



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2017-2018

Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Planning and Environment

ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Hearing: Friday 1 September 2017

Answers due by: Wednesday 27 September 2017

Budget Estimates Secretariat
Phone 9230 2412
budget.estimateds@parliament.nsw.gov.au

ENVIRONMENT

Questions from the Hon Mark Pearson MLC

Kangaroo Slaughter

1. Can the Minister or your department provide the full details of the licence for Googong, including:
 - (a) who exactly it was issued to?
 - (b) for how many kangaroos?
 - (c) what dates?
 - (d) And what evidence of a need to kill was provided, and under what conditions?
2. Were any other licences issued for anyone to shoot kangaroos anywhere else around Queanbeyan, or between the ACT and Googong?
 - (a) If so to whom?
 - (b) what dates?
 - (c) how many kangaroos?
 - (d) On what evidence or information was the decision of demonstrated necessity made?
 - (e) and under what conditions?

Questions from the Hon Paul Green MLC

Rocky Outcrops – Investigations and Litigation

3. Can the Minister provide advice as to how much the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has spent for each year for the last 3 financial years, in litigation against Forest Corporation NSW (FCNSW) including operational staff time, legal staff time, and other legal expenses?
4. Has the EPA followed the Premier's memorandum M1997-26 Litigation Involving Government Authorities directing that agencies should seek to ensure the cost to the public purse is kept to a minimum, in its compliance operations against FCNSW?
5. Could the minister advise what environmental harm has resulted from any breaches of the Integrated Forest Operations Approvals and related licences, where the EPA has chosen to prosecute FCNSW?

- (a) Specifically, what species of flora or fauna, listed at the state or national level, as ‘Threatened,’ have been harmed by any operational breaches and what level of harm has been caused?

Questions from the Dr Mehreen Faruqi MLC

Native Vegetation and Biodiversity

6. In finalising the biodiversity law changes and regulations, has the Western Sydney Airport, and the potentially large amount of offset obligations, ever been raised with you or your department?
- (a) If yes, were any changes made as a result of representations regarding the proposed Western Sydney Airport?
- i. Was the biodiversity offset package weakened ever further to suit big property developers and big projects like the Western Sydney Airport?
7. Did the Minister instruct the Office and Environment and Heritage to drop its objections to the biodiversity offsets package so it could be introduced on August 25?
8. How will areas of high conservation value that are cleared between August 25 and when the mapped products become available be assessed and accounted for?
9. Has there been an assessment of the extent of clearing that could occur using each of the codes, if so can the Minister advise the extents of clearing for each code?
10. Has the interests of National Party donor Peter Harris and the Harris family of Moree ever been raised with you?
- (a) If yes, in what capacity?
11. Has the OEHL issued a submissions report on the land management and biodiversity regulations?
- (a) If no, do they intend to and when?
12. How many LGA’s have plans of management made under the State Environmental Planning Policy No 44—Koala Habitat Protection?
- (a) Are you concerned that only five LGAs will have koala habitat show up on the Native Vegetation Regulatory Maps?
- (b) How can the Government protect potential and known koala habitat if it hasn’t even been identified yet?

13. Are you concerned about the ability of NSW to meet the net-zero carbon emissions goal by 2050 given there will be very little regulation of land clearing under these laws?
14. Which parts of the state the law provides a red flag that clearing absolutely cannot occur?
15. Has draft Native Vegetation Regulatory Maps been shown to landholders?
 - (a) If so why have they not been made available to other stakeholders?
16. How do landholders know what money is on offer for stewardship as an alternative to clearing if there is no investment strategy in place to identify the price per hectare on offer
17. How do the new Acts provide protection for EPBC Act listed threatened and migratory species and communities?
18. How will the increased clearing under the LLSA Act not lead to net loss of extent of native vegetation and habitat and exacerbate the impact of Key Threatening Processes on all threatened species?
19. Will increased clearing under the LLSA Act escalate the decline of species already suffering extinction debt from previous habitat loss?
20. How will the loss of biodiversity at the property level be mitigated at the regional level? (in particular the over cleared floodplain)?
21. How will the objective to address biodiversity decline in the Biodiversity Conservation Act be achieved by relaxing the land clearing rules and the increased dependence on offsetting in the proposed system?
22. How will the aims and objectives of the Biodiversity Conservation Act, Biodiversity Conservation Program and Biodiversity Investment Strategy be met if there is further species and community decline?
23. How do the regulations apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development? What science underpins them?
24. How is the regulation a scientifically robust way of assessing and conserving biodiversity considering that for most rural clearing, the BAM will not be applied?
25. Will there be special considerations and limitations based on the regional extent of native vegetation, such as the over cleared North West floodplains and lower slopes east of Moree.

26. How will Koala habitat be protected in over cleared landscapes considering that two of their main preferred food trees Bimble box and River Red gum have the least protection as paddock trees and can be cleared as invasive species?
27. Can Koala habitat be cleared using the Biodiversity Assessment Method and the use of offsets?
28. Will there be a conservative interim core habitat layer produced for the regulatory map, based on expert knowledge of Koala distributions and preferred food trees at the local scale?
29. Will the use of the Land Management codes enable landholders to clear category 2 (higher conservation remnant vegetation) down to just 10% of category 2 vegetation retained per property.
30. Will the LLS be able to refuse clearing applications in over cleared landscapes when the application is consistent with the codes?
31. Will the equity code enable landholders to broadscale-clear woodlands, open forests and grasslands previously not cleared?
32. Can the Equity Code still clear up to 625ha or down to 10% category 2 remnant vegetation per property?
33. Can Invasive Native Species thinning clear up to 900ha, including trees up to 30cm dbh (Diameter at breast height), and retain just 20 trees per ha? (includes Bimble box and River Red gum Koala preferred food trees)
34. Can the pasture expansion code thin trees up to 90cm dbh, providing the area does not to exceed 30% of total property?
35. Can the farm plan code clearing remove up to 25% of category 2 remnant vegetation on a property?
36. Will determining serious and irreversible impacts be at the Ministers discretion?
37. Will broadscale clearing be allowed?
38. The World Wildlife Fund commissioned a study of the potential clearing that could occur, which estimated that as much as 2.2 million hectares of koala habitat could be cleared under the equity code alone (Eco Logical Australia 2016). Has there been some impact assessment done to quantify the impact those extents will have on threatened species and endangered ecological communities?

39. Will the loss from clearing be balanced by gains from plantings, set asides, offsets and stewardship agreements and over what time frame will gain be achieved?
40. For category 1 land, how will property vegetation planning be incorporated to consider the landscape significance of the vegetation and factors such as soil erosion, salinity recharge and discharge areas, protected lands, stream buffers, landscape corridors, and protection of hollow trees?
41. Does the principle of no net loss apply for the regulations?
 - (a) How do those aims and targets relate to catchment targets?
42. What vegetation mapping product was used in the Native Vegetation Regulatory map?
 - (a) How will the mapping process accurately distinguish between high and low conservation value grasslands?
43. Are Travelling Stock Routes included in the sensitive lands category?
 - (a) If no, why not?
44. Will the offset and set asides areas for biodiversity certified land be field verified and included into protected excluded land?
45. Will land that has been illegally cleared since 1990 to be classed as Category 1 land?
46. How do people nominate areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value?
47. What is included in Vulnerable regulated land? And how have they been identified and mapped?
 - (a) What is included in Sensitive regulated land? And how have they been identified and mapped?
 - (b) How are landholders to identify those features if they aren't mapped on the 25th August, particularly if they have to interpret what is category 1 and 2 land?
48. When will the Biodiversity Assessment Method be applied to rural clearing?
 - (a) Can such clearing be justified if it goes beyond that allowable with the use of the codes?
49. Will land that is a set aside or offset be managed for conservation into perpetuity? How will this be guaranteed?
 - (a) Will the cost of managing that land be borne by the current owner?
50. Will the set asides and offsets be monitored regularly by an independent auditor?

51. How is the application of the BAM to determine offsets and credits going to be audited to ensure integrity?
52. There was a proposed new layer in the decision process called the Ecological Integrity layer, how does that work?
53. Can the Native Vegetation Panel modify the 'like for like' credit retirement and approve clearing that would not otherwise be approved?
54. There is some conflict in the statement that Local Land Services may amend the public register to remove any area (or part of an area) that has ceased to be a set aside area. Elsewhere in the Acts set asides are described as being in perpetuity agreements. Under what circumstances can a set aside be removed from the register?
55. What science underpins the assumption that offsetting works in the timeframe necessary to conserve threatened species?
56. Will tree plantings and natural regeneration of cleared land be acceptable as offsets.
 - (a) If that is to be the case, what will be the acceptable minimum standard for offsets in terms of age classes and time to regenerate mature habitats for threatened species?
 - (b) How can the protection of existing remnant vegetation not under threat be considered a conservation gain to offset the loss of an area of habitat that was a larger total area?
57. The draft regulation was to allow offsets across a species range and swapping between species, is that still the case and if so what science justifies that policy?
58. What science underpins the use of flexible and indirect offsets?
59. What assurance or security is there to guarantee to the public that an offset will achieve a Biodiversity Gain?
60. Offsets achieving conservation gains cannot be guaranteed by law, they will be dependent on ongoing funding, how can that funding be guaranteed into perpetuity and changing political scenarios?
61. There is a lot of discretion to vary offsets, such discretion is open to abuse and political influence. How will that be prevented?
62. Invasive species code - divisions 3 and 4 - will enable the clearing of up to 1000ha and destruction of ground level habitat to facilitate sowing of pastures. Is it the intention of this code to be used in remnant vegetation to change land use?

- (a) It appears the only limitation to the use of this code is vulnerable land, can it be applied to all endangered ecological communities in category 2 land?
 - (b) It allows the clearing of trees up to 30cm dbh, how are trees of that size considered to be invasive regrowth??
 - (c) Two of the invasive species listed to be cleared are Koala preferred trees Bimble box and River Red gum. Where is Bimble box an invasive species in the north west of NSW? Why is River Red gum listed as an invasive species when it is restricted to riparian zones and flood ways that should not be cleared?
63. The pasture expansion code will allow the clearing of remnant woodland trees up to 90cm dbh that will lead to loss of many hollow mature trees, how is the loss of hollow habitat to be compensated when the loss of Hollow-Bearing Trees is a Key Threatening Process?
64. Is the pasture expansion code limited to vegetation communities that are not EEC's?
- (a) If that is the case clearing on the floodplain will target non EEC communities that are Koala habitat of Bimble box, Belah, Baradine Red gum, and River Red gum is that correct?
65. Is it correct that the mosaic code division 3 could fragment high conservation remnants into 5 ha patches, it has no minimum extent of category 2 remnant vegetation to retain after treatment and appears it could allow the clearing of up to 30% of the total area of the property?
66. 'Continuing use' is very open ended and unrestricted with no notify or certificate requirements, applies to all land categories and EEC's. It could refer to all land cleared since 1950 that is in a 50 year rotation. Could you please explain how this code is defined and applied?
67. Property Vegetation Plan Transition, allows LLS to change an existing PVP to allow clearing in a set aside, please explain how this would occur?
- (a) Under what circumstances would an existing PVP be changed?
 - (b) Why wouldn't PVP offsets be maintained and included in sensitive or vulnerable category 2 remnant vegetation land to be registered and protected??
68. Is it correct that the Equity Code could allow clearing up to 625ha of remnant woodland of higher conservation value?
69. Where is the consideration for loss of hollow trees and logs or extent of habitat to sustain viable populations of species?

70. What is the scientific justification for the 50% reduction to set aside requirement by using an EEC as the set aside, or a remnant that is considered by LLS to have strategic landscape significance?
 - (a) Please explain how the equity code will not lead to declines of all species, and what science underpins its use?
71. Vast areas of the over cleared floodplain are paddock trees or small patches of trees surrounded by cleared category 1 land. Could the impact of Farm Plan Code be catastrophic for biodiversity in the over cleared floodplains?
 - (a) It appears to be not limited to paddock tree areas, will it allow broad scale clearing of woodland or open forest up to 25% of the extent of category 2 native vegetation on a property?
72. What is the scientific justification for the formulae for set asides in cleared category 2 land?
73. What is the scientific justification to allow the planting of new trees in a cleared paddock to compensate for the loss of mature and often hollow trees?
74. The lower limit for application of the codes of the category 2 land retained is just 10. This is a very low standard considering that conservation biologists advocate that 30% is the minimum. It is well documented that the effects of fragmentation become more intense when retained habitat is less than 30%. What is the justification for setting the lower limit for application of the codes to just 10% of the category 2 land retained?
75. In the Land Management Code it says “the person who carries out the clearing must not harm an animal that is a threatened species if that person knew that the clearing was likely to harm the animal”. And the footnote says “any act which harms a threatened species or its habitat does not constitute an offence under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 if the act occurs in the course of clearing that is authorised by this code”. Please explain the contradiction?
76. Is it correct that landholders don’t have immunity to prosecution with regard to them impacting on species and endangered ecological communities listed in the EPBC Act?
77. How do The Land Management Codes apply the precautionary principle of Ecologically Sustainable Development? Has the government obtained an independent scientific review of the codes?

Waste

78. When did the minister become personally aware that recycling companies are landfilling or otherwise disposing of recyclable materials, some estimate up to 50% of it?
79. In light of the recent Four corners report, What is the action by the Government on investigating the reporting of recycling rates, including any possible breaches of the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001?
80. Part 53 of the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001 requires EPA to submit a report every 2 years. When was this report last done?
81. The EPA is required to publicly advertise each year a priority statement with respect to the extended producer responsibility schemes the EPA proposes to recommend for implementation under the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001. When was that last done?
82. When NSW rubbish is exported overseas, where does it go and what happens to it?
83. The Waste Contractors & Recyclers Association of NSW raised significant concerns about the EPA's ability to resource waste management activities in NSW and is frustrated at the EPA's ability to meet basic timelines in responding to issues, what extra resources do you need?
84. How much recycling of waste actually happens in NSW?
85. Why doesn't the Government require the waste levy to be spent 100% on at least recycling if not waste avoidance initiatives?
86. Is the EPA monitoring the BINGO facilities at Helensburgh and Kembla Grange for breaches of the license conditions?
 - (a) What is the EPA doing to ensure this facility meets its license conditions?
87. For the EPA 'Bin Trim' program in financial year 2013/2014, please provide:
 - (a) The total program budget, a list of the contractors and regions that they serviced
 - (b) How many businesses were provided 'bin trim' consultancies, broken down by region?
88. For the EPA 'Bin Trim' program in financial year 2014/2015, please provide:
 - (a) The total program budget, a list of the contractors and regions that they serviced
 - (b) How many businesses were provided 'bin trim' consultancies, broken down by region?
89. For the EPA 'Bin Trim' program in financial year 2015/2016, please provide:
 - (a) The total program budget, a list of the contractors and regions that they serviced

- (b) How many businesses were provided 'bin trim' consultancies, broken down by region?
90. For the EPA 'Bin Trim' program in financial year 2016/2017, please provide:
- (a) The total program budget, a list of the contractors and regions that they serviced
- (b) How many businesses were provided 'bin trim' consultancies, broken down by region?
91. For the EPA 'Bin Trim' program in financial year 2017/2018, please provide:
- (a) The total program budget, a list of the contractors and regions that they serviced (planned)
- (b) How many businesses were provided 'bin trim' consultancies, broken down by region (planned)?
92. What is the methodology used to calculate the statistics
93. Are the statistics collected by the 'Bin Trim' program used in determining NSW's waste management statistics?
94. Has there been any evaluation of the Bin Trim Program? If yes, please provide them.

Centennial Park

95. Did Mr Tony Ryan ever declare any conflict of interest in the development of the Moore Park 2040 plan?
- (a) What was the conflict of interest?
- (b) How was this conflict of interest managed?
96. Will you rule out Jones Lang LaSalle Property Consultants Pty Ltd as being involved in any property transactions with the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust due to the conflict of interest of Mr Tony Ryan?
97. When was the Moore Park 2040 Plan finalised?
98. Why did the NSW Government not appoint the required number of trustees to the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust until 29 June 2017?
99. Was there any period of time in the last two years when the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust was in breach of the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust Act 1983?

National Parks and Wildlife

100. When was the proposal to acquire 60 Hectares of the Royal National Park for the proposed F6 extension ever discussed with you?

101. What is the current status of the Royal National Park World Heritage application?
 - (a) Why did your department miss multiple deadlines to submit the nomination?
 - (b) Will you be submitting the nomination in February next year?
 - (c) Has the F6 proposal influenced your decision in any way to nominate the Royal National Park for World Heritage listing?
102. How many new National Parks has the NSW Liberal/National Government established since being elected in 2011?
103. The “Annual Visits to PWG Managed Parks in New South Wales” report was completed in 2014 and was meant to be repeated in 2016. What happened to this study?
104. Why has the Mount Keira Ring Track been closed for over 6 years?
105. Why is the National Parks Wildlife Service is not granted enough operational funding to sufficiently to maintain our recreational assets on the Illawarra Escarpment?
106. Has the draft Master Plan for Middle Head been approved?
 - (a) Does the current draft master plan allows for the visitor numbers and loud music that was created by the Redbull Academy event on September 1?
 - (b) How much is NPWS receiving from the organiser and what surety are they providing to manage any damage to the historical buildings?
 - (c) Is it true that the NPWS states that tours of the forts are not allowed Jul-Sep as the bent-wing bat, a critically endangered species, is hibernating?
 - i. How then can you allow an outdoor music festival on the first day of September?
Has there been an assessment on the impact on the bat?
107. What is the current status of the Gardens of Stage Stone Stage 2 Reserve Proposal?
108. What was the National Park acquisition budget in:
 - (a) 2014/2015
 - (b) 2015/2016
 - (c) 2016/2017
 - (d) 2017/2018 (planned)
109. How much was spent in 2016/2017 on invasive species control? Please provide a list of how much is spent on the following measures:

- (a) Shooting
 - (b) Baiting
 - (c) Non-lethal measures
110. How much is planned to be spent in 2016/2017 on invasive species control? Please provide a list of how much is spent on the following measures:
- (a) Shooting
 - (b) Baiting
 - (c) Non-lethal measures
111. How many kilograms of 1080 poison did the National Parks and Wildlife Service use in 2016/2017?
112. Is the NPWS trialling or planning to trial any invasive species controls measures as a more humane alternative to 1080?
113. How much was spent in 2016/2017 on the Supplementary Pest Control Program? Please provide a list of each species and number of animals that were removed under the program?
114. Was there any government funding going to the Sporting Shooters Association in 2016/2017 year or is any money budgeted in the 2017/2018 financial year.
115. Please provide an update of the activities of the Extinct Animal Reintroduction Program in the 2016/2017 financial year.
116. What have been the conservation benefits to the Threatened Ecological Communities listed under the TSC Act delivered through the Government's Saving our Species program?

Power Stations

117. What is the plan for rehabilitating the Wallerawang Sawyers Creek ash dam, or is this poisoning of Sydney's drinking water going to go on forever?
- (a) Does the government hold any bonds or financial assurances to make sure that rehabilitation is carried out properly on this site?
 - (b) Does the government hold any bonds or financial assurances to make sure that rehabilitation is carried out properly at the Vales Point, Mount Piper, Eraring, Liddell and Bayswater coal fired power stations and their associated ash dams?

- (c) Could you please provide details of the standards that the NSW Government has established for decommission and remediation of coal-fired power stations and their ash dams, and what bonds the NSW Government and/or generators have set aside for this work?
118. In 2015 and 2016 the EPA granted Vales Point power station and Liddell power stations exemptions from the Protection of the Environment (Clean Air) Regulation limit of 800 mg/m³ for Nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Given that NO_x emissions are precursors to ozone and fine particles, and there are no safe levels for exposure to these toxic pollutants, isn't it clear that this exemption will result in adverse impacts on human health? Given that other jurisdictions such as the EU and China have limits of 200 mg/m³, how can the EPA justify this decision?
- (a) The EPA required the Vales Point and Liddell power stations to provide reports about options to reduce NO_x emissions by July 2017. Have these reports been received? Can the EPA please make them available?
- (b) Were the power stations required to take any further action based on these reports?
- (c) Were exemptions from the 800 mg/m³ limit for NO_x also given to the other three coal-fired power stations (Mt Piper, Eraring, Bayswater)?
- i. If yes, how can the EPA justify this exemption for the Bayswater and Liddell power stations neighbouring Muswellbrook, where air pollution has exceeded national standards every year since 2010? (NO_x is a precursor to fine particle pollution).
119. Are the 2015-16 NPI reports for Vales Pt and Mt Piper, for PM_{2.5} based on estimates, periodic measurements, or continuous monitoring data?
- (a) If periodic measurements, how many direct measurements were provided for the 2015-16 NPI reporting period?
- (b) Are the 2014-15 NPI reports for Vales Pt and Mt Piper, for PM_{2.5} based on estimates, periodic measurements, or continuous monitoring data?
- (c) If periodic measurements, how many direct measurements were provided for the 2014-15 NPI reporting period?
- (d) Isn't it clear that these results are measurement errors and should be revised?
- (e) In light of the anomalous reports, has the EPA considered requiring Mt Piper to continuously monitor PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}, SO₂ and NO_x emissions, as other power stations are required to do?

- (f) Does the continuous monitoring data recorded at Vales Pt for PM2.5 concentration and flue gas volume accord with the total PM2.5 load reported to the NPI for PM2.5 in 2015-16?
- 120. Under EPLs, many pollutants are monitored continuously by NSW coal-fired power stations. Why isn't this data published daily, or more frequently, so that community members can have a better understanding of air pollution sources in their area, and to encourage operators to minimise emissions?
- 121. Coal-fired power stations are the third biggest emitter of mercury. And Mercury emissions limits for NSW coal fired power stations are 666 times weaker than the USA. How does the EPA and OEH plan to reduce mercury emissions from NSW coal-fired power stations in line with our obligations under the Minamata convention, which Australia signed in 2013?

Air Pollution

- 122. I understand that the NSW Clean Air Summit attendees were told that, despite being used as the main form of heating by only 5% of households in Sydney, residential wood heating is responsible for more PM2.5 emissions (the most health-hazardous air pollutant) than all other sources put together and the deaths of 100 Sydney residents each year (approximately 25% of Sydney's pollution-related deaths).

Why have we still seen no action on this issue, such as phasing out existing wood heaters when houses are sold or not allowing new wood heaters?

Rural Noise

- 123. Why has the EPA proposed changes to the Industrial Noise Policy that weaken protection for rural communities near large mining sites without conducting any research in rural NSW?
- 124. Will independent research in New South Wales into the impacts of mine noise on rural communities be conducted prior to the adoption of the proposed changes to the Industrial Noise Policy?
- 125. Will the community be included in setting the terms of reference for an independent review into the impacts of mine noise?

Koalas

- 126. In light of the increasing number of koalas being killed on roads in the Greater Macarthur area (such as Appin Rd), and the fact that an additional 143,000 dwellings are projected to be built in this area (including additional roads such as the widening of Appin rd and the Georges River

Parkway), what measures is OEH proposing to use to maximise safe koala crossings within the Wollondilly and Campbelltown LGAs?

Moorebank Intermodal

127. What is the Minister doing to preserve the *Hibbertia Fumana* Sieber ex Toelken plant on the proposed Moorebank Intermodal Site, a species thought extinct in NSW since 1824?
- (a) Is there to be an independent scientific study to ratify the re-discovery of this species and its ecosystem, which includes a minimum of 5 other threatened species?
 - i. If not, why not?
 - ii. If so, what budget allocations or projections are underway?
 - (b) What actions if any have been undertaken to ensure the safety and security of the critically endangered species for the purposes of aforementioned study?
 - (c) Is the Minister aware that immense land clearing of 272ha has begun onsite over the past two months? And that said clearing is nearby to the aforementioned critically endangered species?
128. Is the Minister aware of the March 2013 report produced by ENVIRON for the EPA, which advised that at that time there were no emissions standards for Diesel Locomotives anywhere in the Country?
- (a) Can the Minister advise and or site any updated or more recent reports into this issue?
 - (b) Can the Minister advise of any plans and or budget allocations for the creation of an Emissions Standard for Diesel Locomotives?
129. Is the Minister aware that this one project could effectively account for a 400% increase in diesel locomotives and subsequent air pollution in the Sydney Metro Area and that this increase does not factor in the growth in movements to existing terminals or the announcements of expansion at Enfield Intermodal and a new Intermodal at Villawood, which all travel the one freight line through Sydney?
- (a) Can the Minister advise of any current or future programs and policies of the EPA, that are intended to account for, monitor or mitigate poor air pollution outcomes for Pm2.5 & Pm10 at Moorebank Intermodal, and any other intermodal terminal sites?
 - i. What if any current budget allocations or future budget projections have been undertaken to found or support the EPA in this way?

130. Can the Minister advise how her office and or the EPA intend to reconcile the lack of Emissions Standards on [up to 60] Diesel Locomotives [of ages up to 40 to 50 years old] with the W.H.O. recommendations, the NEPM's and the initiatives of Clean Air for NSW?
131. What if any current budget allocations or future budget projections have been undertaken or explored to ensure that targets of Clean Air for NSW can be met?
132. What if any current budget allocations or future budget projections have been undertaken or explored to ensure a capacity to manage risk, Specifically that which may be generated by other Departments and Agencies of the NSW Government?

Spring Gully

133. With regard to the recently exhibited proposal for a road easement through the Royal National Park to the proposed eco-tourist facility at 60-70 Bournemouth St, Bundeena, can the Minister advise:
- (a) Whether the proposed road includes use of any of the currently unformed roads at Spring Gully?
 - (b) Whether it is more accurate to describe the proposed route of the proposed road as being across or along the existing management and fire trail joining Beachcomber Ave?
 - (c) The length of the proposed roadway over Royal National Park land?
 - (d) The maximum width of the proposed roadway?
 - (e) The total land area of the proposed road easement/license on Royal National Park land?
 - (f) Whether all documents provided by the applicant and referred to in the Review of Environmental Factors and whether all appendices to the Statement of Environmental Effects, Recreation Camp were exhibited?
 - (g) Whether any figures, diagrams or drawings were redacted from any documents provided by the applicant prior to their exhibition?
 - (h) Which, if any, endangered ecological communities listed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 are likely to be in the relevant area of consideration for the proposal?
 - (i) Which, if any, fauna species listed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 are likely to be in the relevant area of consideration for the proposal?

- (j) Which, if any, protected flora species listed under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 are likely to be in the relevant area of consideration for the proposal?
- (k) Which, if any, endangered ecological communities listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth) are likely to be in the relevant area of consideration for the proposal?
134. With regard to the removal of the 5.6 hectare former Scout land at 60-70 Bournemouth St, Bundeena from the Spring Gully Strategic Fire Advantage Zone (SFAZ) within the Royal National Park Bushfire Management Strategy, NPWS, can the Minister advise:
- (a) Where the Eastern containment line for the SFAZ will be located for future hazard reduction burns?
- (b) What is the slope and terrain of the new Eastern boundary of the SFAZ and what vegetation communities are present?
- (c) Whether, in the Minister's opinion, removal of the former Scout land from the Spring Gully SFAZ increases or decreases the operational difficulty of managing a controlled hazard reduction burn at the Eastern end of Spring Gully?
- (d) What is the Minister's response to the residents adjoining the former Scout land to the north of the wetland who are concerned that recent changes to the area of the Spring Gully SFAZ will decrease bushfire safety for their properties?
- (e) Whether the NPWS is aware of any expert opinion that the reduction in area of the Spring Gully SFAZ subject to periodic controlled hazard reduction burn will result in ecologically negative outcomes in this area?

Use of artificial intelligence

135. 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:

- Chatbots for customer service or advice
- Customer management systems
- Scanning legal documents to find relevant case law
- Categorising and searching documents
- Directing petitions efficiently

- Translation
- Document drafting

136. What planned uses does the department have for artificial intelligence?
137. What policy guidelines, if any, guide the exploration and use of artificial intelligence by the department?
138. What research, if any, has the department undertaken regarding the use of AI in Government services?

Air Quality Monitoring

139. Is the Government considering commissioning any new air quality monitoring sites in NSW?
- (a) If so, where?
140. Is the NSW Government satisfied that the current number of monitoring sites in Western Sydney is sufficient to give an accurate picture of air quality in Western Sydney?
141. How long has the Vineyard monitoring station been inoperative? When was it brought back online?
142. Are there any legally enforceable standards for ambient air toxics in NSW or Nationally?
143. How does the NSW Government intend to meet the fine particle standard of 7µg/m³ that the NSW Government is committed to complying with by 2025?
144. How many investigations into non-compliance with air quality standards have been commenced by the EPA in each of the past 4 years?
145. How many breaches of air quality standards have been identified by the EPA in each of the past 4 years?
146. How many penalty notices have been granted by the EPA for breaches of air quality standards in each of the past 4 years?
147. How many prosecutions by the EPA have been commenced for breaches of air quality standards in each of the past 4 years?

Major resource recovery infrastructure program

148. What criteria was used to assess projects for the major resource recovery infrastructure grant program under the Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative in 2013 and 2014?
149. What has happened to the almost \$5million not allocated under that fund?

150. How much of their own money did the organisation receiving the grant put in for each of the following projects:

- (a) Boral Berrima cement kiln alternative fuel
- (b) Eastern Creek UR-3R facility RDF circuit and expansion
- (c) Tuncurry Resource Recovery Park
- (d) KEE - landfill resource recovery facility
- (e) Project advantage: Hexham stage two
- (f) Dunmore resource recovery redevelopment (R3)
- (g) Camellia Recycling Centre
- (h) Earthcare SRF manufacturing facility
- (i) Geneses Xero Waste C&I Plant
- (j) Doyle Bros C&I materials recovery facility
- (k) Summerhill C&I dirty MRF
- (l) NSW next generation e-waste recycling facility
- (m) Relivit recycling resource recovery project - Nowra
- (n) ResourceCo Processed Engineered Fuel (PEF) facility

151. For each of the following projects, has the grant money been already given to the organisations who were successful:

- (a) Boral Berrima cement kiln alternative fuel
- (b) Eastern Creek UR-3R facility RDF circuit and expansion
- (c) Tuncurry Resource Recovery Park
- (d) KEE - landfill resource recovery facility
- (e) Project advantage: Hexham stage two
- (f) Dunmore resource recovery redevelopment (R3)
- (g) Camellia Recycling Centre
- (h) Earthcare SRF manufacturing facility
- (i) Geneses Xero Waste C&I Plant

- (j) Doyle Bros C&I materials recovery facility
- (k) Summerhill C&I dirty MRF
- (l) NSW next generation e-waste recycling facility
- (m) Relivit recycling resource recovery project - Nowra
- (n) ResourceCo Processed Engineered Fuel (PEF) facility

152. For each of the following projects, where is the facility up to in terms of construction and operation?

- (a) Boral Berrima cement kiln alternative fuel
- (b) Eastern Creek UR-3R facility RDF circuit and expansion
- (c) Tuncurry Resource Recovery Park
- (d) KEE - landfill resource recovery facility
- (e) Project advantage: Hexham stage two
- (f) Dunmore resource recovery redevelopment (R3)
- (g) Camellia Recycling Centre
- (h) Earthcare SRF manufacturing facility
- (i) Geneses Xero Waste C&I Plant
- (j) Doyle Bros C&I materials recovery facility
- (k) Summerhill C&I dirty MRF
- (l) NSW next generation e-waste recycling facility
- (m) Relivit recycling resource recovery project - Nowra
- (n) ResourceCo Processed Engineered Fuel (PEF) facility

153. Can you provide the committee with a copy of the deed of agreement for the Geneses Xero Waste C&I Plant

- (a) What are the conditions under the deed of agreement?
- (b) Does one of the conditions specify the percentage of waste that must be recycled at the facility?
 - i. If so what is the percentage?

- ii. If not, what percentage does the NSW Government expect will be recycled?
 - (c) On the Office of Environment website it states that Dial-a-Dump “intend to eventually recover up to 89 per cent of all waste processed at this facility”. Is this based on the Western Sydney Incinerator proceeding?
 - i. How will Dial-a-Dump meet this percentage if the incinerator is not given planning approval?
154. Can you provide the committee with a copy of the deed of agreement for the Eastern Creek UR-3R facility RDF circuit and expansion?
- (a) What are the conditions under the deed of agreement?

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

National Parks

155. For each of the National Parks and Wildlife Service’s 8 Park Operations Branches (Blue Mountains, Hunter Central Coast, Greater Sydney, North Coast, Northern Inland, South Coast, Southern Ranges, West), and for previous years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 for each NPWS Region if no breakdown into the current Park Operations Branches is available:
- (a) How many full-time national parks rangers are currently employed?
 - i. Of these current ranger employees, how many are permanent and how many are temporary positions?
 - (b) What was the number of full-time national parks rangers in each of the years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17?
 - i. In each year, how many were permanent and how many were temporary positions?
 - (c) How many full-time field officers are currently employed?
 - i. Of these current field officer employees, how many are permanent and how many are temporary positions?
 - (d) What was the number of full-time field officers in each of the years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17?
 - i. In each year, how many were permanent and how many were temporary positions?

- (e) How many Regional Managers are currently employed?
 - (f) What was the number of Regional Managers in each of the years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17?
 - (g) How many Area Managers are currently employed?
 - (h) What was the number of Area Managers in each of the years 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17?
156. Which categories of employee positions within the National Parks and Wildlife Service have undergone a change of job title, position description or award?
- (a) What are the details of changes that have been made?
 - (b) How many employees within each category have been affected? Please provide a list.
157. Which categories of employee positions within the National Parks and Wildlife Service have undergone a change of salary or remuneration (other than a regularly negotiated annual increase)?
- (a) What changes have been made to salary or remuneration? Please provide a list.
 - (b) How many employees within each category have been affected? Please provide a list.
158. How many NPWS Regions and Areas are proposed under the current restructure process? Please provide a list.
159. Regarding each of the following list of national parks offices and visitor centres:
- (a) What is the budget allocation for 2017-18?
 - (b) What was the actual expenditure for each financial year 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17?
 - (c) What was the total actual expenditure on new tracks and visitor facilities for each financial year 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17, and allocated for 2017-18?
 - (d) What was the total actual expenditure on upgrades of existing track and facilities each financial year 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17, and allocated for 2017-18?
 - (e) What was the total number of permanent staff positions (both full and part time) related to each office, including the number of staff in each of the following categories (eg Regional Manager, Area Manager, Ranger, Field Officer, Administrative staff, Visitor Centre staff, Project Officer, Other specialist staff eg fire and pest management, world heritage

management, Aboriginal heritage management), for each financial year 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 and estimated for 2017-18?

- (f) What was the total number of temporary staff positions (both full and part time) related to each office, including the number of staff in each of the following categories (eg Regional Manager, Area Manager, Ranger, Field Officer, Administrative staff, Visitor Centre staff, Project Officer, Other specialist staff eg fire and pest management, world heritage management, Aboriginal heritage management), for each financial year 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 and estimated for 2017-18?

- (1) Abercrombie Caves - National Parks office
- (2) Alpine Resorts - National Parks office
- (3) Alstonville - Northern Rivers Region - National Parks office
- (4) Alstonville - Richmond River Area - National Parks office
- (5) Armidale (local office) - National Parks office
- (6) Armidale (regional office) - National Parks office
- (7) Baradine (Pilliga Forest Discovery Centre) - National Parks office
- (8) Baradine - National Parks office
- (9) Bathurst - National Parks office
- (10) Blue Mountains (Blackheath) - National Parks office
- (11) Blue Mountains (Glenbrook) - National Parks office
- (12) Blue Mountains (Katoomba) - National Parks office
- (13) Bombala - National Parks office
- (14) Borenore Caves - National Parks office
- (15) Bourke - National Parks office
- (16) Broken Hill - National Parks office
- (17) Bulga - National Parks office
- (18) Bungonia local office - National Parks office
- (19) Buronga - National Parks office
- (20) Byron Bay - National Parks office
- (21) Cape Byron Information Centre - National Parks office
- (22) Cape Byron Lighthouse - National Parks office
- (23) Central Coast - National Parks office
- (24) Chatswood - National Parks office
- (25) Coffs Coast Area National Parks Office - National Parks office
- (26) Dorrigo Rainforest Centre - National Parks office
- (27) Dubbo - National Parks office
- (28) Fitzroy Falls Visitor Centre - National Parks office
- (29) Forbes - National Parks office
- (30) Glen Innes - National Parks office
- (31) Gloucester - National Parks office
- (32) Grafton - National Parks office
- (33) Great Lakes (Pacific Palms) - National Parks office
- (34) Griffith - National Parks office
- (35) Hartley Historic Site - National Parks office
- (36) Hay Area - National Parks office
- (37) Highlands - National Parks office
- (38) Hill End - National Parks office
- (39) Hurstville (NPWS main administration office) - National Parks office

- (40) Hurstville (Park Management Policy Unit) - National Parks office
- (41) Illawarra - National Parks office
- (42) Jenolan Caves - National Parks office
- (43) Jindabyne - National Parks office
- (44) Khancoban - National Parks office
- (45) Killcare - National Parks visitor centre
- (46) Kurnell (Kamay Botany Bay National Park) - National Parks office
- (47) Kyogle - National Parks office
- (48) La Perouse Museum (Botany Bay National Park) - National Parks office
- (49) Lake Munmorah - National Parks office
- (50) Macleay area (local office) - National Parks office
- (51) Manly - National Parks office
- (52) Merimbula - National Parks office
- (53) Merimbula - National Parks visitor centre
- (54) Minnamurra Rainforest Centre - National Parks office
- (55) Moama (South West Area) - National Parks office
- (56) Mosman (venue information and bookings) - National Parks office
- (57) Mudgee - National Parks office
- (58) Narooma - National Parks visitor centre
- (59) Narrabri - National Parks office
- (60) National Parks Contact Centre - National Parks office
- (61) Nattai Area office - National Parks office
- (62) Nelson Bay - National Parks office
- (63) Newcastle - National Parks office
- (64) Northern Beaches (Forestville) - National Parks office
- (65) Nowra - National Parks office
- (66) Oberon - National Parks office
- (67) Parramatta - National Parks office
- (68) Perisher Range Resorts - National Parks office
- (69) Port Macquarie - National Parks office
- (70) Queanbeyan (National Parks and Wildlife) - National Parks office
- (71) Richmond - National Parks office
- (72) Royal National Park Area Office - National Parks office
- (73) Royal National Park visitor centre - National Parks office
- (74) Scone - National Parks office
- (75) Sea Acres Rainforest Centre, Port Macquarie - National Parks office
- (76) South West Rocks (Trial Bay Gaol) - National Parks office
- (77) Sydney Harbour - National Parks office
- (78) Sydney North (Hornsby) - National Parks office
- (79) Sydney North (Kalkari Discovery Centre) - National Parks office
- (80) Taree - National Parks office
- (81) Tenterfield - National Parks office
- (82) Tibbooburra - National Parks office
- (83) Tumut - National Parks office
- (84) Tumut National Parks and Wildlife Service Office - National Parks office
- (85) Tweed Area Office - National Parks office
- (86) Ulladulla - National Parks office
- (87) Vacluse (general inquiries, venue information and bookings) - National Parks office
- (88) Walcha - National Parks office
- (89) Warrumbungles Visitor Centre - National Parks office
- (90) White Cliffs Visitor Centre (Paroo Darling National Park) - National Parks office

- (91) Windsor - National Parks office
- (92) Wombeyan Caves - National Parks office
- (93) Yanga National Park - National Parks office
- (94) Yarrangobilly Caves - National Parks office

160. Did the Minister discuss with the Deputy Premier the timber recently allocated to commercial sawmills in the Riverina, derived from the ecological thinning trial from the Murray Valley National Park?
- (a) How much timber is proposed to be allocated for commercial use?
 - (b) What is the estimated commercial value of this timber?
161. Did any commercial operators in receipt of the timber from the Murray Valley National Park benefit from the \$97 million compensation package upon the gazettal of the red gum national parks?
162. Are any other national parks in NSW are being considered for commercial logging or for the provision of timber derived from any national park for commercial use? If so, please provide details.
163. What action has the Minister taken to ensure that environmental water allocations to the red gum national parks in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys are secure?
164. Regarding reserves managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service for which tickets are sold or an entry fee is charged to access areas to observe Sydney's New Year's Eve fireworks:
- (a) What was the ticket price for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2016? Please list each area separately.
 - (b) How many tickets were sold for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2016? Please list each area separately.
 - (c) What is the proposed ticket price for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2017? Please list each area separately.
 - (d) How many tickets are proposed to be available for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2017? Please list each area separately.
165. How many section 121 'occupier licences' to permit harm to native animals were issued; which species were subject of licenses issued; how many of each species were permitted to be harmed; and how many of each species were destroyed in 2016-17? Please provide the full list in table form.

166. How many section 121 ‘occupier licences’ to permit harm to native animals were applied for and not issued or approved in 2016-17?

(a) What were the amounts and species subject to these applications?

Forestry

167. When will the Natural Resources Commission’s ‘Independent Review of Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals’ be finalised and made public, as detailed in the Forest Industry Roadmap?

168. What were the findings and recommendations of the NRC review regarding:

- (a) What baseline the NRC used when making a decision on the area of available forest for harvest and how this baseline was derived;
- (b) Whether wood supply commitments and environmental protection commitments are mutually achievable, or whether trade-offs must be made;
- (c) If trade-offs must be made, what environmental or wood supply trade-offs were recommended by the NRC;
- (d) What recommendations the NRC made in regards the maximum allowable coupe size and the minimum allowable return time to harvest an adjacent coupe for intensive regeneration harvesting;
- (e) What basal area limit the NRC recommended for selective logging;
- (f) What percentage of each harvest area the NRC recommended should be retained as tree retention clumps;
- (g) What percentage of each harvest area the NRC recommended should be retained as habitat clumps; and
- (h) What definitions the NRC used to define large trees, rocky outcrops or other key habitat features?

169. What role has the Office of Environment and Heritage had in the development of a Light Detecting and Ranging (LIDAR) dataset for use in forestry planning and operations? In particular:

- (a) What areas of the State have been surveyed?
- (b) What forestry decision-making will the LIDAR dataset inform and what, if any, current management processes will LIDAR replace?

- (c) How will the LIDAR dataset relate to the management of threatened species and ecological communities?
- (d) How much has the dataset cost?

170. Where can the dataset be accessed?

Koala habitat

171. Regarding the strategy underpinning the \$10 million earmarked for the purchase of koala habitat:

- (a) What analyses have been undertaken to identify high quality habitat, and what has this analysis shown?
- (b) What cost-benefit analyses have been undertaken?
- (c) How has climate change been considered in any prioritisation of areas for purchase?
- (d) How has long-term persistence of koala populations been considered in any prioritisation?
- (e) What analysis has taken place as to the relative cost-benefit of purchasing timber contracts in order to protect koala habitat on public land?
- (f) Have any alternatives to land purchase been proposed to protect koala habitat on public or private land?

172. Has any priority land been identified under recommendation 7 of the Whole of Government Koala Strategy, and has this analysis been tenure blind?

Land clearing and native vegetation

173. Given the Native Vegetation Regulatory Map is not available to allow landholders to confirm the category of land they wish to clear, what will be the penalty if vegetation is cleared without the required approval?

174. How many Local Government Areas (LGAs) have identified core Koala habitat that will show up on the current regulatory map as category 2 sensitive lands?

- (a) What will protect other koala habitat outside of these LGAs being open to potential clearing under the Land Management Codes?

175. How does the new regime provide protection for *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*-listed threatened and migratory species and communities and how will a landholder know whether they need federal approval under the Act for the clearing they wish to undertake?

176. Has the Government conducted a cost benefit analysis into the Biodiversity Offsetting Scheme?

- (a) If so, what were the key findings in relation to whether the new scheme would be a positive or negative impact on the NSW community?
177. Given the regulations and codes under the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and the *Local Land Services Amendment Act 2016* were not released until 25 August 2017, the date they came in to force, what training have LLS and OEH compliance staff had in the details of the new regime? Please outline the length of training, the number of staff who undertook such training from each agency and the dates of the training.
 178. Has there been an assessment of the extent of clearing that could occur using each of the codes?
 - (a) If so, when will this be released publicly?
 - (b) Has there been an impact assessment done to quantify the impact those extents will have on threatened species and endangered ecological communities?
 179. Is the Government committed to protecting in perpetuity the equivalent biodiversity values that will cleared by landholders under this new regime?
 180. Can the Government confirm how regularly and within what time period satellite data will be made publically available which outlines the extent of native vegetation clearing?
 181. Will there be interim core habitat layer produced for the regulatory map, based on expert knowledge of Koala distribution and preferred food trees at the local scale, until comprehensive statewide mapping is completed?
 182. Will the set asides and offsets be monitored regularly by an independent auditor?
 183. How is the application of the Biodiversity Assessment Method to determine offsets and credits going to be audited?
 184. How will the Government ensure that the carbon emissions from all clearing which takes place is counted in the Government's pledge to reach net zero emissions by 2050?
 185. What model of private landowner support and compliance will the new Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) adopt under its stewardship program and what resources will be allocated to this function?
 186. How will the BCT be able to move quickly enough to secure, sell and protect high conservation value land at acceptable commercial rates as a government entity?
 187. How does the Government or the BCT plan to fund the BCT in the long term?

188. As NSW will be the only State without an NGO covenanting entity, have the experiences in other States been fully assessed regarding this change in NSW?
- (a) If so, what were the outcomes of this assessment?
189. How will landholders know what money is available to them for stewardship payments, as an alternative to clearing, if there is no private conservation investment strategy in place to identify the price per hectare?
190. How is the Government addressing concerns that once the new laws are implemented, significant cultural heritage sites, such as scar trees could be destroyed?
- (a) What resources has the Government allocated to ensuring compliance with the new laws?
191. Has the Government allocated funds for awareness and education about the new laws to ensure that landholders properly understand them?
- (a) If so, how much?
- (b) How are the funds being targeted across NSW?
192. Of the \$240 million announced for the new Biodiversity Conservation Trust:
- (a) How much will be made available in 2017/18?
- (b) When will funds become available?
- (c) Will all land holders be able to access the funds or only landholders who meet a certain threshold or criteria, and if so what is the criteria?
193. Of the \$100 million announced for the Saving our Species program
- (a) Are these funds are quarantined for government spending or whether there will be any specific streams of funding that land holders will be able to access or apply for?
- (b) How much will be made available in 2017/18?
194. Will the Government publicly release all submissions to the consultation on the draft Regulations and other key products supporting the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016* and *Local Land Services Amendment Act 2016*?
- (a) If so, when?
- (b) If not, why not, considering all submissions to the original draft bill were made public?

195. Has the Government considered or reviewed the impact of the new land clearing and native vegetation laws to threatened and migratory species and endangered ecological communities listed in the federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*?
 - (a) If so, what were the findings?
 - (b) If not, why not?
196. Does the current Native Vegetation Regulatory Map include coastal and Ramsar wetlands, littoral rainforest, core koala habitat, critically endangered ecological communities, old growth forests and high conservation value grasslands?
197. How will the loss of biodiversity at the property level be mitigated at the regional level?
198. How will the objective to address biodiversity decline be achieved by the increased dependence on offsetting in the proposed system?
199. How do the regulations apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development?
200. Will the Biodiversity Assessment Method be applied for most rural clearing?
 - (a) If not, how are the regulations a scientifically robust way of assessing and conserving biodiversity?
201. Will there be special considerations and limitations based on the regional extent of native vegetation, such as the over-cleared North West floodplains and lower slopes east of Moree?
202. How will Koala habitat be protected in over-cleared landscapes considering that two of their main preferred food trees Bimble box and River Red gum have the least protection as paddock trees and can be cleared as invasive species?
203. Can Koala habitat be cleared using the Biodiversity Assessment Method and the use of offsets?
204. Will the LLS be able to refuse clearing applications in over cleared landscapes when the application is consistent with the codes?
205. Will the equity code enable broadscale clearing of woodlands, open forests and grasslands previously not cleared?
206. Can the Equity Code still clear up to 625ha or down to 10% category 2 remnant vegetation per property?
207. Can Invasive Native Species thinning clear up to 900ha, including trees up to 30cm dbh, and retain just 20 trees per ha?

208. Can pasture expansion activities thin trees up to 90cm dbh, providing the area does not to exceed 30% of total property?
209. Can farm plan code clearing remove up to 25% of category 2 remnant vegetation on a property?
210. Will determining serious and irreversible impacts be at the Minister's discretion?
211. Will the loss from clearing be balanced by gains from plantings, set asides, offsets and stewardship agreements?
- (a) If so, over what timeframe are such gains estimated be achieved?
212. For category 1 land, how will property vegetation planning be incorporated to consider the landscape significance of the vegetation and factors such as soil erosion, salinity recharge and discharge areas, protected lands, stream buffers, landscape corridors, and protection of hollow trees?
213. Will all clearing be considered according to the 'maintain or improve' standard for both the property and region levels?
214. Does the principle of no net loss apply?
215. How do people nominate areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value?
216. What is included in vulnerable regulated land and how have they been identified and mapped?
217. What is included in sensitive regulated land and how have they been identified and mapped?
218. What scientific evidence underpins the assumption that offsetting is successful in the timeframe necessary to conserve threatened species?
219. What will be the acceptable minimum standard for offsets in terms of age classes and time to regenerate mature habitats for threatened species?
220. Is protection of existing remnant vegetation not under threat considered a conservation gain if it offsets the loss of an area of habitat that was a larger total area?
221. Do the regulations allow offsets across a species range and swapping between species?
- (a) If so, what is the scientific evidence that this will lead to positive biodiversity outcomes?
222. What scientific evidence underpins the use of flexible and indirect offsets?
223. What assurance or security is there to guarantee that an offset will achieve a biodiversity gain?

224. When will the Government publicly release the native vegetation and clearing data for 2014-15 and 2015-16, as has been released in previous years in the annual 'NSW Report on Native Vegetation'?

(a) Why has the release of this data been delayed?

Air pollution

225. What actions will the Minister and the responsible agencies take in the next year to bring PM2.5 levels in Muswellbrook under the national standard?

226. Does the EPA have an estimate of the number of years of life lost, or the number of asthma attacks suffered in Muswellbrook that is caused by this polluted air?

(a) If not, why not?

227. Will the Minister declare the Muswellbrook region noncompliant with the national air pollution standards and commit to an action plan to reduce PM2.5 concentrations to beneath the national standard?

(a) If so, will this be incorporated in the NSW Air Pollution Strategy?

228. What measures is the Minister undertaking to reduce toxic pollution from power stations causing unhealthy air in Muswellbrook?

229. What progress has been made on the one-year benchmarking study of international best-practice for regulating coal-fired power stations, as proposed at the "Clean Air for NSW" consultation?

(a) Will the Government commit to implementing findings of world's best practice?

230. What actions has the NSW EPA taken since the WHO reduced its guideline for SO₂ pollution to 7 parts per billion, to provide the community with this greater degree of protection?

231. Does the EPA have an estimate for the number of years of lives lost, number of hospital visits or the number of asthma attacks suffered in Muswellbrook that are caused by the high level of sulphur dioxide in the air breathed at times of low air quality?

232. Are power stations' SO₂ limits currently too low for the best health and wellbeing of the local residents?

(a) If not, why not?

233. Is the Minister considering tightening their pollution limits or requiring AGL Macquarie to consistently burn lower sulphur coal or install scrubbers?

(a) If not, why not?

234. Does the Minister consider it acceptable that in NSW the standards protecting people's health are four times weaker than in Europe, given that NSW power stations must report to the EPA if their SO₂ stack emissions exceed a concentration of 600 ppm, while in Europe the limit is 140 ppm?
235. Will the Minister commit to reviewing pollution licences for the five NSW coal-fired power stations and setting stack emission limits consistent with international standards as summarised in the recent 'Toxic and Terminal' report?

Botanic Gardens

236. Regarding areas of the Botanic Gardens for which tickets are sold or an entry fee is charged to observe Sydney's New Year's Eve fireworks:
- (a) What was the ticket price for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2016? Please list for each area separately.
 - (b) How many tickets were sold for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2016? Please list for each area separately.
 - (c) What is the proposed ticket price for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2017? Please list for each area separately.
 - (d) How many tickets are proposed to be available for each ticketed/fee-restricted area in 2017? Please list for each area separately.

Environment Protection Authority

237. What is the timeframe for implementing all of the recommendations from the Legislative Council inquiry into the Performance of the NSW Environment Protection Authority?
- (a) When will the Government resolve the conflict created by the dual role performed by Mr Barry Buffier who is both the Chair and CEO of the EPA?
238. What compliance actions have been taken by the EPA in respect of the vapour recovery program for petrol stations in 2016-17?
239. How many of the 351 service stations required to install VR2 by 1 January 2017 complied with this deadline?
240. How many petrol stations, and what proportion of those required to, have complied with the requirement to install VR1 to date?

241. How many petrol stations have still not complied to date with the requirement to install VR1, and why have they not complied?
242. What action has been taken against those that are non-compliant?
243. Have any prosecutions been taken or fines imposed upon non-compliant petrol stations?

Spring Gully, Bundeena

244. With reference to the former Minister for the Environment's answers to Supplementary Questions 73-77, Budget Estimates 2016-17:
 - (a) What action has the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) taken to resolve the discrepancies in land title records it has identified with the Registrar General?
 - (b) With reference to the advice that the NPWS identifies 'The Reform Land Investment and Building Company Limited (deregistered) as the owner of the paper roads, and the former Minister's stated intention to acquire the roads for addition to the Royal National Park, what action has the NPWS or the Minister taken in relation to the proceedings in the Land and Environment Court (RVA Australia Pty Ltd v Rosemary Elizabeth Marzouk, case 2017/00190236) whereby other parties claiming ownership of the roads are seeking a Court endorsed dealing?
245. In June and August 2017 the NPWS placed "Review of Environmental Factors, Bundeena Coast Eco Lodge request alternative right of way" (REF) and accompanying documents on public exhibition. The proposed activity requires the approval of the Minister or her delegate under s153C of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. With regard to the exhibited REF:
 - (a) Can the Minister advise of the author of the exhibited REF?
 - (b) Is the Minister satisfied as to the legal permissibility of the proponent's proposal to:
 - i. gift approximately five hectares of land, being part of the unmade roads, to the Minister for the Environment for addition to the Royal National Park, and
 - ii. extinguish the right of way of other land owners over that land to the benefit of the Minister for the Environment in consideration of the granting of the proposed right of way through the Royal National Park (REF pp 11, 12, 30, 43)?
 - (c) Can the Minister confirm that the NPWS were satisfied as to the ownership and legal permissibility of the proposed gift of land prior to exhibition of the REF in compliance with the Guidelines for preparing a Review of Environmental Factors, Office of Environment and Heritage, 2016?

- (d) Is the lack of progress in the addition of the unmade paper roads into the Royal National Park, as previously advised by then Minister for the Environment, The Hon. Rob Stokes MP in March 2015, and the resolution of ownership of the paper roads with the Registrar General (as advised in the answers to Supplementary Questions, Budget Estimates 2016-17) related to the public exhibition of the proposed gift of the land by RVA Australia Pty Ltd as consideration for their proposed road access over the Royal National Park?

Warragamba Dam

246. Has the Minister consulted the EPA about the environmental impacts of the proposed upgrade of the dam?
247. Will the government revoke any of the declaration of Blue Mountains national parks (for example, Blue Mountains, Kanagra Boyd and Nattai NPs and Yerranderie and Burragorang State Conservation Areas) if the Warragamba Dam wall is lifted?

Mangrove Mountain landfill

248. Given concerns regarding environmental damage and potential pollutants intercepting local groundwater, as well as the vast increase in the allowable amount of deposited waste, has the Government considered cancelling the environment protection licence (EPL 11395) for the landfill?
- (a) If not, will the Government consider such action?

Environmental Contamination

249. When you met with the Member for Newcastle on 4 May 2017 you suggested the NSW Chief Scientist undertake a comprehensive research and analysis of heavy metal contamination in Newcastle. Why have you now decided this is not an appropriate course of action?
250. Will you now get the EPA to undertake an analysis of heavy metal contamination in Newcastle?
- (a) If so, when will this occur
- (b) If so, when will the results be presented to the Newcastle community?
- (c) If not, why not?

Walking Tracks in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area

251. Will the Minister commit to increasing funding to the Office of Environment and Heritage to maintain and improve walking tracks in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area?
- (a) Specifically in relation to the Mt Keira Ring Track?

- (b) In relation to the small number of tracks open to the public in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area?
252. Is the Minister happy with the current state of disrepair and underdevelopment of the network of walking tracks in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area due to lack of funding?
- (a) Specifically in relation to the Mt Keira Ring Track of which large sections are closed due to the need for maintenance?
 - (b) In relation to the small number of tracks available in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area?
253. Can the Minister provide details of any planned investment that will be made via the Office of Environmental and Heritage to upgrade and maintain the Mt Keira Ring Track
- (a) In 2017-18?
 - (b) In 2018-19?
254. Will the Minister provide assurances that no part of the Royal National Park will be compromised in any way by the current proposal to extend the F6 through a section of this iconic protected area?
- (a) How will the Minister protect the environmental values of this Royal National Park should this extension of the F6 go ahead?

Office Administration

255. 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?
256. 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?
257. 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?
- 258. Has any artwork been purchased or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?
 - (a) What is the cost of this?
- 259. 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?
- 260. 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?
- 261. 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?
- 262. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?
- 263. 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?
- 264. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?
 - (a) What is the monthly cost of this?
- 265. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?
 - (a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?
- 266. 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

267. 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

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

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

Labour Hire Firms

270. 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

271. 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?

272. 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?

273. What is the total cost of media monitoring services used by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities?

274. 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?

275. 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?

276. 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

277. How much did your ministerial office spend on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts in 2016-17?

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

Overseas Trips

279. 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?

280. 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

281. 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

282. 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

283. 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?

284. 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

285. 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?

286. 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?

287. 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?

288. 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?

289. 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?
290. 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?
291. Are any staff formerly employed by your ministerial office now employed by Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibility?
292. How many staff were dismissed from Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibilities in 2016-17?
- (a) What were the reason/s for each dismissal?
293. What was the total amount your Departments/agencies spent on stationery?

Smart Phone Accounts

294. 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?
295. 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

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

Merchant fees

298. 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.
299. 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.
300. 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

301. 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.

Questions from Ms Dawn Walker MLC
--

Environmental Protection Agency

302. How many audits and investigations did the Environmental Protection Agency undertake for native forestry operations over the last financial year?
- (a) How many were for Forestry Corporation of NSW?
 - (b) How many resulted in:
 - i. Advisory letters
 - ii. Formal warnings
 - iii. Show causes
 - iv. Clean up notices
 - v. Remedial action
 - vi. Official cautions
 - vii. Penalty notices
 - viii. Other
 - (c) Can you provide a breakdown of the above compliance matters for each forest in NSW?
303. What investigations has the EPA done into illegal harvesting?
- (a) Has the EPA sought legal advice about this illegal harvesting?

- i. Are they able to provide the committee with this legal advice?
304. What role will the EPA play in negotiations of the integrated forestry operations approvals (IFOAs)?
305. Does the EPA currently have enough resources to conduct compliance works?
- (a) How many officers does the EPA currently have committed to forestry issues?
 - (b) Can the EPA provide a breakdown of number of compliance officers for each region of NSW?
 - (c) Are there any areas that are currently without compliance officers?
306. Is the EPA concerned about the nature of non-compliance within Forestry Corporation?
- (a) Has the EPA undertaken any investigations into non-compliance by Forestry Corporation?

Koala mapping

307. How much money did the Government invest in the Predictive Koala Habitat Model?
308. How much has the Government invested in Koala mapping, including the trial four state forests in Northern NSW?
- (a) Can you provide the spending for 2014-15; 2015-16; 2016-17?
 - (b) Can you provide a breakdown of the spending in these years?

HERITAGE

Questions from the Hon Paul Green MLC

Wild Play Garden and Horse Track

309. How could your department grant an approval in 2015 for a playground and then pretend that such approval included permission to radically change the nature and usage of a different part of the park which is the exceptional heritage horse track?

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

Aboriginal Heritage

310. What is the number of Aboriginal heritage impact permits (AHIPs) that have been issued in the last financial year?
- (a) What is the number for each financial year since the commencement of *National Parks and Wildlife Amendment Act 2010*?
311. How many breaches related to Aboriginal heritage were reported to the OEH in 2016-17?
- (a) How many of these were investigated?
- (b) If suspected harm to Aboriginal heritage was not investigated, why not?
312. How many staff will be employed by the Office of Environment and Heritage in 2017-18 to specifically undertake work in relation to Aboriginal culture and heritage?
- (a) How many were employed in each of the previous five financial years?
313. How many Aboriginal staff will be employed by the Office of Environment and Heritage in 2017-18 to specifically undertake work in relation to Aboriginal culture and heritage?
- (a) How many were employed in each of the previous five financial years?
314. What was the budget for litigation associated with Aboriginal sites and objects in 2016-17?
315. What is the budget for litigation associated with Aboriginal sites and objects in 2017-18?
316. Of the \$409 million allocated to 'Encouraging communities to enjoy their environment and heritage' in the 201718 budget and in particular the \$29 million of this to 'conserve, celebrate and enjoy the State's unique Aboriginal and other historic heritage', how much is allocated to be spent in 201718 on the following:

- (a) Protecting Aboriginal heritage sites?
- (b) Delivering programs to Aboriginal communities?
- (c) Delivering Aboriginal culture and heritage -sites training courses?
- (d) Staffing costs?
- (e) Promoting Aboriginal heritage?
- (f) Increasing the number of Aboriginal sites and areas protected?
- (g) Providing Aboriginal people with opportunities to protect their culture and heritage and access traditional lands by increasing the number of Aboriginal comanagement?

317. What is the OEH's total budget for joint management (activities specifically related to national parks and reserves that are-will be jointly managed under Part 4A of the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*) in 2017-18?

- (a) Of this, how much is spent on the following:
 - i. Staff?
 - ii. Rents?
 - iii. Proposals to develop new jointly managed parks?

318. What is the OEH's total budget for comanagement activities related to increasing Aboriginal people's participation and management in national parks and reserves?

- (a) What is the budget for arrangement over national parks and other conservation areas' (Goal 26, NSW 2021)?
- (b) What is the budget for investigating incidents of alleged unauthorised harm to Aboriginal heritage?

319. How much money has been allocated to specifically increase the number of Aboriginal heritage items listed on the State Heritage Register in 2017-18?

- (a) How much was spent in each of the previous five financial years?

320. Has the number of Aboriginal heritage impact permits (AHIPs) issued by the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage increased or decreased since the Aboriginal heritage amendments to the *National Parks and Wildlife Act* commenced in October 2010?

- (a) Can the OEH provide reasons for any increases or decreases?

321. What is the OEH's budget for specifically enforcing the laws relating to Aboriginal 'objects' and 'places'?
322. How many items listed on the State Heritage Register for their Aboriginal Heritage significance does the OEH expect to be listed in 2017-18?
- (a) How many have been listed in each of the previous five financial years?
323. How many staff does the OEH employ to promote the inclusion of Aboriginal heritage items on the State Heritage Register?
- (a) What is the forecast budget for this role-these roles in the future?
324. How much money has been allocated in 2017-18 to improve the information contained in AHIMS reports?
- (a) What specifically is this funding intended to be spent on?
325. What was the actual budget for managing and operating AHIMS in 2016-17?
326. What is the forecast expenditure for operating the AHIMS database in 2017-18?
327. How many Aboriginal cultural, heritage or archeological sites did Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS) identify in the following years:
- (a) 2015?
- (b) 2016?
328. How many places that have been proposed as possible declared Aboriginal places are currently under consideration or are awaiting review to proceed to assessment, and what was the date that a nomination was received for each outstanding place under consideration or awaiting review?
329. Does the Minister acknowledge the concerns of local Awabakal women that the cultural and heritage values of the Butterfly Cave are threatened by a proposed development on surrounding land?
330. Will the Minister direct that a full assessment of the bushland around the Butterfly Cave as a potential Aboriginal place be carried out, as requested by local community members including local Awabakal women?
- (a) If not, why not?
- (b) Is it correct that one reason OEH has not undertaken a full assessment of the bushland is that the OEH believes that "Pursuing a full assessment of the bushland around the

Butterfly Cave will create expectations that an Aboriginal place gazettal will result from the process”?

- (c) If so, is this an appropriate consideration given that such a nomination should proceed on a merits-basis, rather than on “expectations”?

Windsor Bridge

331. Will the Minister intervene to ensure the irreplaceable heritage in the vicinity of the Windsor Bridge project is protected and conserved, including stopping earthworks that could impact on heritage items or potential heritage values near Thompson Square?

Office Administration

332. 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?
333. 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?
334. 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?
335. Has any artwork been purchased or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?
- (a) What is the cost of this?
336. 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?

337. 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?
338. 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?
339. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?
340. 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?
341. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?
- (a) What is the monthly cost of this?
342. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?
- (a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?
343. 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
344. 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

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

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

Labour Hire Firms

347. 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

348. 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?
349. 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?
350. What is the total cost of media monitoring services used by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities?
351. 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?
352. 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?
353. 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

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

Overseas Trips

356. 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?
357. 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

358. 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
359. 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

360. 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?
361. 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

362. 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?
363. 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?
364. 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?
365. 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?
366. 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?
367. 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?

368. Are any staff formerly employed by your ministerial office now employed by Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibility?

369. How many staff were dismissed from Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibilities in 2016-17?

(a) What were the reason/s for each dismissal?

370. What was the total amount your Departments/agencies spent on stationery?

Smart Phone Accounts

371. 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?

372. 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

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

374. What were the top 20 most accessed (by number of times accessed) unique domain names accessed by your Ministerial office this year?

Merchant fees

375. 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.

376. 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.

377. 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

378. 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.

Questions from the Mr David Shoebridge MLC

Heritage listings

379. How many State Heritage listings has the Minister determined each month since she became Minister?
380. How many listings are currently outside of the 14 day time limit?
381. What is the reason for failing to comply with relevant time limits around heritage listing?
382. What were the reasons for refusing to list the Sirius building despite its obvious significance?
383. When will the Nielsen Park recommendation be determined (noting it is more than 265 days since it was recommended)?

Aboriginal heritage impact permits

384. What was the total number of Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit applications that were received in the following financial years:
- (a) 2013/14?
 - (b) 2014/15?
 - (c) 2015/16?
 - (d) 2016/17?
385. What was the total number of Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit applications that were approved in each of the following financial years:
- (a) 2013/14?
 - (b) 2014/15?
 - (c) 2015/16?
 - (d) 2016/17?
386. What was the total number of Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit applications that were refused in each of the following financial years:

- (a) 2013/14?
- (b) 2014/15?
- (c) 2015/16?
- (d) 2016/17?

Aboriginal cultural heritage reform

- 387. What stage is the Aboriginal cultural heritage reform process up to?
- 388. When will a report be released?

Aboriginal heritage protected via the State Heritage Register and Aboriginal Places Program

- 389. What budget is set aside to increase the number of Aboriginal culture and heritage items listed on the State Heritage Register in 2017/18?
 - (a) Is this more or less than previous years?
- 390. How many items listed on the State Heritage Register for their Aboriginal Heritage significance does the OEH expect to be listed in 2017/18?
 - (a) Is this more or less than last year?
- 391. How many staff does the OEH employ to promote the inclusion of Aboriginal heritage items on the State Heritage Register?
 - (a) What is the forecast budget for this roles/these roles in the future?

Supercar race

- 392. The Newcastle 500 Supercar race will go through a local and state-listed Heritage Conservation Zone, what steps has the Minister taken to protect the fragile heritage homes in the area from the vibration damage from construction vehicles and low-frequency sound waves?
- 393. What guidance has the Office of Environment and Heritage provided to Destination NSW to ensure that Newcastle's fragile heritage is protected?

Windsor Bridge

- 394. Is the Minister aware of the community group, Community Action for Windsor Bridge (CAWB)?
- 395. Is the Minister aware this group has recently commenced their fifth year of a continuous, 24-hour a day, protective vigil in Thompson Square, Windsor.... That's seventy two thousand hours....the equivalent of one person's working life, or put another way, more than 17,000 4-hour shifts this community has invested in protecting their heritage.

396. Has the Minister contacted this group? Organised to meet with them? Visited the Square?
Protested to Cabinet colleagues about this project?
397. Is the Minister happy about what is being done by the Government to the oldest public square in the nation?
398. Is Thompson Square the new benchmark for heritage "management" in NSW?
399. Has the Minister been briefed on the archaeological findings?
400. Is the Minister aware that the RMS archaeologists have been unable to "find" previously identified and highly significant archaeological remains such as the brick barrel drains (likely to prove to be the oldest example of such public infrastructure in Australia)?
401. Does this "loss" worry the Minister?
402. Has the Minister been briefed on the RMS "landscaping" plans that involve removing almost every single tree in the Square, leaving a steep, bare, unprotected hill towered over by a concrete monolith, topped with very large, noisy vehicles?
403. Is the Minister satisfied with these plans?
404. Is the Minister satisfied with the reports being prepared by the RMS?
405. Has the Minister read the Strategic Conservation Management Plan?
406. Are you happy that the "Plan" excludes all the built structures in the Square?
407. Are you satisfied with the community consultation processes to date?
408. Do you have any concerns regarding the sequence of preparation and release of the mandatory heritage documents for this project?

Use of artificial intelligence

409. 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:

- Chatbots for customer service or advice
- Customer management systems
- Scanning legal documents to find relevant case law
- Categorising and searching documents

- Directing petitions efficiently
- Translation
- Document drafting

410. When did the department implement AI technologies and which technologies were these?

411. What planned uses does the department have for artificial intelligence?

412. What is the anticipated timeline for the expansion of existing AI uses or implementation of new technologies?

413. What policy guidelines, if any, guide the exploration and use of artificial intelligence by the department?

414. What research, if any, has the department undertaken regarding the use of AI in Government services?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Questions from the Hon Mark Pearson MLC

Council Pounds

415. In the previous two years, how many complaints has your department received about substandard conditions and treatment of animals in council pounds?
416. Does your Department have a memorandum of understanding or some other protocol with RSPCA NSW, AWL NSW or the Police to notify the Minister for Local Government where they have investigated any alleged breaches of POCTAA or complaints concerning council pounds?
417. Is the Minister aware of which council pounds have been investigated by RSPCA NSW in the last two years?
418. Does the Minister acknowledge there is a high level of dissatisfaction within the NSW community regarding the management of council pounds including non-compliant pounds, high kill rates and inadequate council responses to community concerns?
419. Will the Minister implement an Inquiry into the state of NSW council pounds and private shelters?
420. Given the increasing public concern in regards to the poor treatment of impounded companion animals, will the Minister commit to directing the Auditor-General to conduct a performance audit of Council pounds to ensure they comply with their obligations under the NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments?
421. Of the more than 150 local government councils in NSW, how many councils actively promote and undertake collaboration with rehoming of animals to approved welfare organisations including grass roots companion animal rescue groups in order to reduce the numbers of impounded companion animals that are killed?
422. Given that analysis of pound data is available, including seasonal and yearly intake trends and outcome trend comparisons by year, region and council types, what steps, if any, has your department taken to assist Councils in planning and implementation for reducing kill rates?
423. The pound data shows significant disparities between different NSW local councils in terms of kill rates and release rates to animal welfare organisations. What steps, if any, has the Minister taken to investigate whether these disparities are indicative of lack of compliance with s.64(5)

Companion Animals Act, which mandates councils to consider alternatives to killing and (if practicable) to adopt any such alternative?

424. Given that NSW Rescue Groups rehome more cats and dogs than all council pounds, and nearly as many as RSPCA pounds and shelters combined, what assistance does your department provide to these groups?
425. Ever since mandatory pound reporting data was required to be lodged with the Office of Local Government, a number of councils have consistently failed to provide this information. What steps has the Minister taken to remedy this gap in the information, and to ensure that it will not happen again?
426. What is the total number and names of those NSW council pounds that allow staff to undertake the killing of impounded companion animals?
- (a) Why are these NSW council pounds undertaking their own killing, what methods are being used and what qualifications do these council staff have to enable them to lawfully kill companion animals?

Questions from the Hon Paul Green MLC

Local Government Regulation

427. What progress has been made in reviewing the Local Government (General) Amendment (Performance Management) Regulation 2016 (financial controller regulation) so it contains objective criteria to guide the decision to impose a financial controller on a council?
- (a) What discussions has your office and/or the Office of Local Government had with the local government sector on this matter?
- (b) What analysis of LGNSW's proposed criteria has been undertaken? When will a revised regulation be introduced?
- (c) Will that revised regulation include objective criteria to guide the decision to impose a financial controller on a council?

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

Forced Council Mergers

428. When did you read the secret \$499,895 KPMG Reports that were prepared in the second half of 2015 on the then proposed forced council mergers?

- (a) Have you read the main report titled 'Merger Impacts and Analysis,' as well as the related documents entitled 'Implementation of Local Government Mergers: Business Case' also prepared by KPMG and collectively called 'the KPMG documents?'
- (b) What do these reports say about other councils that you want to forcibly merge in the future?
- (c) In *Ku-ring-gai Council v Garry West as delegate of the Acting Director-General, Office of Local Government* [2017], the Court of Appeal in its judgement said this at paragraph 91:
Further, there is no reason to assume that when an organisation such as KPMG, applying its own professional expertise, prepares a business case in relation to council amalgamations in the statutory context provided by the Local Government Act, it would do so on an assumption that the government would never disclose the figures and information it supplied. The claim that, in such a case, candour and frankness might be compromised by disclosure borders on the fanciful.'

On the basis of this judgement, why is the NSW Government still keeping this report a secret?

- 429. The Administrator of the Inner West Council recently stated that there were discrepancies between the actual budget savings and alleged KPMG cost savings. Do you stand by the assumptions in the KPMG 'Outline of Financial Modelling Assumptions for Local Government Merger Proposals?'
- (a) Is it not the case that the bulk of these supposed cost savings under your policy of forced mergers, are largely expected to come from the cutting of staff to reduce the wages bill?
 - (b) If not, where will they come from?
- 430. Can you provide details of the total amount each individual Delegate received for their role in the assessment of the forced merger proposals?
- 431. Minister Dominello revealed in his local newspaper that the name of the new merged Ryde/Hunters Hill and Lane Cove council would be 'Riverside.'
- (a) Can you confirm that this was the proposed name?
 - (b) Can you provide all the documents prepared for the gazettal of this forcibly merged council?
- 432. What will be the impact of a road user pricing system on local government?

- (a) Given that local councils are responsible for around 80 per cent of all roads and this directly impacts their budgets, what discussions are you currently having in regard to local government and the imminent introduction of road user pricing?
- (b) What current per kilometre models are being proposed for all road users that will so significantly impact local government?
- (c) Have there been any discussions between the Government and the private sector, either Australian or Multinational organisations, on the introduction of road user pricing and its impact on Local Government in New South Wales?
 - i. What was discussed? With whom?

433. In Estimates last year, I asked for the calendar year 2015/16 how much had the Government paid for advertising in relation to its local merger campaign. The written answer I finally received was that this information would be in the Annual Report.

- (a) Of course, the only figure provided in the Annual Report when it was finally published in November 2016 was for 'Promotions and Publicity' amounting to \$3.721 million. Accordingly, I ask again: how much of this amount was paid specifically for advertising in relation to your local government merger campaign?
- (b) Will the figure be available in the 2016/17 Annual Report in a useable format, or will it again not be disaggregated?

Spending Caps

434. Minister on 31st May last year the former Premier Mike Baird told the Legislative Assembly that the government would introduce spending caps prior to the September 2016 local government elections as an important measure to prevent corruption. In June 2016 the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters unanimously recommended spending caps for local government elections.

- (a) But the government failed to introduce them for the 2016 elections, and has failed to introduce them for the 2017 council elections. Why?

Smart and Skilled funding

435. In its document "NSW Local Government Workforce Strategy 2016-2020", funded by the Office of Local Government and Local Government NSW, Local Government NSW says it has been working to secure some Smart and Skilled funding for local government. This involves funding for pre-employment programmes, apprenticeships, traineeships and funding for improving

existing worker qualifications. Can you please advise how much funding has been provided to local councils in NSW, and for what programmes?

Annual Report

436. In what month this year do you expect the 2016/17 Annual Report of the Office of Local Government to be published?

Contracts

437. Since the commencement of calendar year 2016 to date, what contracts have been awarded relating to the council mergers or the performance of forcibly merged councils? To whom were they awarded, and for what amounts?

Lighting

438. Local Government NSW has been seeking an investment of \$50 million from your sale of poles and wires to enable councils to switch from obsolete street lighting to less expensive, energy-efficient LED lighting. Can you please provide an update on the progress of this submission please?

Cladding

In the then Minister's response to my question regarding the role of the Office of Local Government in the issue of flammable cladding such as Alucobest being used in high rise buildings, the answer I received was: 'The Office of Local Government does not have a role in the identification of such materials, and no record was identified of any involvement by OLG in these matters.'

439. Is the Office of Local Government still ignoring this issue or, following the tragedy in the UK, and given the role that councils are being asked to play, have you decided it might finally be time to take action before we have a similar tragedy in this state?

Cats

440. Last year this committee was advised regarding the seizure of cats: 'The Office of Local Government is undertaking a review of pound statistical data to ensure that it is presented in a meaningful and useable format.' As that was a year ago, can we now please be given a copy of this data in the new 'meaningful and useable format'?

Amalgamations

441. What would you estimate was the amount of taxpayer dollars spent by the Government on its failed attempt to forcibly amalgamate 14 metropolitan and a similar number of regional councils that have now been advised they can continue to stand alone?

- (a) What was the total amount of money that would have been allocated to these Councils had they been forced to amalgamate – both the funding available to them to assist with amalgamation, and the additional incentive funding drawn from the Stronger Communities Fund?
- (b) Will you confirm that this funding will no longer be available to the councils slated for forced amalgamation but now given a reprieve?
- (c) How much remains of this residual funding allocation?
- (d) Where will this residual funding allocation now be spent?
- (e) Will you confirm that this residual funding will be kept within the local government sector and used to assist councils?

442. Will you confirm that the Government is considering amendments to the Local Government Act that would clarify the council amalgamation process and incorporate meaningful community consultation processes, thereby preventing any future waste of taxpayers' funds on forced amalgamations?

443. Will you commit to the Coalition's previous pledge to work with the local government sector to achieve greater financial sustainability, rather than forcing council amalgamations which continue to claim a significant political price?

Local Government Act

444. How many Office of Local Government staff are currently engaged with the primary responsibility of reviewing the Local Government Act?

445. What, if any, steps has the Office of Local Government has taken in the last year to consult with the sector on the effective and ineffective sections of the existing local Government Act?

446. How has this sector feedback, if any, been incorporated into existing and future amendments to the Local Government Act?

Regional Councils

447. Does the Government intend to proceed with the Joint Organisation model for regional councils?

IPART

448. When will the Government release the IPART's final report into the Review of the Local Government Rating System, which was provided to the previous Minister for Local Government in December 2016?

449. Why has the Government failed to respond to the recommendations in this report for at least eight months?
450. When will you respond to the recommendations in this Rating Review report?
451. Will the Government release the IPART's final report into the Review of Reporting and Compliance Conditions for Local Government – commonly known as the Local Government Red Tape Review - which was provided to the previous Minister for Local Government in April 2016?
- (a) Why has the Government failed to respond to the recommendations in this report for at least 16 months?
- (b) When will you respond to the recommendations in this report?
452. Why do councils found by IPART to be financially fit for the future -but not fit on the grounds of scale and capacity - continue to be denied access to low-interest T-Corp loans available to amalgamated councils?

Low Interest Loans

453. Do you believe it is in the best interest of ratepayers to prevent councils accessing low interest loans to invest and maintain infrastructure desperately needed to support an increasing population?
- (a) Why haven't you or OLG developed a process to reassess these councils?

OLG

454. What is the annual rent in total and per square metre of OLG's head office space in Nowra?
455. What is the annual rent in total and per square metre of OLG's new office space in Pitt St in Sydney?
456. How many staff have designated offices or desks in both places?
457. What are the salary bands/levels/gradings of these staff?
458. How many staff have been transferred from the Department of Premier and Cabinet to boost the performance of the Office of Local Government?
459. How many of the most senior OLG staff – that is, OLG staff in Bands 1, 2 and 3 - are based in Nowra, where the Office of Local Government is located?
460. How many OLG staff live and work remotely from Nowra where the OLG offices are?

461. Are these staff paid a living-away-from-home allowance or similar while attending the Nowra offices, or are they reimbursed for actual expenses?
462. What was the total annual expenditure attributable solely to this arrangement (ie living-away-from-home allowance or actuals) in 2015 and 2016?
463. How much has been budgeted for this purpose in 2017?
464. How much of this actual expenditure is attributable to OLG staff in Band 1, how much to Band 2 staff and how much to Band 3 staff?
465. How much of this budgeted expenditure is attributable to OLG staff in Band 1, how much to Band 2 staff and how much to Band 3 staff?
466. How did the OLG's results relating to job satisfaction and morale in the most recent People Matters survey conducted by your Government compare to the public sector averages?
467. Given absentee rates are an acknowledged barometer of a healthy workplace culture, could you advise the Committee of the absentee rates for Nowra-based staff at the Office of Local Government, and compare these to the state average?
468. Was the reduced funding allocated to the Office of Local Government in the most recent State Budget a reduction in real terms?
469. Can you confirm that the Office of Local Government was the only Government agency who lost funding in real terms in the latest NSW State Budget?
- (a) Why was the funding allocation reduced?

Parking infringements

470. How many parking infringement notices were issued by the following Local Governments during the financial year 2016-17:
- (a) Cessnock City Council
- (b) Maitland City Council
- (c) Singleton Council
- (d) Newcastle City Council
- (e) Dungog Shire Council
- (f) Port Stephens Council
- (g) Lake Macquarie Council

- (h) Muswellbrook Shire Council
 - (i) Upper Hunter Shire Council?
471. How many of these infringements were referred to Revenue NSW for collection?
472. Of the finances returned to each Council from Revenue NSW, where does each of the abovementioned Councils direct
473. How many of these infringements were collected by the Council?
474. Were these infringement notices issued by Council employed Rangers?
- (a) If so, how many in each LGA?
475. As at 30 August 2017, how many Rangers are employed on FTE basis at:
- (a) Cessnock City Council
 - (b) Maitland City Council
 - (c) Singleton Council
 - (d) Newcastle City Council
 - (e) Dungog Shire Council
 - (f) Port Stephens Council
 - (g) Lake Macquarie Council
 - (h) Muswellbrook Shire Council
 - (i) Upper Hunter Shire Council?
476. As at 30 August 2017, how many Rangers are employed on a part-time basis at:
- (a) Cessnock City Council
 - (b) Maitland City Council
 - (c) Singleton Council
 - (d) Newcastle City Council
 - (e) Dungog Shire Council
 - (f) Port Stephens Council
 - (g) Lake Macquarie Council
 - (h) Muswellbrook Shire Council

- (i) Upper Hunter Shire Council?

477. In the 12 months to 1 July 2017, how many Ranger positions were publicly advertised by:

- (a) Cessnock City Council
- (b) Maitland City Council
- (c) Singleton Council
- (d) Newcastle City Council
- (e) Dungog Shire Council
- (f) Port Stephens Council
- (g) Lake Macquarie Council
- (h) Muswellbrook Shire Council
- (i) Upper Hunter Shire Council?

Office Administration

478. 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?

479. 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?

480. 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?

481. Has any artwork been purchased or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?

- (a) What is the cost of this?

482. 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?
483. 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?
484. 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?
485. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?
486. 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?
487. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?
- (a) What is the monthly cost of this?
488. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?
- (a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?
489. 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
490. 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

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

Labour Hire Firms

493. 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

494. 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?
495. 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?
496. What is the total cost of media monitoring services used by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities?
497. 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?
498. 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?
499. 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

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

Overseas Trips

502. 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?
503. 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

504. 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
505. 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

506. 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?
507. 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

508. 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?
509. 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?
510. 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?
511. 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?
512. 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?
513. 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?

514. Are any staff formerly employed by your ministerial office now employed by Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibility?

515. How many staff were dismissed from Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibilities in 2016-17?

(a) What were the reason/s for each dismissal?

516. What was the total amount your Departments/agencies spent on stationery?

Smart Phone Accounts

517. 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?

518. 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

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

520. What were the top 20 most accessed (by number of times accessed) unique domain names accessed by your Ministerial office this year?

Merchant fees

521. 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.

522. 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.

523. 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

524. 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.

Questions from the Mr David Shoebridge MLC

Property developers on council

525. How many of the Liberal Party's candidates for the 2017 council elections are property developers or real estate agents?

Administrators standing for council

526. How many of council Administrator are standing as candidates for the 2017 council elections?

Waverley code of conduct

527. What consideration has been given to a report from Waverley Council's independent conduct review committee which found Mayor Sally Betts acted ignored the clear majority of council when adjourning a meeting on 17 May 2016, and that these actions constituted a breach of Waverley Council's Code of Conduct?
528. What steps has the Minister taken to reprimand Mayor Sally Betts for her conduct?
529. Is the Minister aware of Active Chief Executive Tim Hurst's intervention in this complaint that went beyond Section 9.6 of the model code of conduct, and sought to review the finding of the investigation?

Climate change

530. What consideration has been given to the Australian Climate Council's report 'Local Leadership: Tracking Local Government Progress on Climate Change'?
531. What steps is the government taking to partner with local councils to implement Climate Change Action Plans to address climate change?

Countbacks

532. What progress has been made on the regulations for introducing countbacks in the case of casual vacancies?
533. Why has there been such a significant delay in specifying the regulations for introducing countbacks in the case of casual vacancies on council?

534. What was the total cost of the Campbelltown City Council by-election in February 2017?

By election costs

535. Is the Minister aware that 26,000 voters were issued fines by the NSW Electoral Commission for not voting in the March 2017 Campbelltown Council by-election?

536. What was the total revenue accrued from these fines?

537. What consideration has been given to passing this revenue on to Campbelltown City Council to cover the cost of the by-election?

Implementation Advisory Committees

538. Was the establishment of local representative committees at merged councils required by the state government?

539. Was the payment to each former councillor part of that requirement?

540. How was that amount determined?

541. How did the ratepayers get value for money?

542. Why hasn't Georges River Council published the minutes of these meetings? The council is claiming to be open and transparent.

543. Why and how can information provided at these meetings be deemed confidential?

544. How can Council decisions that are based on the advice received at these meetings be considered valid?

Constitutional recognition of local government

545. What steps is the Minister taking to advocate for constitutional recognition of local government that gives local councils proper legal protections?

Use of artificial intelligence

546. 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:

- Chatbots for customer service or advice
- Customer management systems
- Scanning legal documents to find relevant case law

- Categorising and searching documents
- Directing petitions efficiently
- Translation
- Document drafting

547. When did the department implement AI technologies and which technologies were these?

548. What planned uses does the department have for artificial intelligence?

549. What is the anticipated timeline for the expansion of existing AI uses or implementation of new technologies?

550. What policy guidelines, if any, guide the exploration and use of artificial intelligence by the department?

551. What research, if any, has the department undertaken regarding the use of AI in Government services?