

4 September 2003

(General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4)

Portfolio

Infrastructure and Planning, and Natural Resources

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING HEARING

“Infrastructure Portfolio”

1. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

Would you provide a timetable for the completion of the review of corporate services within your new department? (Hansard: page 2)

Answer

The Director General responded to this at the Hearing.

2. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) What are the estimated costs for the merging and restructure of the newly created IPNR?
- (b) How much has been allocated to the process of integration of Regional Planning and Natural Resources at a centralised departmental level and at a regional level? (Hansard: page 7)

Answer

- (a) Whilst there are costs associated with the merger and restructure, these costs will be one-off in nature and will be more than offset by savings to be achieved over a period of years through economies of scale and integration of services. It is difficult to provide estimates of costs involved as the process of integration of the former Department's involved is ongoing.
- (b) No specific funding has been allocated to the process of integration however it is realised there will be some costs involved. It is not envisaged these costs would be substantial and the costs would be offset by savings stemming from integration of services.

3. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) How much will be allocated to water quality monitoring and reporting in 2003-04?
- (b) How much money was dedicated, minus external funding, to monitoring the effectiveness of interim environmental flow rules and their implementation in the three financial years 2000-01, 2001-02, and 2002-03?
- (c) How much will be allocated to monitoring of environmental flow rules and their implementation in 2003-04? (Hansard: page 8)

Answer

Please see answer to Question on Notice No. 488

4. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) How much will be spent on environmental works programs of the \$44.4 million that has been allocated?
- (b) On water sharing, given that substantial components of the State's water infrastructure have been privatised and State Water has moved to a new department, what is the breakdown for the \$44.4 million allocated for operating costs and works programs for irrigation areas? (Hansard: page 10)

Answer

- (a)&(b) The \$44.4 million has since been revised to \$46.092 million representing additional investment. This amount comprises \$26.341 million as the NSW contribution to the Murray Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) and \$19.751 million as the contribution to private irrigation areas.

5. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

How much money was allocated for enforcement of or compliance with the Native Vegetation Conservation Act in 2002? (Hansard: page 14)

Answer

There is no dedicated budget line-item for compliance in the Department's budget. Compliance is a core recurrent function of the Department in discharging its responsibilities for administration of a range of natural resource legislation.

6. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) How many successful prosecutions for illegal land clearing were made in 2002-03?
- (b) What was the total revenue raised from such prosecutions? (Hansard: page 15)

Answer

Please refer to the answer to Question on Notice No. 524

7. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) In regard to the former Director-General of Planning, Sue Holliday, could you indicate what her salary and other remuneration was at the time of her dismissal?
- (b) What is the current remuneration of the former Director-General of Planning, Sue Holliday, now working in Premier's Department? (Hansard: page 15)

Answer

- (a) Ms Holliday's package was valued at \$275,000 at the time of her departure from the Department.
- (b) This question should be directed to the Premier.

8. Ms Forsythe asked the Director-General of the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, and Natural Resources, Ms J Westacott—

What are the inherent establishment costs of setting up the new departments? (Hansard: page 16)

Answer

See answer to question 2(a).

9. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) What is the cost to date of the conduct of the review being lead by Ms Gabrielle Kibble into the Plan First Reforms?
- (b) What fees or payments have or will be paid to the Chair of the review? (Hansard: page 17)

Answer

- (a) The total cost of the Planfirst review led by Ms Kibble between July and August 2003 was \$28,628.
- (b) The total payment made to Ms Kibble as chair of the review was \$10,500.

10. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) Have any of the Plan First levy moneys been spent?
- (b) If so, could you give the details of the amount and the purpose of each allocation? (Hansard: page 18)

Answer

- (a)&(b) I refer the Honourable Member to the response to Question on Notice No 483 asked by Ms P Seaton MP in the Legislative Assembly.

11. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) Why has the environmental impact statement into the expansion of Port Botany, due for release in June 2003, not yet been released?
- (b) When will it be released? (Hansard: page 18)

Answer

- (a) Timing for the release of an environmental impact statement always rests with the proponent.
- (b) See answer to (a).

12. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) Regarding condition 73/5 relating to the building of the M5 East tunnel, can you tell us why it has taken your department and its predecessor department more than 18 months to begin investigating why that condition was not enforced, even though it was drawn to the attention of departmental officers?
- (b) Do you have any plans to deal satisfactorily with people who have been unable to record their difficulties with emissions and obtained possible mitigation as provided for under the conditions for approval? (page 19)

Answer

- (a) The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) has from the very outset been working, in conjunction with the RTA, in a timely and efficient manner to address both actual complaints and the complaints handling mechanism. This has been an evolving process with full community consultation and has included independent facilitation and review.
- (b) DIPNR is working with NSW Health in a pro-active manner to investigate and address general level concerns about emissions. A phased health study has the capacity, if appropriate, to respond to past complaints.

“Natural Resources Portfolio”

13. Ms Forsythe asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

- (a) Can you provide details of the budget and the actual dividends paid for each agency or enterprise in your portfolio paying dividends?
- (b) Can you provide the budgeted figures and the actual dividends paid in the years 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03, and the estimated dividends in the budget and the anticipated dividends in the following two years? (Hansard: page 21)

Answer

- (a)&(b) Dividends are paid by State Forests, Land and Property Information and the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. The annual reports contain details of all dividends paid by each agency within that financial year.

14. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

What studies has the Government undertaken to assess the benefits of expanding port facilities in Wollongong rather than in Botany Bay? (Hansard: page 21)

Answer

I refer to the Honourable Member to the Premier's recent announcements on this subject.

15. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

In relation to the inclusion or exclusion of certain estuaries in the Botany Bay Strategy can you provide me with an indication of the basis why those decisions were made, especially in relation to Cooks Cove and the exclusion of Botany Bay estuaries such as Georges River and Cooks River? (Hansard: page 23).

Answer

The physical scope of the Strategy was determined based on the Statement of Intent (SOI) for the Georges River - Botany Bay System, being the NSW Government's response of 2002 to the Report of the Healthy Rivers Commission Inquiry into this system.

16. Ms Hale asked the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, and Minister for Natural Resources, the Hon Craig Knowles MP—

In relation to the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, page 26 of Budget Paper No 4, shows a total of \$73.9 million being spent in total acquisitions, whereas the listed sites add up to only \$48 million. Can you indicate what the remaining \$25.9 million was spent on? (Hansard: page 23)

Answer

SHFA's mention on Page 26 of Budget Paper No. 4 is a summary reference only of SHFA's role in "other significant asset acquisitions" in 2003/04. This reference forms part of the wider summary of the entire 2003/04 Asset Acquisition Program as described from Pages 20-26 of the paper.

Pages 108-109 of Budget Paper No. 4 include the full details of SHFA's 2003/04 capital works program of \$73.933m.

Craig Knowles, MP

