



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-2018 Supplementary Questions**

**Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education**

**SKILLS, REGIONAL NSW, SMALL BUSINESS**

Hearing: Thursday 31 August 2017

**Answers due by: Tuesday 26 September 2017**

**Budget Estimates Secretariat**

Phone 9230 2412

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## SKILLS

### Questions from Dr Mehreen Faruqi MLC

#### Use of artificial intelligence

1. What current uses of artificial intelligence does the department undertake?

Note: Please include all uses of AI including uses for resource allocation and administrative support, big data analysis, replacement and assistance of experts and researchers, procedural matters, or summarising diverse data – for reference this might include:

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2. What planned uses does the department have for artificial intelligence?
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4. What research, if any, has the department undertaken regarding the use of AI in Government services?

### Questions from the Hon Shaoquett Moselmane MLC (on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition)

#### Smart and Skilled

5. How many private providers are operating on TAFE campuses? Where are they operating?
6. What percentage of Smart and Skilled funding goes towards administration costs?
7. Isn't it true under Smart and Skilled that students are charged to re-sit a unit of competency if they fail in the first instance?
8. This being the case, how much of this was collected in 16-17 from students resitting units of competency?

**In relation to TAFE enrolment figures for West Wollongong and North Wollongong Campuses**

9. What are the enrolments for North Wollongong TAFE
  - (a) Year to date 2017
  - (b) Year commencing 2016
  - (c) Year commencing 2015
  - (d) Year commencing 2014
  - (e) Year commencing 2013
10. What are the incomplete enrolments for North Wollongong TAFE
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## REGIONAL NSW

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### Questions from the Hon Shaoquett Moselmane MLC (on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition)

#### Jobs for NSW

66. How much is the CEO for Jobs for NSW paid?

67. Do the Directors receive remuneration?

68. How many times have the Board met?

69. How many applications for support have been received?

(a) In what regions have the applicants been based?

70. How many applications have been approved?

71. What is the total value of grants?
- (a) How much of this total value has been granted to applicants based in regional NSW?
72. How many jobs has this Initiative supported?
- (a) Can the minister confirm how many of these jobs have been in regional NSW?
73. The Jobs for NSW allocates at least 30% of the funds for Regional NSW, shouldn't it be at least 40% given 41% of the State's population lives in Regional areas?

### **Departmental**

74. In 2015/16 the FTE in Economic and Regional Development was 534 employees and the revised FTE for 2016/17 was 303 is that correct?
- (a) How has that impacted the performance of the department?
75. How many Aboriginal staff are currently employed in the regional offices of the Department of Industry?
- (a) What proportion of these staff are senior executive staff?
- (b) What is the average remuneration for non-Aboriginal staff?
- (c) What is the average remuneration for Aboriginal staff?
76. How many staff in Total are employed in Regional offices of the Department of industry?

### **Regional greyhound racing industry**

77. How many direct and indirect regional jobs does the government estimate were lost as a result of the uncertainty around the Greyhound Racing ban in NSW.
- (a) Which regions are estimated to be most impacted?
78. Has the Government commissioned any research as to the impact of the greyhound racing ban and then backflip on the economies of regional communities in NSW

### **Regional commercial fishing industry**

79. How many commercial fishing businesses exist in Regional NSW?
- (a) How many are sole traders?
- (b) How many are partnerships?
80. How many commercial fishing businesses exist in each region across New South Wales?

81. Has the Government commissioned any research as to the impact of its changes to commercial fishing on regional economies?
82. Will the Minister guarantee that the Government will support regional fishers who want to stay in the industry?
- (a) How does the minister plan to do so?

### **Definition of Wollongong local government area**

83. Has the Government received representations from Illawarra stakeholders in relation to the definition of the Wollongong local government area as metropolitan?
- (a) If so, which stakeholders have made representations to the Government?
84. Why is Wollongong local government area defined as metropolitan?
85. Is the Government considering changes to the current definition of Wollongong local government area, including that it is regional capital?
- (a) If not, why not?

### **Lease of electricity assets**

86. Considering the response to LA Q5875, has the Government invested any of the electricity lease proceeds in the Wollongong Local Government Area?
- (a) If so:
- i. What projects has the Government invested in?
  - ii. What is the total investment for each project?

### **Illawarra Jobs Action Plan**

87. Has the Government considered adopting and funding any of the initiatives contained the NSW Labor's *Illawarra Jobs Action Plan* announced during the Wollongong by-election in November 2016?
88. If not, why not?

### **Trains**

89. Can the Deputy Premier explain his public comments that "we don't build trains in NSW"?

### **Capital Works**

90. Can the Deputy Premier provide a list of all capital works projects in regional NSW that did not receive funding in the 2017-18 budget and the benefit-cost ratios for those unsuccessful projects?

## Miscellaneous

91. How many jobs have been created in Regional NSW during the past 12 months?
92. How many of these jobs are full time positions?
93. If you take the Illawarra and Newcastle out of the figures, how many fulltime positions have been created in the rest of Regional NSW?
94. How many jobs have been lost in Regional NSW in the past 12 months?
95. Why won't the Government financially support the EVOCity initiative given that there has been demonstrated growth in the seven regional cities the initiative encompassed?
96. What incentives currently exist for NSW Regional companies to remain in NSW and not relocate to other States?
  - (a) Payroll tax?
  - (b) Training incentives?
  - (c) Low interest loans for expansion?
97. Many Regional businesses are small (less than 10 employees and annual turnover less than \$3M), what programs are in place to assist them with expansion or new innovation?
98. What infrastructure grants are available to unlock potential business location or expansion in Regional NSW for projects such as power upgrades, Broadband access and road and intersection upgrades?
  - (a) If these grants exist, where are some examples and the dollar value of the projects?
99. Applications for the Regional Growth – Marketing and Promotion Fund closed in May.
  - (a) How many applications were received?
    - i. How many were funded and what was the total funds distributed under the program?
100. Applications for the Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund (RGETF) closed in April.
  - (a) How many applications were received?
    - i. How many were funded and what was the total funds distributed under the program?
101. The Future Towns Program was established to assist towns to take advantage of the NBN rollout.
  - (a) What criteria were used to select the locations for the grants?

- (b) For each location what have been the projects supported and the funding allocated?

### **General**

102. What factors are used to determine how communities are defined as “regional” in regards to eligibility for programs and funding applications
103. In relation to the classification of Regional NSW funding programs;
- (a) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for Regional Sports infrastructure funding?
  - (b) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for the Stronger Country Communities fund?
  - (c) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for the regional cultural fund?
  - (d) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for connecting country communities?
  - (e) Please explain why Wollongong was not eligible for the Growing local economies?
104. When did each of the relevant Ministers make you aware that Wollongong would not be eligible for various regional funding?
105. Did you seek a review in relation to eligibility and the classification required for NSW Regional Growth Fund eligibility?

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### Questions from the Hon Shaoquett Moselmane MLC (on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition)

#### Red Tape Reduction

157. Given that the Auditor General has shown that the estimated burden on small business from regulation has increased since the government took office, why hasn't the Minister acted to advocate on behalf of small businesses to ensure that red tape is really reduced?

158. Does the Minister agree that the number of regulations is less important to the smooth running of businesses than the complexity of the legislation in terms of compliance costs?

159. How many regulations for small businesses were removed in the 2016/17 financial year?

160. How many regulations for small businesses were added in the 2016/17 financial year?

161. How many regulations for small businesses will be removed in the 2017/18 financial year?
162. How many regulations for small businesses will be added in the 2017/18 financial year?
163. What is the Minister doing to reduce red tape for small businesses?

#### **Impact of Infrastructure Developments and Constructions on Small Businesses**

164. What is the Minister doing to assist businesses who are impacted by infrastructure developments where small businesses are relocated or have their businesses interrupted during construction?
165. What is the Small Business Commission doing to assist small businesses impacted by these changes?
166. Is the Minister aware of the Book Kitchen Café?
167. Is the Minister aware that the café was forced to close its doors after operating for over 8 years as a result of his Government's light rail construction?
168. What compensation has been available to small businesses affected by Sydney light rail construction?
169. What has the Minister done to advocate on behalf of small businesses affected by government infrastructure changes?

#### **Commercial Fishing Industry**

170. How many small commercial fishing businesses have been forced out of business as a result of the Commercial Fishers Business Adjustment Program?
171. What action has the Minister taken to assist small commercial fishing businesses from being forced to close their doors?
172. How many small businesses have received assistance from the Minister or the Office of the Small Business Commissioner which has helped them to remain in the industry?

#### **Electricity Prices for Small Businesses**

173. How much are NSW Electricity Prices expected to increase for average businesses under 20 employees in the next twelve months?
174. Does the Minister consider rising electricity prices as a threat to the viability of small businesses across NSW?
175. What has the Minister done to alleviate the pressure of rising electricity prices upon small businesses in NSW?

### **Local Government Forced Amalgamations Impact on Contractors**

176. In merged councils, where bulk tendering did not happen prior to amalgamation, there is potential for two small businesses who were separately contracting to two formerly separate but now newly merged councils to be in competition when the merger occurs?
177. What steps is the Minister for Small Business taking to ensure that such competition is fair and that smaller and micro businesses are not cannibalised by larger businesses?
178. What actions has the Minister undertaken to ensure small businesses who were contracted to undertake work on behalf of merged Councils were compensated for any losses sustained as a result of the mergers?
179. Were affected small businesses notified their contracts would be terminated prior to the announcement of these mergers?
180. If not, why not?
181. Has the Minister met with affected small businesses since the mergers were announced?
182. If so:
  - (a) How many small businesses have been adversely affected by the forced merger process?
  - (b) How many jobs within small businesses have been lost?
  - (c) How many small businesses have gone into liquidation due to the termination of contracts?
183. Has the Minister advocated for the implementation of a financial assistance package to ensure affected small businesses have the opportunity to remain sustainable following the termination of their contracts with merged Councils?

### **Payroll Tax**

184. How much did the Government allocate in the 2016/17 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?
185. How much did the Government allocate in the 2017/18 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?
186. How much did the Government spend in the 2016/17 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?
187. How much did the Government spend in the 2017/18 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?
188. Why has the Government allocated \$135 million less in the 2017/18 budget?



189. Has the payroll tax rebate scheme attracted less interest from small businesses across NSW than was expected?
190. What is the average cost to a small business of an audit of the Government's Payroll Tax rebate by their own accountant?
191. Does the Government conduct external audits of those in the Payroll tax rebate scheme?
  - (a) If so, how long does an average Government triggered external audit take?
192. What is the completion rate of data entry for customers (that is once they have commenced entering data, how many are able to complete the transaction without time outs) for the Government's Payroll Tax portal?

### **Impact of the Storms on Small Businesses in the Tweed**

193. How many businesses were impacted adversely by the Storms in the Tweed, including impacts on:
  - (a) Telecommunications?
  - (b) Internet access?
  - (c) Damage to buildings?
  - (d) Damage to land and fencing?
  - (e) Damage to plant and equipment?
  - (f) Inability to access properties?
194. How many of these businesses were covered by the appropriate (flood, business interruption, storm) insurance?
195. How many claims were refused?
196. Did the Minister advocate with the Insurance industry on behalf of small businesses where claims were refused?
197. What other government assistance were they eligible for?
198. How Many businesses approached the government appointed Small Business Commissioner
199. How did the Minister ensure that small businesses who were not assisted by the Small Business Commissioner were aware of eligibility for payments?
200. How many businesses closed as a result of the storms and what were the reasons given?

- (a) Business interruption?
  - (b) Irrecoverable damages?
  - (c) Failure to have landlords repair business premises?
201. Are Farmers Small Businesses?
202. How does Primary Industries communicate with farmers - email, letter?
203. Does the Department have a comprehensive list of all farms in the Mid North Coast Electorate?
204. How many farmers have had to reduce their stock levels after the storms?
- (a) What was the average number stock levels were reduced by?
  - (b) What was the average sale price?
  - (c) If they have repurchased, what was the average cost of buying?
205. How many farmers lost stock in the storms?
- (a) What was the average stock levels?
206. Did the Minister apply for Category C funding after the storms?
207. What is the government doing to advocate for small farm owners who work off farm to provide a living wage while they are establishing their properties, or those transitioning to retirement and supplementing their income with superannuation to ensure they are eligible for natural disaster payment from the Federal Government under Category C Funding?
208. What were the stock levels of Tweed cattle farms in 2011, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 financial years?

### **Office Administration**

209. How many staff are in your ministerial office?
- (a) What was the average salary for staff members in your office during 2016-17?
  - (b) What is the estimated average salary for a ministerial staffer in your office in 2017-18 based on current appointments?
210. How many blackberries/iphones/smart phones are assigned to your staff?
- (a) For each phone, how much was each bill in 2016-17?
  - (b) How many phones have been lost or replaced due to damage in your office?
    - i. What is the cost of replacing those phones?

211. How many iPads or tablets has DPC assigned to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?
- (a) What was the cost of providing iPads or tablets to your Ministerial Office in 2016-17?
  - (b) How many iPads or tablets have been replaced due to lost or damage in 2016-17?
    - i. What was the cost of replacing these devices?
212. Has any artwork been purchased or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?
- (a) What is the cost of this?
213. Have any floral displays or indoor plants or potplants been hired or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?
- (a) If so, what was the cost of these items?
214. Have any floral displays or indoor plants or potplants been purchased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?
- (a) If so, what was the cost of these items?
215. What was the total cost of all subscriptions by you and your staff to online news services, newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals in 2016-17?
- (a) What are these services/newspapers/magazines/journals/periodicals?
    - i. Who is the subscriber for each of these?
216. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?
217. What was the total value of all gifts purchased for use by you and your office in 2016-17?
- (a) What were the gifts purchased?
    - i. Who were they gifted to?
218. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?
- (a) What is the monthly cost of this?
219. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?
- (a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?
220. What was the total bill for your office in 2016-17 for:
- (a) Taxi hire

- (b) Limousine hire
- (c) Private hire care
- (d) Hire car rental
- (e) Ridesharing services

221. Were any planes or helicopters chartered by you or your office and paid for with public money in 2016-17?

- (a) If yes, will you please detail each trip, the method of transport and the cost?

### **Hospitality**

222. How much did your ministerial office spend on hospitality, including catering and beverages, in 2016-17?

223. How much did your Department/agency spend on hospitality, including catering and beverages, in 2016-17?

### **Labour Hire Firms**

224. Do any Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities utilise the services of Labour Hire Firms? If yes, please advise in table form for 2016-17:

- (a) The names of the firms utilised
- (b) The total amount paid to each firm engaged
- (c) The average tenure period for an employee provided by a labour hire company
- (d) The longest tenure for an employee provided by a labour hire company
- (e) The duties conducted by employees engaged through a labour hire company
- (f) The office locations of employees engaged through a labour hire company
- (g) The highest hourly or daily rate paid to an employee provided by a labour hire company

### **Media and Public Relations**

225. How many media or public relations advisers are employed for each of your portfolio agencies and what is the total cost to employ these advisers?

226. What is the forecast for the current financial year for the number of media or public relations advisers to be employed and their total cost?

227. What is the total cost of media monitoring services used by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities?
228. By how much has the number of media or public relations advisers employed for each of your portfolio agencies increased since 2011-12 to the current date?
229. By how much has the expenditure on media or public relations advisers employed for each of your portfolio agencies increased since 2011-12 to the current date?
230. Have you had media training or speech training?
- (a) If yes, who paid for it?
  - (b) If paid by taxpayers, what was the amount paid in 2016-17?

### **Facebook**

231. How much did your ministerial office spend on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts in 2016-17?
232. How much did your Department/agency spend on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts in 2016-17?

### **Overseas Trips**

233. Were any of your overseas trips in the last financial year paid for in part or in full by using public money?
- (a) If so, did any of your relatives or friends accompany you on these trips?
234. Have you undertaken any official overseas travel that was privately funded?
- (a) If so, what was the nature of these trips?
  - (b) Who paid for these trips?

### **Department/Agency Travel**

235. What was the total expenditure in 2016-17 by Departments/agencies within your portfolio on:
- (a) Taxi hire
  - (b) Limousine/private car hire
  - (c) Hire car rental
  - (d) Ridesharing services

236. Do any senior executive service employees in your Departments/agencies have a driver that is paid for by the Departments/agencies? If so, what is the number of senior executive service employees that have a driver and which senior executive service employees have a driver?

(a) How much was spent on these drivers in 2016-17?

### **Consulting**

237. How much did the Department/agencies under your portfolio responsibility spend in legal costs in 2016-17?

(a) For what specific purposes or matters was legal advice sought?

238. Have Department/agencies under your portfolio engaged any consultants to provide the following services or advice in 2016-17:

(a) Social media

i. And the cost of these services

(b) Photography

i. And the cost of these services

(c) Acting training

i. And the cost of these services

(d) Ergonomics

i. And the cost of these services

### **Department/Agency Staffing**

239. What was the number of senior executive service employees employed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio in 2016-17?

(a) How much was this number in 2011-12?

240. What was the expenditure on senior executive service employees employed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio in 2016-17?

(a) How much was this number in 2011-12?

241. What was the number of internal legal counsel employees employed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio in 2016-17?

(a) How much was this number in 2011-12?

242. What was the expenditure on internal legal counsel employees employed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio in 2016-17?
- (a) How much was this number in 2011-12?
243. How many redundancies were processed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2016-17?
- (a) Of these redundancies, how many were:
- i. Voluntary
  - ii. Forced
- (b) What was the total cost of all redundancies?
244. Have any staff who received a redundancy in the last two years undertaken any paid work or provided any paid services for the agency with which they were formerly employed?
- (a) What was the nature of these works/services?
- (b) What was the total cost of these works or services?
245. Are any staff formerly employed by your ministerial office now employed by Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibility?
246. How many staff were dismissed from Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibilities in 2016-17?
- (a) What were the reason/s for each dismissal?
247. What was the total amount your Departments/agencies spent on stationery?

### **Smart Phone Accounts**

248. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have an iTunes account?
- (a) What was the total expenditure in 2016-17 on iTunes?
- i. What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through iTunes?
249. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have an Android account?
- (a) What was the total expenditure in 2016-17 on Android?
- i. What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through Android?

**Websites Visited**

250. What were the top 20 most utilised (by data sent and received) unique domain names accessed by your Ministerial office this year?
251. What were the top 20 most accessed (by number of times accessed) unique domain names accessed by your Ministerial office this year?

**Merchant fees**

252. Please provide a list of all transactions where customers need to pay a merchant fee on credit and/or debit card payments in your Department/agency.
253. Please provide the percentage and/or amount of the merchant fees applied to all credit and/or debit card payments/transactions in your Department/agency.
254. What was the total amount paid in merchant fees on credit and/or debit card payments in your Department/agency in 2016-17?

**Probity Auditor**

255. Has your office or department used a Probity Auditor or Probity Advisors, or similar, in the past five years? If so please list the company and/or individual, the project, the engagement dates, and their total remuneration in tabular format.