

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 4

24 NOVEMBER 2003

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATE HEARINGS

ROADS PORTFOLIO

1. Mr Clarke asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Could you please indicate all consultancies used by the RTA during 2002-2003 for which the total cost was less than \$30,000, and in particular:

- (i) the name of each consultancy
- (ii) the cost of each consultancy
- (iii) the purpose of the work
- (iv) whether each exceeded its projected costs? (Hansard p3)

ANSWER:

Expenditure on consultancies in 2002-2003 is listed in the RTA Annual Report 2003.

2. Mr Clarke asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

In 2002-2003 how many consultancy agreements had variations during the consultancy, both in dollar terms and in terms of deliverables (Hansard p 4)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 1.

3. Mr Clarke asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Are you able to indicate the names of all contractors that the RTA used in 2002-2003, and in particular:

- (i) the name of each contractor
- (ii) how much they were paid
- (iii) the purpose of the work
- (iv) whether each exceeded its projected costs? (Hansard p3)

ANSWER:

The RTA engages numerous contractors for professional services as well as contract agency services and personnel. Provision of the detailed information requested would require an unreasonable use of the resources of the RTA.

4. Mr Clarke asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

- (a) How much was spent by the RTA on media monitoring from Rehome Australia Monitoring Services as outlined in the Premier's Department circular 2002?
- (b) How much was spent by the RTA on media monitoring other than from Rehome Australia Monitoring Services? (Hansard p4)

ANSWER:

All costs incurred were appropriate to the needs identified.

5. Ms Rhiannon asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

A number of questions were put to Mr Forward in regard to a document entitled "Question time brief. M5 East NSW Health In-tunnel Air Quality Report" (Hansard p6-7, document enclosed with these questions). In light of receipt of the document, could you revise or elaborate on any answers given during the hearing in regard to this document?

ANSWER:

There is nothing further to add to the answers already provided by Mr Forward.

6. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Did the magistrate investigating the M5 accident on 20 February 2003 inform the Minister that the driver of the 42.5 tonne truck involved was unable to stop in the 150 m space he had because he was traveling at the speed limit of 80 kilometres an hour and there were no warning signs on that day about congested traffic? (Hansard p9)

ANSWER:

I received a letter from the magistrate, Mr Paul Falzon, concerning the incident on 20 February 2003. The matter was referred to the Roads and Traffic Authority for investigation. I replied to the Magistrate's concerns on 19 June 2003. There is nothing further to add to this advice.

7. Mr Clarke asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

- (a) Did you receive advice from Lisa Corbyn from the EPA in a letter of 11 July 2002 that the EPA estimated a cancer risk three times greater than one times ten to the power of six for residents exposed to emissions from the western stack of the Lane Cove tunnel? (Hansard p9)
- (b) Did Nick Agapides of the EPA predict a cancer risk for those at elevated receptors near the west stack of the Lane cove tunnel 10 times higher? (Hansard p9).

ANSWER:

I am advised the content of the letter referred to is not consistent with the Honourable Member's question.

8. Ms Rhiannon asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

- (a) Condition 70 for the M5 East project states that the tunnel ventilation systems must be designed and operate to the World Health Organisation five-minute carbon monoxide goal of 87 parts per million; that is, that must not be exceeded under any condition. Would you like to comment on that? How does that work in practice?
- (b) There has been a shift to widening the definition of this condition so that a victim needs to be exposed for more than 15 minutes, if there is a victim. Does condition 70 apply only if a person is involved? Is that how it operates?
- (c) Does the word "exposure" mean a human being had been exposed? (Hansard p10)

ANSWER:

This matter is the subject of detailed legal action by the Environmental Defender's Office. It is therefore inappropriate for me to provide comment at this point in time.

9. Ms Rhiannon asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Can you explain why the word "exceedences" was changed by an RTA officer to "creating the potential for exceeding" in the document from Hibbs and Associates entitled "Final Report for Study of Atmospheric Contaminants, Sydney M5 East Tunnels" and the document "Brief, NSW Health, Public Health Division, Health Protection/Environmental Health Branch, Subject: Release of M5 East tunnel air quality monitoring report." (p11)

ANSWER:

The authors of these reports are accountable and responsible for the content of these reports.

10. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Could you please provide to the Committee the protocol between the RTA and the NSW Police Highway patrols, particularly in regard to police fee arrangements? (Hansard p12)

ANSWER:

Police have a responsibility to enforce the traffic laws. This enforcement is an important part of the road safety strategy in NSW as set out in *Road Safety 2010*. NSW Police recognise their contribution to road safety in their Traffic Policy Statement and work with the RTA to achieve the goals of *Road Safety 2010*.

In working with the RTA, NSW Police provide enforcement in conjunction with RTA public education programs at the State, regional and local level.

In order to achieve a higher level of visible Police enforcement at critical times of the year, the Enhanced Enforcement Program (EEP) has been established between NSW Police and the RTA. This partnership results in Police operations that receive some RTA funding to increase the size of the operation.

11. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

How many police patrols are based on the Pacific Highway under the Night Safe Program? (Hansard p13)

ANSWER:

This is a matter for NSW Police.

12. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Can you explain why the estimated cost of the north-west transit link has increased from \$380 million to \$482 million? (Hansard p13)

ANSWER:

The following items make up the bulk of cost differences on the project:

- Indexation of estimate from 1998 dollars to current.
- Conversion from current dollars to outturn.
- Provision of a comprehensive Intelligent Transport System.
- Property cost increases at a rate faster than road construction cost rises.
- Significant construction scope changes including grade separations and widening works.

13. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Can you provide detail on why the Bonville by-pass is still in the planning stages after four years? (Hansard p13)

ANSWER:

Planning approval for the Bonville Deviation was given in March 2000. Subsequent to the approval, results from a major study being carried out for the RTA into the local koala population indicated a high density of koalas in the vicinity of the Highway with a number having movement patterns that would be significantly affected by the approved route for the new Highway.

In view of this and also in response to approaches from local environmental groups, the route for the Highway was further investigated and a proposed modification to the alignment as well as provision for further mitigation measures was placed on public display. Submissions received from the display have been reviewed and arrangements for seeking planning approval for the modifications are currently underway.

14. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Do you have an estimate of future traffic growth from the northern beaches peninsula into the Sydney road network on the north-south access and also the east-west access? (Hansard p14)

ANSWER:

Traffic surveys for the Sydney Region are undertaken every three years and these documents can be purchased from the RTA.

15. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Can you apportion the breakdown of speed cameras located in metropolitan compared to regional areas? (Hansard p14)

ANSWER:

Information on the location of speed cameras can be sourced from the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au

16. Ms Rhiannon asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

What is the RTA's response to the specific recommendation by NSW Health that signs should be erected at the tunnel entrance so that all users of the tunnel can see them? (Hansard p16)

ANSWER:

The RTA has been assessing appropriate means of communicating the NSW Health findings to motorists and meeting with NSW Health to discuss the issue.

Currently, whenever there is an incident in the tunnel, at least four (4) Variable Message Signs (VMS) on the approaches to and at the tunnel portals for both Eastbound and Westbound traffic already warn traffic to Reduce Speed, to Expect Delays, or that there is a Lane Closed.

In addition to fixed signs about closing windows, modifications to the wording of the VMS are under consideration in the light of the NSW Health warning about "transits that are likely to be prolonged."

17. Ms Rhiannon asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

I refer you specifically to the change on page 7 of the executive summary and to the changes on page 11 of the Hibbs Report. As there are so many changes—tracking and handwritten—both to the document from NSW Health and to the document from Hibbs and Associates, can the RTA advise who made those changes and why? (Hansard p16)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 9.

18. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

- (a) Can you advise of the number of kilometres of the Pacific Highway which have been upgraded?
- (b) How many kilometres will have been upgraded by 2006? (Hansard p17)

ANSWER:

(a) Details of progress of the Pacific Highway Upgrading program can be sourced from the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au

(b) This is dependent on the final scope of individual projects, which are being developed in consultation with Government agencies and the community.

19. Ms Gardiner asked Mr Forward, Chief Executive Officer, Roads and Traffic Authority—

Do you have any information about any progress between the Minister and Walcha council in relation to the Topdale Road, which is the road that links the Port Stephens cutting and Thunderbolts Way from Tamworth for traffic travelling to Walcha and Gloucester? (p17)

ANSWER:

I had a productive meeting on 19 November 2003 with Peter Draper MP and Walcha Council in which the Topdale Road was discussed. I have undertaken to report back at a future date following my detailed consideration of the issues raised at the meeting.

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QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATE HEARINGS

HOUSING PORTFOLIO

1. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) Please name all the consultants that the Department of Housing used in 2002-03, including those whose consultancy was worth less than \$30,000?
- (b) How much they were paid?
- (c) What was their purpose (p18)

ANSWER:

Expenditure on consultancies in 2002-2003 is listed in the Department of Housing Annual Report 2003.

2. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) Did any consultancy exceed its projected cost as far as you are aware?
- (b) If there were any, please provide details of those instances
- (c) If there were any, please provide details of how much they exceeded the projections and why they exceeded the projections. (p18)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 1.

3. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

In 2002-03 how many consultancy agreements had variations during the consultancy, both in dollar terms and in terms of deliverables? (p18)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 1.

4.

5. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) Please provide the names of all contractors the Department of Housing used in 2002-03?
- (b) How much were they paid?
- (c) What was their purpose? (p19)

ANSWER:

The Department of Housing engages numerous contractors for professional services as well as contract agency services and personnel. Provision of the detailed information requested would require an unreasonable use of the resources of the Department of Housing.

6. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

Did any contractor exceed its projected cost? (p19)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 5.

7. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

Last year the Government was in the process of changing the eligibility criteria in relation to assets. How far advanced it is? (p19)

ANSWER:

The Department of Housing is currently undertaking this review.

8. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

What was the estimated monetary value of damage to public housing in 2002-03 by residents and by uncontrollable elements such as weather, fire and so forth? (p19)

ANSWER:

During 2002-03 11,016 tenancies were charged for tenant damages. This included 3,529 vacated properties where former tenants were charged for repairs to the properties.

9. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

How many residences were damaged by residents in 2002-03? (p19)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 8.

10. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

Similarly, how many tenants were evicted from public housing in 2002-03? (p19)

ANSWER:

During 2002-03 the Department of Housing evicted 242 tenants from Public Housing.

11. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

How many people are on the community housing waiting list as of now? (p20)

ANSWER:

Community housing providers have separate waiting lists from the Department of Housing waiting list for public housing.

12. Mr Clarke asked Mr T Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

How many people are on the Aboriginal Housing Office waiting list? (p20)

ANSWER:

At 30 June 2003 there were 2,749 applicants on the Aboriginal Housing Office waiting list.

13. Mr Oldfield asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

- (a) How many dwellings do you have in New South Wales?
- (b) What is the range of values of those properties - what a property might be worth in regional, as opposed to rural, as opposed to next to the harbour bridge? (p21)

ANSWER:

(a) At 30 June 2003 the Department of Housing managed 141,878 properties in Public and Community Housing. Public Housing had a total number of 129,185 properties of which 3,914 were leased from the private sector. Community Housing had a total number of 12,693 properties of which 5,603 were leased.

(b) Dwellings valued at \$10,000 or less are located in Condobolin, Broken Hill, Temora, Brewarrina, Grenfell and Tingha.

For regional centres including Dubbo, Tamworth and Coffs Harbour the average market value of a public housing cottage is \$65,000, \$80,628 and \$157,443 respectively.

Rural areas including Tingha, Mudgee and Broken Hill have recorded property market values for cottages of \$16,000, \$101,810 and \$17,400 respectively.

14. Mr Oldfield asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

Please provide details of the means test applied by the Department of Housing? (p21)

ANSWER:

The Department's means test varies with the size and circumstances of the household. For example, for a one-person household, the gross household income must be no more than \$395 per week; for a three-person household, it must be no more than \$580 per week; or, for a six-person household, the gross weekly household income must be no more than \$775 per week. Where there are more than six members in a household, the income limit is raised by \$55 per week for each additional person. The total household limit is increased by \$55 per week for each household member with a disability.

15. Mr Oldfield asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

What is the range of market rents payable for Department of Housing properties, broken down regionally, rurally and in Sydney? (p22)

ANSWER:

The range of market rents payable for Department of Housing properties, broken down regionally, rurally and in Sydney are:

	Regional	Rural	Sydney
Minimum market rent	\$45.00	\$35.00	\$70.00
Percentile 25 market rent	\$120.00	\$100.00	\$50.00
Median market rent	\$140.00	\$130.00	\$180.00
Percentile 75 market rent	\$155.00	\$140.00	\$225.00
Maximum market rent	\$320.00	\$350.00	\$825.00

16. Mr Oldfield asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

- (a) How many people are on a list waiting for an apartment in Sydney?
- (b) In particular, how many people are waiting for an apartment in close proximity of the Sydney central business district? (p23)

ANSWER:

(a) At 30 June 2003 there were 11,858 applicants waiting for an apartment in the Sydney Metropolitan Area.

(b) At 30 June 2003 there were 257 applicants waiting for an apartment in the Sydney City Allocation Zone.

17. Mr Clarke asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

What is the proportion of people young people applying for public housing? (p24)

ANSWER:

In 2002/03, 0.4% of housing applicants were aged under 18; and 10.5% were aged 18-24.

18. Mr Oldfield asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) How many new projects for public housing are currently underway in NSW? (p24)
- (b) Can you please provide a rough breakdown of those, into three general groups – regional NSW, rural NSW and Sydney? (p24)
- (c) Can you please provide a breakdown, within these groups, of where where the majority of two-bedroom and three-bedroom units are, as opposed to homes? (p25)

ANSWER:

- (a) The 2003-04 budget provides for the commencement of 743 new units of public housing in NSW.
- (b) The breakdown these units in the three general groups is:

Regional NSW:	137
Rural NSW:	61
Sydney:	545
TOTAL:	743

- (c) The breakdown of these in the three general groups by two and three bedroom units and two and three bedroom homes is:

Regional NSW:	
Two & three bedroom units:	63
Two & three bedroom homes	22
Rural NSW:	
Two & three bedroom units:	39
Two & three bedroom homes	0
Sydney:	
Two & three bedroom units:	178
Two & three bedroom homes	85

The balance is made up of bedsitter, one bedroom, four bedroom and larger units and homes.

19. Mr Oldfield asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

What size range are the properties in the existing Department of Housing stock? (p25)

ANSWER:

The size of properties varies from bedsitter units of approximately 35 square metres in floor area to six bedroom dwellings over 130 square metres. Most public housing dwellings are smaller in floor area and are modest compared to their private sector counterparts. Public housing dwellings constructed prior to the 1970s are very modest in size.

In summary:

		Average
Bedsitters	6% of the portfolio	35 square metres
One bedroom	19% of the portfolio	50 square metres
Two bedrooms	26% of the portfolio	60-70 square metres
Three bedrooms	41% of the portfolio	80-95 square metres
Four bedrooms	7% of the portfolio	100-115 square metres
Five plus bedrooms	1% of the portfolio	120+ square metres

20. Mr Oldfield asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

Is there any attempt or any policy in place in public housing to encourage out of public housing those who perhaps are not what the average person would consider to require public housing? (p25)

ANSWER:

The Department of Housing has strict eligibility criteria for public housing applicants to ensure that housing is allocated on a needs basis, and the Department has a policy of priority allocation to those in greatest need. The Department has also implemented a number of programs to better manage its tenancies or to assist its tenants into a more appropriate housing tenure. These include the introduction of renewable tenancies, sales of public housing properties to public housing tenants, and sponsorship of self-build schemes. In addition, tenants earning in excess of a certain amount (dependent of household size and circumstances) are required to pay full market rent.

21. Ms Rhiannon asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

Your response to earlier questions taken on notice refers to a network of 12 Government agencies working to address homelessness.

- (a) How long has this network been in operation?
- (b) How much have homeless rates fallen over this period?

Please provide yearly rates from 1999 to now. (p25)

ANSWER:

(a) The Partnership Against Homelessness commenced in 1999. Membership of the Partnership has grown since its inception to now include a network of 12 Government agencies working together to address the needs of homeless people across NSW. The partnership also works closely with Local Government, non-Government services and agencies, and the community.

(b) There is currently no annual data collection of homelessness figures.

On 18 November 2003, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released the report *Counting the Homeless 2001*. This report has noted a decrease in the rate of homelessness per 10,000 of the population in NSW from 49.4 in 1996 to 42.2 in 2001. It has also reported a decrease in the overall number of homeless people in NSW from 29,608 in 1996 to 26,676 in 2001. Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania all recorded increases in both indicators.

22. Ms Rhiannon asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

Between 30 June 2002 and 30 June 2003 the number of households on the register waiting for public housing fell from 90,926 to 80,188.

- (a) What happened to the homeless rates over this period?
- (b) Do you have the data for the last financial year? (p25)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my response to Question No. 21.

23. Ms Rhiannon asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

How is it possible that you do not have a criteria for homelessness when given that the criteria for homelessness given that you have a program for Disability Home Support Services that has recently been changed so that only people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are eligible for payments? (p25)

ANSWER:

The Disability Home Support Services program is not administered by the Department of Housing.

24. Ms Rhiannon asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

In respect of questions 432(1), (a), (b) and (c), previously asked on notice could you please provide details on the financial resources expended as this is not clear from the answer provided on 14 October 2003? (p26)

ANSWER:

(a) During 2002-03 the major resources and expenditure by the Department of Housing on improving housing outcomes for people with a disability were as follows:

- The construction of public housing dwellings that are accessible for people with disability was \$5.159 million;
- The modification of public housing to accommodate people with a disability was \$5.051 million;
- The provision of additional housing to accommodate people with disabilities under the Community Housing Assistance Program was \$1.928 million;
- The expenditure of \$10.380 million under the Special Assistance Subsidy to assist people with a disability to live in the private rental market; and
- The allocation of 40% of priority housing to people with either a disability or medical reasons.

(b) I refer the Honourable Member to Question No. 24 (a).

(c) The following resources have been allocated by the Department of Housing on improving housing outcomes for people with a disability in 2003-04:

- The construction of public housing dwellings that are accessible for people with a disability is \$9.974 million;
- The modification of public housing to accommodate people with disability in 2003/04 is \$4.339 million;
- The provision of additional housing for people with disabilities under the Community Housing Assistance Program is \$5.200 million;
- The expenditure of \$10.800 million under the Special Assistance Subsidy; and
- The continued prioritisation of a significant proportion of priority housing to assist people with a disability.

25. Ms Rhiannon asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

(a) Has the Department's current Disability Action Plan been posted onto the Department's website? (p27)

(b) If not, when the Department's Disability Action Plan be publicly available? (p27)

ANSWER:

The Department of Housing is currently developing an updated plan, which will reflect a more strategic approach to the provision of services for people with a disability.

The updated plan will incorporate other strategies including the Department's Supported Housing Strategy (which is currently under development). In addition to supported housing, the plan will incorporate references to the Special Assistance Subsidy for people with special accommodation needs that cannot immediately be met by the Department; continuation and improvement of partnership arrangements with service providers; provision of priority housing for people with urgent housing needs as well as programs for construction of public housing dwellings accessible to people with a disability and modification of existing dwellings.

26. Ms Rhiannon asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

- (a) Was funding in the 2002-03 financial year adequate for disability housing expenditure? (p27)
- (b) How much additional funding will be budgeted for disability housing services and its infrastructure in the coming period, compared to the period covered in the past disability action plan? (p27)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 24.

27. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) How many staff service the Housing Appeals Committee?
- (b) What is the total sum of money spent on staff servicing the Housing Appeals Committee?
- (c) What is the remaining sum spent on the rest of the expenses of running the Committee? (p28)

ANSWER:

- (a) At 30 June 2003, the Housing Appeals Committee was serviced by 4 full-time and 1 part-time administrative staff, plus a part-time Executive Chair.
- (b) Total salaries for these staff in 2002/03 was \$285,433.
- (c) Total expenditure on the Committee in 2002/03 was \$873,260.

28. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

With respect to the Critical Asset Improvement Program, for 2002-03 can you advise the Committee how many residences were upgraded from that budget of \$36.6 million? (p28)

ANSWER:

The budget of \$36.6 million refers to \$25 million for maintenance and fire safety which is the 2002-03 portion of a total enhancement funding of \$105 million for public housing properties and Aboriginal Housing Office properties over the three year period to 2004-05. It also includes \$11.6 million in reduced loan servicing costs arising from a transfer to the Crown in June 2001 of \$200 million of the Department of Housing's Commonwealth loans.

In 2002-03, a total of \$105.780 million was spent on the Accelerated Improvement Program to upgrade and improve the Department's dwellings of which the \$25 million is part. The number of residences upgraded and improved in this Program for 2002-03 was 8,814.

29. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

With respect to community fire units, do you have a proposed timeframe for the establishment of those in Bourke, Brewarrina, Condobolin, Coraki, Cowra, Lake Cargelligo, Moree and Nambucca Heads? (p28)

ANSWER:

The community fire units are not administered by the Department of Housing.

30. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

How much was spent by the Department of Housing on media monitoring by Reham Australia Monitoring Services, as outlined in the Premier's Department's circular 2002 No. 22? (p29)

ANSWER:

All costs incurred were appropriate to the needs identified.

31. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

In 2002 how much was spent by the Department of Housing on media monitoring other than from Reham Australia Monitoring Services? (p29)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 30.

32. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) What was the cost of media and public relations advisers employed as officers of the Department of Housing in 2002-03?
- (b) Do you have an estimate as to the number of such officers or advisers who would be employed in 2003-04 and the cost of them? (p29)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 30.

33. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) In 2002-03 how many media or public relations officers were employed as contractors to the department?
- (b) What was the total cost?
- (c) What is the forecast numbers for 2003-04 and the total cost? (p29)

ANSWER:

I refer the Honourable Member to my answer to Question No. 30.

34. Revd Moyes asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

- (a) In relation to advertising, can you give the Committee the amount that the department spent on advertising in 2002-03, splitting the figure between employment related advertising and non employment related advertising? (p29)
- (b) Can you give the Committee a list of the campaigns that were undertaken by way of advertising, the names of the advertising firms involved and how much was spent on the media and advertising agency fees? (p30)
- (c) Can you provide a monthly breakdown of advertising expenditure by the department? (p30)
- (d) Can you outline the success or otherwise of each campaign? (p30)

ANSWER:

Government agencies are required to submit a campaign advertising plan and budget twice a year to the Cabinet Sub Committee on Advertising. The Government Advertising Agency is continuing efforts to achieve cost savings in advertising across Government agencies.

35. Mr Oldfield asked Ms Mills, Executive Director, Department of Housing—

Can you please provide a percentage breakdown as to what pensions people in public housing are receiving? (p 30)

ANSWER:

In 2002-03, 90.2% of the Department's rebated tenants received a CentreLink benefit. This is broken down as follows:

Age Pension	28.6%
Disability Pension	26.8%
NewStart Allowance	8.6%
Parenting Payment	17.6%
Other CentreLink Benefit	8.6%

36. Mr Oldfield asked Mr Barnes, Director General, Department of Housing—

Is there ever a situation in which you determine that the value of the real estate that you have occupied is such that it could be turned over and people could be relocated and hence supply housing for more people in less expensive areas? (p30)

ANSWER:

Yes, although some of the most valuable properties are housing communities displaced by local redevelopment activity. The Rocks redevelopment, for example, could not be progressed until the Department of Housing re-housed the local community in the area.

It is also true that such redeployment of the portfolio base attracts high transaction costs that can erode the expected multiplier effect in housing provision.

Nevertheless, such opportunities that arise where there is community support and relocation matches highest housing need are explored.