADDITIONAL COMPUTERS IN SCHOOLS

Question 13: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

In relation to the additional computers to schools what is the formula to be used?

Answer:

Schools to receive computers under this phase are those that need them most. They are schools whose computer-to-student ratio is currently below the State average. The new formula that has been worked out in consultation with districts and school principals uses current enrolment figures and the number of Computers in School Program machines that have been already delivered to the school.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS AT RISK

Question 14: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) How much money is allocated to programs providing vocational education for young people identified as being at risk of leaving school early? (page 74 NSW Dept of Education and Training Annual Report 2001)
- (2) How much money is allocated to programs for young people who have left school early and are unemployed? (page 74 NSW Dept of Education and Training Annual Report 2001)
- (3) What are the names of the individual programs, the goals of each, and the allocations to each in 2001-02 and 2002-03?
- (4) How many EFT Department of Education and Training employees work on these programs?

Answer:

(1)-(4) On 4 June, 2002 I issued a media statement relating to TAFE funding. The statement read, in part:

“...The Capped Scholarships Scheme and Youth at Risk program demonstrate TAFE NSW’s commitment to assist young people and people in areas of special need,” Mr Watkins said.

“Disadvantaged youth, people from non-English speaking backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people with disabilities are among those in need....

Mr Watkins said the 2002/2003 VET budget would also include almost \$21 million for adult and community education.

“Of this, more than \$14 million will be allocated to support more than 60 Adult and Community Education (ACE) organisations across the State,” Mr Watkins said.

“Targeted youth projects, under the Links to Learning Program, will also benefit from \$6 million in funding,” he said.

“These critical projects provide services to young people at risk. Next year, this funding will mean approximately 4000 young people can be helped.”

YOUTH WEEK AND ARTSTART

Question 15: Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Education and Training, the Hon John Watkins MP—

- (1) How much money is allocated to Youth Week from the DET budget in 2002-03 compared to 2001-02?
- (2) How many EFT Department of Education and Training employees work on Youth Week activities?
- (3) How much money is allocated to the ARTSTART Youth Arts & Skills Festival from the DET budget in 2002-03 compared to 2001-02?
- (4) How many EFT Department of Education and Training employees work on ARTSTART Youth Arts & Skills Festival activities?
- (5) Are there any other DET programs which are designed to assist disadvantaged or ‘at risk’ young people aged 12 to 24, what money has been allocated to them and how many EFT DET employees work on them?

Answer:

- (1)-(2) The *Youth Week* Program was transferred to the Premier’s Department on 28 March 2002.

- (3) Funding allocated to the *ARTSTART Youth Arts & Skills Festival* was \$380,000 in 2001-02. I am yet to approve the final budget for 2002/2003.
- (4) The greater part of the funding for *ARTSTART* is distributed across various community organisations and therefore, no accurate Department EFT number is available.
- (5) The Department of Education and Training offers a range of programs, including *Links to Learning* and *Plan-it Youth* programs.