

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

SKILLS

Use of artificial intelligence

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

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

- 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

ANSWER:

As outlined in the Digital Government Strategy, the NSW Government will continue to explore the use of cognitive and machine learning, and related Artificial Intelligence technologies, to simplify processes, eliminate duplication, and improve customer experience

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

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 1

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

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 1.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 1.

Smart and Skilled

5. How many private providers are operating on TAFE campuses? Where are they operating?

ANSWER:

This matter falls within the portfolio responsibility of the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

6. What percentage of Smart and Skilled funding goes towards administration costs?

ANSWER:

Smart and Skilled does not fund administration costs.

7. Isn't it true under Smart and Skilled that students are charged to re-sit a unit of competency if they fail in the first instance?

ANSWER:

Under the current Smart and Skilled Fee Administration Policy, training providers are not paid an additional subsidy for repeat attempts by a student to complete a unit of competency. Providers must have a policy on the number of times a student can attempt to complete a unit of competency for their student fee. It is a requirement that providers must make students aware of the policy prior to or at enrolment.

8. This being the case, how much of this was collected in 16-17 from students resitting units of competency?

ANSWER:

The Smart and Skilled contract requires providers to report training activity data that includes qualification name, units of competencies delivered, start and end dates and outcomes achieved. The Smart and Skilled contract does not require providers to report the number of repeat attempts by a student to complete a unit of competency.

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

9. What are the enrolments for North Wollongong TAFE

- (a) Year to date 2017
- (b) Year commencing 2016
- (c) Year commencing 2015
- (d) Year commencing 2014
- (e) Year commencing 2013

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

10. What are the incomplete enrolments for North Wollongong TAFE

- (a) Year to date 2017
- (b) Year commencing 2016

- (c) Year commencing 2015
- (d) Year commencing 2014
- (e) Year commencing 2013

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

11. What are the enrolments for West Wollongong TAFE

- (a) Year to date 2017
- (b) Year commencing 2016
- (c) Year commencing 2015
- (d) Year commencing 2014
- (e) Year commencing 2013

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

12. What are the incomplete enrolments for West Wollongong TAFE

- (a) Year to date 2017
- (b) Year commencing 2016
- (c) Year commencing 2015
- (d) Year commencing 2014
- (e) Year commencing 2013

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

13. What are the course completion figures for North Wollongong TAFE

- (a) Year to date 2017
- (b) Year commencing 2016
- (c) Year commencing 2015
- (d) Year commencing 2014
- (e) Year commencing 2013

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

14. What are the course completion figures for West Wollongong TAFE

- (a) Year to date 2017
- (b) Year commencing 2016
- (c) Year commencing 2015
- (d) Year commencing 2014
- (e) Year commencing 2013

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Assistant Minister for Skills, the Hon Adam Marshall MP.

Office Administration

15. 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?

ANSWER:

Ministers' staff numbers and salary bands are available on the DPC website. Refer to:

http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/about/publications/premiers_and_ministers_staff_numbers

16. 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?

ANSWER:

There were 240 smart phones allocated across the Ministerial Offices in 2016-17. The total usage cost of these smart phones and other mobile devices (including iPads) was \$269,644, a 53.4% per cent reduction on the 2008-09 expenditure of \$578,691. The cost of replacing any lost or stolen devices is claimed through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund. Repairs are funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Corporate and Ministerial Services.

17. 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?

ANSWER:

There were 139 iPads in use across the Ministers' IT network in 2016-17. The cost of replacing any lost or stolen devices is claimed through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund. Repairs are funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Corporate and Ministerial Services.

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

- (a) What is the cost of this?

ANSWER:

Artwork in the Deputy Premier's office includes art donated at no cost.

19. 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?

ANSWER:

Floral arrangements purchased by the Ministry are managed within the office's budgets.

20. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 19 above.

21. 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?

ANSWER:

The Deputy Premier's office subscribes to a modest number of publications, the cost of which is managed within the office's budget.

22. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?

ANSWER:

Expenditure on stationery in 2016-17 across the Ministry was \$146,596. This includes the cost of printed stationery (business cards and letterheads).

23. 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?

ANSWER:

Gifts are presented to dignitaries during overseas missions and to dignitaries visiting NSW.

24. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?

(a) What is the monthly cost of this?

ANSWER:

No.

25. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?

(a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?

ANSWER:

Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, other nominated public office holders and certain former office holders are provided with official cars and drivers. During 2016-17 all costs associated with these vehicles were paid from the relevant office's budget.

26. 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

ANSWER:

Expenditure on taxis, hire cars and ride share services in 2016-17 across the Ministry was \$82,771, down from \$99,463 last year. This compares with 2009-10 expenditure of \$175,776.

27. 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?

ANSWER:

Expenditure on charter flights for the Ministry totalled \$6,921 in 2016-17, down from \$28,706 last year. This compares with expenditure in 2009-10 of \$281,567.

Hospitality

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

ANSWER:

Expenditure on hospitality across the Ministry totalled \$32,021 in 2016-17- which includes catering for stakeholder meetings and courtesy calls with visiting dignitaries.

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

ANSWER:

Costs are managed within each agency's recurrent budget.

Labour Hire Firms

30. 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

ANSWER:

The Premier and Cabinet Cluster and the Industry Cluster use Labour Hire firms, in accordance with NSW Public Service policies to cover temporary vacancies as required. There are no central records maintained, with operations authorised to make such arrangements, subject to their overall labour expense cap.

Media and Public Relations

31. 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?

ANSWER:

DPC and Department of Industry staff numbers are included in the Annual Reports of both Departments.

32. 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?

ANSWER:

DPC and Department of Industry staff numbers undertaking media or public relations activities are commensurate with need and can go down or up as required.

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

ANSWER:

The NSW Government purchases all commercial media monitoring centrally through the Department of Premier and Cabinet which delivers significant savings through aggregated procurement.

34. 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?

ANSWER:

Centralised media functions were established for the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Industry in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

35. 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?

ANSWER:

Centralised media functions were not established for the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Industry until 2015 and 2016 respectively.

36. 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?

ANSWER:

No.

Facebook

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

ANSWER:

No taxpayer money has been spent on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts.

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

ANSWER:

Where appropriate social media is used by agencies alongside other forms of advertising as a cost effective medium of communication.

Overseas Trips

39. 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?

ANSWER:

Details of overseas travel including costs are published on the Department of Premier and Cabinet's website.

40. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 39.

Department/Agency Travel

41. 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

ANSWER:

Travel in 2016-17 was in accordance with NSW Treasury and Finance Circular OFS-2014-07 and DPC and Department of Industry internal travel policies.

Department of Industry travel costs for 2016-17 were:

- (a) \$746,761
- (b) \$2,216
- (c) \$303,267
- (d) \$2,216

Department of Premier and Cabinet's travel costs for 2016-17 were:

- a) \$195,498. This compares with \$466,745 in 2009-10
- b) \$19,812*. This compares with \$10,000 in 2009-10
- c) \$81,667. This compares with \$53,047 in 2009-10
- d) \$1,337.

* This includes arrangements for the Australia-China Provincial Leaders Forum.

42. 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?

ANSWER:

No.

- (a) N/A

Consulting

43. 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?

ANSWER:

Financial statements, including expenditure on consultants, are available in agency annual reports.

44. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 43.

Department/Agency Staffing

45. 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?

ANSWER:

Public Service Senior Executive (PSSE) numbers are reported in the Annual Reports of agencies within the Premier and Cabinet Cluster and the Industry Cluster.

46. 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?

ANSWER:

Public Service Senior Executive (PSSE) remuneration is reported in the Annual Reports of agencies within the Premier and Cabinet Cluster and the Industry Cluster.

47. 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?

ANSWER:

Staff numbers and their cost are managed within the agency's Labour Expense Cap as part of the sector's Budget Controls.

48. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 47.

49. 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?

ANSWER:

Voluntary redundancies are a component for agencies to achieve their efficiency dividends. Redundancy figures across the sector for 2016/17 are anticipated to be in the order of 1,222, totalling 12,999 Since July 2011. The Labour Expenses Cap introduced in the 2012-13 Budget also continues to give Secretaries as much flexibility as possible to achieve these savings in the most appropriate ways to meet the service requirements of their agencies. Nurses, policy officers and teachers in schools have been quarantined from this measure.

50. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 49 above.

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

ANSWER:

Staffing decisions made within individual agencies are a matter for that agency.

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

ANSWER:

Staffing decisions made within individual agencies are a matter for that agency.

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

ANSWER:

Staffing decisions made within individual agencies are a matter for that agency.

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

ANSWER:

Stationary expenses are accounted for in agencies recurrent budgets.

Smart Phone Accounts

54. 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?

ANSWER:

IT costs are managed within each agency's budget and are guided by NSW Government's ICT and procurement policies and frameworks.

55. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 54.

Websites Visited

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

ANSWER:

The configuration of the Ministers' IT network infrastructure by our third party service providers does not allow the determination of such data.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to the answer to Question 56.

Merchant fees

58. 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.

ANSWER:

All NSW Government agencies are required to impose surcharges to recoup their merchant interchange fees, pursuant to Treasury Circular TC12/13. DPC does not accept payment for goods and services, so it does not impose merchant fees on our customers.

DPC staff only use their Pcards for the purchase of goods and services for official business purposes. If particular vendors elect to impose a merchant fee on card transactions, that is an unavoidable cost of doing business. It would not be possible to determine fees charges to Departmental cards, as these would either be embedded in the individual transaction cost, or if separately disclosed would require each monthly card statement for each user to be reviewed.

The Department of Industry charged customers a surcharge on payments made via credit and debit cards through the Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Diners schemes, when a payment was made using the Department of Industry's internet payment pages, via the phone using the 1300 number listed on invoices and where payment were made at counters with physical merchant terminals.

The Department of Industry invoices include alternative payment options of Bpay and cheque, which don't have a surcharge for customers.

59. 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.

ANSWER:

See question 58.

60. What was the total amount paid in merchant fees on credit and/or debit card payments in your Department/agency in 2016-17?

ANSWER:

See question 58.

Probity Auditor

61. 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.

Answer:

In accordance with the NSW Procurement Board's Direction (PBD-2013-05), DPC and the Department of Industry have internal mechanisms in place to ensure that probity considerations are routinely taken into account in their procurement decisions, and the use of external probity advisers and auditors is the exception rather than the rule. The Departments' Annual Reports include all consultancies, including those involving probity advisers valued more than \$50,000.

REGIONAL NSW

Use of artificial intelligence

62. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 1.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 2.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 3.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 4.

Jobs for NSW

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

ANSWER:

\$410,000 as at September 2017.

67. Do the Directors receive remuneration?

ANSWER:

Yes.

68. How many times has the Board met?

ANSWER:

Eleven times.

69. How many applications for support have been received?

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

ANSWER:

Total applications received for 2016/17 is 961.

(a) Applications have been received from across NSW: South Coast; Mid North Coast; Northern Rivers; Illawarra; Central West; Hunter; Riverina; Orana; Central Coast; Southern Inland; and Sydney Metro.

70. How many applications have been approved?

ANSWER:

Total applications approved for 2016/17 is 189.

71. What is the total value of grants?

(a) How much of this total value has been granted to applicants based in regional NSW?

ANSWER:

The Jobs for NSW Fund provided a total of \$23.8 million in financial year 2016-2017.

(a) 31.5 per cent of the total investment, or \$7.5 million was invested to projects in regional NSW.

72. How many jobs has this Initiative supported?

(a) Can the minister confirm how many of these jobs have been in regional NSW?

ANSWER:

412 jobs were directly created by grant projects in financial year 2016-17.

(a) Of the 412 jobs, 377 were created in regional NSW.

73. The Jobs for NSW allocates at least 30% of the funds for Regional NSW, shouldn't it be at least 40% given 41% of the State's population lives in Regional areas?

ANSWER:

For the purposes of funding allocation, the *Jobs for NSW Act 2015* defines 'regional NSW' as areas outside the metropolitan areas of Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. Using this definition, 30.6 per cent of the State's population lives in a regional area¹. Therefore, the statutory commitment to allocate at least 30 per cent of the \$190 million Jobs for NSW Fund to regional NSW is commensurate with the regional population of NSW.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates of resident population (2016)

This 30 per cent regional funding allocation is also in line with regional NSW's contribution to the total Gross State Product. Regional NSW contributes around \$138 billion to the Gross State Product, 29 per cent of NSW's total output².

Departmental

74. In 2015/16 the FTE in Economic and Regional Development was 534 employees and the revised FTE for 2016/17 was 303 is that correct?

(a) How has that impacted the performance of the department?

ANSWER:

Revised FTEs reflect the machinery of government changes that took effect from 1 April 2017. Responsibility for Regional NSW was transferred from the Department of Industry to the Department of Premier and Cabinet as a result of these machinery of government changes.

75. How many Aboriginal staff are currently employed in the regional offices of the Department of Industry?

(a) What proportion of these staff are senior executive staff?

(b) What is the average remuneration for non-Aboriginal staff?

(c) What is the average remuneration for Aboriginal staff?

ANSWER:

Nine within Department of Industry.

(a) Nil

(b) \$93,471

(c) \$84,060

76. How many staff in Total are employed in Regional offices of the Department of Industry?

ANSWER:

2,747 excluding casuals.

Regional greyhound racing industry

77. How many direct and indirect regional jobs does the government estimate were lost as a result of the uncertainty around the Greyhound Racing ban in NSW.

(a) Which regions are estimated to be most impacted?

ANSWER:

² NSW Department of Trade and Investment (2015)

This matter falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Racing, the Hon Paul Toole MP.

78. Has the Government commissioned any research as to the impact of the greyhound racing ban and then backflip on the economies of regional communities in NSW

ANSWER:

This matter falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Racing, the Hon Paul Toole MP.

Regional commercial fishing industry

79. How many commercial fishing businesses exist in Regional NSW?

(a) How many are sole traders?

(b) How many are partnerships?

ANSWER:

Budget estimate questions regarding the commercial fishing industry are the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Primary Industries.

80. How many commercial fishing businesses exist in each region across New South Wales?

ANSWER:

Budget estimate questions regarding the commercial fishing industry are the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Primary Industries.

81. Has the Government commissioned any research as to the impact of its changes to commercial fishing on regional economies?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government supported a Fisheries Research and Development Corporation report into the economic and social functions of the commercial fishing industry by University of Technology Sydney.

82. Will the Minister guarantee that the Government will support regional fishers who want to stay in the industry?

(a) How does the minister plan to do so?

ANSWER:

The NSW Small Business Commissioner is legislated to advocate for and support all businesses in NSW. To date, the NSW Government has supported all fishers with subsidised share trading that has equitably distributed support to all those in need of shares. The NSW Government has also provided support to all commercial fishers through business advice, grants and improved leasing arrangements. The

NSW Government subsidies for business and market advice have had a strong regional uptake as have the low interest loans that support purchasers in the share market.

Definition of Wollongong local government area

83. Has the Government received representations from Illawarra stakeholders in relation to the definition of the Wollongong local government area as metropolitan?

(a) If so, which stakeholders have made representations to the Government?

ANSWER:

Yes – extensive community consultation and stakeholder feedback was undertaken as part of the development of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan that identified Wollongong as a metropolitan centre.

(a) Development of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan is the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Planning, the Hon Anthony Roberts MP.

84. Why is Wollongong local government area defined as metropolitan?

ANSWER:

Shellharbour, Wollondilly, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Wollongong and Newcastle are classified as metropolitan, rather than regional, centres by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

85. Is the Government considering changes to the current definition of Wollongong local government area, including that it is regional capital?

(a) If not, why not?

ANSWER:

No.

(a) Extensive community consultation and stakeholder feedback was undertaken as part of the development of the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Regional Plan that identified Wollongong as a metropolitan centre.

Lease of electricity assets

86. Considering the response to LA Q5875, has the Government invested any of the electricity lease proceeds in the Wollongong Local Government Area?

(a) If so:

i. What projects has the Government invested in?

ii. What is the total investment for each project?

ANSWER:

Yes.

(a) (i) & (ii)

- Wollongong City Council - Cordeaux Road and Bridge Improvements and Mount Kembla Shared Path Project
Project value: \$11.6m; Restart NSW funding: \$4.478m
- ISLHD - Centre of Excellence for Aged Care Bulli Hospital:
Project value:- \$33.8m; Restart NSW funding: \$14.46m
- iAccelerate University of Wollongong
Project value: \$17m; Restart NSW funding: \$16.5m
- Wongawilli Access Project
Project value: \$11.3m; Restart NSW funding: \$2.4m
- Aged Care Facility and Community Centre for Intellectually Disabled
Project value: \$3m; Restart NSW funding: \$3m
- West Dapto Access Road Link
Project value: \$50m; Restart NSW funding: \$22.5m
- Bald Hill Improvement Project
Project value: \$8.4m; Restart NSW funding: \$2.9m
- Grand Pacific Walk Stage 1
Project value: \$7.3m; Restart NSW funding: \$5m.

Illawarra Jobs Action Plan

87. Has the Government considered adopting and funding any of the initiatives contained the NSW Labor's Illawarra Jobs Action Plan announced during the Wollongong by-election in November 2016?

ANSWER:

The NSW Liberals and National's Government already had successful initiatives in place which reached and exceeded the benefits of the initiatives proposed in Labor's Illawarra Jobs Action Plan.

The \$100m Restart NSW Illawarra Infrastructure Fund was established to help fund priority infrastructure projects, using proceeds from the long-term lease of Port Kembla.

Twelve priority infrastructure projects have received funding from the Fund and include aged and healthcare facilities, a technology hub, facilities for people with disabilities, pedestrian and cycle links, road links and tourism infrastructure.

This is in addition to \$170 million in Restart NSW funding for the Princes Highway, giving a total of \$270 million Restart NSW investment in the Illawarra region.

88. If not, why not?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 88.

Trains

89. Can the Deputy Premier explain his public comments that “we don’t build trains in NSW”?

ANSWER:

In August 2017, the NSW Government announced it would replace all trains operating on the regional network including 60 XPTs and more than 50 XPLOER and Endeavour trains.

It also confirmed Government owned land in Dubbo as the preferred location to build the new maintenance facility, subject to planning approval.

This will stimulate regional economies and provide long term, sustainable jobs including traineeships and apprenticeships.

The new trains will come into service progressively, with the first trains anticipated to be delivered in the early 2020s.

Capital Works

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

ANSWER:

Budget estimate questions regarding the NSW Government budget allocation process are the portfolio responsibility of the Treasurer and this question is not sufficiently clear in scope in order to be able to respond meaningfully.

Miscellaneous

91. How many jobs have been created in Regional NSW during the past 12 months?

ANSWER:

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) does not measure job creation or job losses. In their monthly labour force survey they measure net change in employed persons. The data can be sourced on the ABS website. This data covers all of the non-Sydney Statistical Area 4s with the exception of Newcastle and Lake Macquarie, and the Illawarra, but including the Central Coast.

92. How many of these jobs are full time positions?

ANSWER:

Measured on the same basis as the answer to question 91. This data can be sourced publicly on the ABS website.

93. If you take the Illawarra and Newcastle out of the figures, how many fulltime positions have been created in the rest of Regional NSW?

ANSWER:

As noted in the answers to questions 91 and 92 Newcastle and the Illawarra have been excluded from the figures, and this data can be viewed on the ABS website.

94. How many jobs have been lost in Regional NSW in the past 12 months?

ANSWER:

As noted in the answer to question 91 the Australian Bureau of Statistics does not specifically measure job creation or job losses.

95. Why won't the Government financially support the EVOCity initiative given that there has been demonstrated growth in the seven regional cities the initiative encompassed?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government has supported the Evocities initiative. The Liberals and Nationals Government have provided \$300,000 for Evocities through the \$1 million Regional Growth: Marketing and Promotion Fund.

96. What incentives currently exist for NSW Regional companies to remain in NSW and not relocate to other States?

(a) Payroll tax?

(b) Training incentives?

(c) Low interest loans for expansion?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government provides a number of initiatives that are making NSW the number one state to start up, grow and innovate a business. These initiatives build on the strong economic foundations the Liberals and Nationals Government have built since being elected in 2011 and continue to provide a fertile place for businesses to set up and remain successful in NSW.

The NSW Government are taking a whole of Government approach to supporting and retaining businesses in NSW. Information on these initiatives is publically available and can be found at the following online websites:

The Office of the Small Business Commissioner

<https://www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au/>

Jobs for NSW <https://www.jobsfornsw.com.au/>

Department of Industry <http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/>

Service NSW <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/>

The DFSI <https://www.finance.nsw.gov.au/>

The Treasury <https://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/>

Innovation NSW <https://www.innovation.nsw.gov.au/>

The NSW Government is also working hard to ensure small businesses are considered across other NSW Government projects

97. Many Regional businesses are small (less than 10 employees and annual turnover less than \$3M), what programs are in place to assist them with expansion or new innovation?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government's Small Business Strategy and the NSW Government's Innovation Strategy provide key insight into how the NSW Liberal and Nationals Government are working hard to provide new opportunities across government, that will to attract investment into the NSW economy for innovation, job creation and growth.

Please also refer to the response to question 96.

98. What infrastructure grants are available to unlock potential business location or expansion in Regional NSW for projects such as power upgrades, Broadband access and road and intersection upgrades?

(a) If these grants exist, where are some examples and the dollar value of the projects?

ANSWER:

\$1.3 million Regional Growth Fund which includes an allocation for the Connecting Country Communities Fund designed to invest in communications infrastructure and deliver improved regional voice and data connectivity.

The fund also includes a \$500 million allocation for the Growing Local Economies Fund to turbocharge new regional economic opportunities and enliven local economies.

Growing Local Economies is designed to unlock growth in regional NSW by delivering the infrastructure that supports projects of economic significance. This could include road works, natural gas mains and pipelines, water supply, sewerage connections and telecommunications (including data networks). The program is expected to deliver long-term growth benefits.

(a) The program was launched in August 2017 and it is expected that projects will typically be in the range of \$1 million to \$10 million and be regionally significant in terms of their economic benefits.

99. Applications for the Regional Growth – Marketing and Promotion Fund closed in May.

(a) How many applications were received?

i. How many were funded and what was the total funds distributed under the program?

ANSWER:

(a) 82 applications were received for the Regional Growth – Marketing & Promotion Fund

(i) 22 projects were funded to a total of \$1.1 million.

100. Applications for the Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund (RGETF) closed in April.

(a) How many applications were received?

i. How many were funded and what was the total funds distributed under the program?

ANSWER:

(a) 165 applications were received for the Regional Growth – Environment and Tourism Fund.

(i) 54 projects requesting \$216 million have been shortlisted and are currently preparing detailed applications. To date \$24.5 million has been allocated from this Fund to Western Plain Zoo.

101. The Future Towns Program was established to assist towns to take advantage of the NBN rollout.

(a) What criteria were used to select the locations for the grants?

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

ANSWER:

(a) The Future Towns Program was designed to deliver either digital ready or place activation activities to support small business growth across regional NSW in conjunction with local councils.

Locations were decided on a number of criteria, including consideration of main street issues and vacancy rates; isolation from expert knowledge due to distances and/or access to fast internet connection; impacts from larger surrounding regional centres, industries in transition or natural disasters and effects on the economic environment such as socio-economic factors and other government initiatives.

(b) Refer to table overleaf.

Local Government Area (LGA)	Nominated Town	Project
Bega Valley Shire Council	Bega	Digital Readiness
Bellingen Shire Council	Urunga	Place Activation
Bland Shire Council	West Wyalong	Digital Readiness
Coffs Harbour City Council	1. Coramba	Place Activation
Coffs Harbour City Council	2. Woolgoolga	Digital Readiness
Dungog Shire Council	Dungog	Place Activation (with a digital component)
Gunnedah Shire Council	Gunnedah	Place Activation
Junee Shire Council	Junee	Mix of Place Activation & Digital Readiness
Kempsey Shire Council	Kempsey	Digital Readiness
Kyogle Council	Kyogle	Digital Readiness
Mid-Coast Council	1. Gloucester	Digital Readiness
Mid-Coast Council	2. Wingham	Place Activation
Narrandera Shire Council	Narrandera	Place Activation
Richmond Valley Council	1. Casino	Place Activation (& digital)
Richmond Valley Council	2. Coraki	Place Activation & Digital Readiness
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	1. Bombala	Place Activation
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	2. Cooma	Place Activation
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	3. Jindabyne	Digital Readiness
Tamworth Regional Council	Manilla	Place Activation
Tenterfield Shire Council	Tenterfield	Place Activation

General

102. What factors are used to determine how communities are defined as “regional” in regards to eligibility for programs and funding applications

ANSWER:

The NSW Government uses the ABS definitions of metropolitan and regional as the starting point for determining eligibility for regional funding programs.

103. In relation to the classification of Regional NSW funding programs;

- (a) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for Regional Sports infrastructure funding?
- (b) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for the Stronger Country Communities fund?
- (c) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for the regional cultural fund?
- (d) Please explain why the Wollongong was not eligible for connecting country communities?
- (e) Please explain why Wollongong was not eligible for the Growing local economies?

ANSWER:

The Illawarra, including Wollongong, receive dedicated funding through the Restart Illawarra Infrastructure Fund. This improves infrastructure in the Illawarra, using proceeds from the long-term lease of Port Kembla.

Twelve priority infrastructure projects received funding from the \$100 million Restart NSW Illawarra Infrastructure Fund. These projects include aged and healthcare facilities, a technology hub, facilities for people with disabilities, pedestrian and cycle links, road links and tourism infrastructure.

This is in addition to \$170 million in Restart NSW funding for the Princes Highway, giving a total of \$270 million Restart NSW investment in the Illawarra region.

(a-e) The NSW Government uses the Australian Bureau of Statistics definitions of metropolitan and regional as the starting point for determining eligibility for regional funding programs. Wollongong is classified as metropolitan, rather than regional, by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

104. When did each of the relevant Ministers make you aware that Wollongong would not be eligible for various regional funding?

ANSWER:

Eligibility for the Regional Growth Funds was determined by the Government prior to the launch of the Funds in June 2017.

105. Did you seek a review in relation to eligibility and the classification required for NSW Regional Growth Fund eligibility?

ANSWER:

Like any new programs eligibility for the Regional Growth Funds was determined by the Government prior to the launch of the Funds in June 2017.

The Government will monitor the performance of the Regional Growth Funds including the effectiveness of the eligibility criteria.

Office Administration

106. 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?

ANSWER: Refer to answer to Question 15.

107. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 16.

108. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 17.

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

(a) What is the cost of this?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 18.

110. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 19.

111. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 20.

112. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 21.

113. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 22.

114. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 23.

115. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?

- (a) What is the monthly cost of this?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 24.

116. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?

- (a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 25.

117. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 26.

118. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 27.

Hospitality

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 28.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 29.

Labour Hire Firms

121. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 30

Media and Public Relations

122. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 31.

123. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 32.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 33

125. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 34.

126. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 35.

127. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 36

Facebook

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 37

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 38

Overseas Trips

130. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 39

131. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 40

Department/Agency Travel

132. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 41.

133. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 42

Consulting

134. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 43.

135. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 44.

Department/Agency Staffing

136. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 45.

137. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 46.

138. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 47.

139. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 48.

140. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 49.

141. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 50.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 51

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 52.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 53.

Smart Phone Accounts

145. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 54.

146. 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?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 55.

Websites Visited

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 56.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 57

Merchant fees

149. 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.

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 58.

150. 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.

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 59.

151. What was the total amount paid in merchant fees on credit and/or debit card payments in your Department/agency in 2016-17?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 60.

Probity Auditor

152. 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.

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 61.

SMALL BUSINESS

Use of artificial intelligence

153. 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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 1.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 2.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 3.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 4.

Red Tape Reduction

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

ANSWER:

In 2012, shortly after being elected to government, the NSW Liberals and Nationals Government created the legislation that gives power to and governs the NSW Small Business Commissioner, an independent statutory officer. The NSW Small Business Commissioner is a dedicated advocate, who continues to work with the Minister for Small Business and the NSW Government, to deliver many red tape reducing programs for small businesses in NSW. Details about these initiatives are publically available online. <https://www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au/>

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

ANSWER:

Both the number of regulations and their complexity can impact on small businesses' compliance costs. The impact of each factor differs depending on the type of regulation and the nature of each business.

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

ANSWER:

The NSW Government is working hard to deliver regulatory and service delivery reforms that will reduce red tape burden for NSW businesses. Although regulation does impact on small business, regulation is generally not specifically directed at

small businesses, and as such it is not possible to identify or count specific 'regulations for small businesses' that have been or might be added or removed over any given period.

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

ANSWER:

See response Question 159.

161. How many regulations for small businesses will be removed in the 2017/18 financial year?

ANSWER:

See response Question 159.

162. How many regulations for small businesses will be added in the 2017/18 financial year?

ANSWER:

See response Question 159.

163. What is the Minister doing to reduce red tape for small businesses?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government is working hard to deliver practical reforms that will reduce red tape for NSW small businesses. The Easy to do Business initiative is one way the NSW Government is reducing the administrative burden on small businesses in NSW. This initiative is making it easier for small business owners to establish and expand a cafe, small bar or restaurant, and will be expanded to other industry sectors progressively.

Please also refer to response for Question 159.

Impact of Infrastructure Developments and Constructions on Small Businesses

164. What is the Minister doing to assist businesses who are impacted by infrastructure developments where small businesses are relocated or have their businesses interrupted during construction?

ANSWER:

The NSW Small Business Commissioner supports the sustainability of small businesses by providing confidential mediation and dispute resolution services and advocating for small businesses within all levels of government. The NSW Department of Industry delivers the Business Connect program which provides quality business advice through an extensive network of mobile advisors tailored to meet their particular needs, including targeted programs to support businesses impacted by specific infrastructure developments.

Each small business is unique as are the effects of the surrounding environment and the NSW Government works hard to ensure tailored advice and support is provided to suit each individual circumstance.

165. What is the Small Business Commission doing to assist small businesses impacted by these changes?

ANSWER:

See response Question 164.

166. Is the Minister aware of the Book Kitchen Café?

ANSWER:

The Deputy Premier's office has not directly received any correspondence from the Book Kitchen Cafe.

167. Is the Minister aware that the café was forced to close its doors after operating for over 8 years as a result of his Government's light rail construction?

ANSWER:

The Deputy Premier's office has not directly received any correspondence from the Book Kitchen Café

168. What compensation has been available to small businesses affected by Sydney light rail construction?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Transport and infrastructure, the Hon. Andrew Constance MP.

169. What has the Minister done to advocate on behalf of small businesses affected by government infrastructure changes?

ANSWER:

I advocate for small businesses across a range of issues, including on any infrastructure changes.

Please also refer to the response to question 164.

Commercial Fishing Industry

170. How many small commercial fishing businesses have been forced out of business as a result of the Commercial Fishers Business Adjustment Program?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries, the Hon Niall Blair MLC.

171. What action has the Minister taken to assist small commercial fishing businesses from being forced to close their doors?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries, the Hon Niall Blair MLC.

172. How many small businesses have received assistance from the Minister or the Office of the Small Business Commissioner which has helped them to remain in the industry?

ANSWER:

The Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner (OSBC) contacted commercial fishing business owners up to 5,000 times in the lead up to, during and following the Subsidised Share Trading Market, which resulted in 502 fishing businesses registering for the market. In addition, over 300 businesses received business support during planning workshops conducted by the OSBC to prepare their business for the Business Adjustment Program. The OSBC, in conjunction with the Department of Primary Industries, also reviewed 153 share class level appeals made by small businesses in relation to their catch records. Of these, 78 had their records improved.

Electricity Prices for Small Businesses

173. How much are NSW Electricity Prices expected to increase for average businesses under 20 employees in the next twelve months?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Energy and Utilities, the Hon Don Harwin MLC.

174. Does the Minister consider rising electricity prices as a threat to the viability of small businesses across NSW?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government is committed to easing energy costs for households and businesses across the State to ensure they have every chance at success. Please also refer to response to question 173.

175. What has the Minister done to alleviate the pressure of rising electricity prices upon small businesses in NSW?

ANSWER:

The NSW Government recently announced an unprecedented energy bill relief package, which will give up to 10,000 small businesses access to rebates, and could see discounts on energy efficient appliances saving small businesses up to \$1,900 per year.

Please also refer to response to question 173.

Local Government Forced Amalgamations Impact on Contractors

176. In merged councils, where bulk tendering did not happen prior to amalgamation, there is potential for two small businesses who were separately contracting to two formerly separate but now newly merged councils to be in competition when the merger occurs?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

177. What steps is the Minister for Small Business taking to ensure that such competition is fair and that smaller and micro businesses are not cannibalised by larger businesses?

ANSWER:

The NSW Small Business Strategy outlines the NSW Government is working hard to give small businesses a greater opportunity to compete for government tenders. The Small Business Commissioner has developed the Small Business Friendly Councils initiative. This means that around 60 per cent of all NSW small businesses now benefit from operating in a small business friendly council area. A number of participating councils are now implementing initiatives to support small businesses in local procurement opportunities. Further information around procurement is a matter for the Minister for Finance, Services and Property.

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

179. Were affected small businesses notified their contracts would be terminated prior to the announcement of these mergers?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

180. If not, why not?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

181. Has the Minister met with affected small businesses since the mergers were announced?

ANSWER:

I regularly meet with small businesses across NSW.

182. If so:

- (a) How many small businesses have been adversely affected by the forced merger process?
- (b) How many jobs within small businesses have been lost?
- (c) How many small businesses have gone into liquidation due to the termination of contracts?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

183. Has the Minister advocated for the implementation of a financial assistance package to ensure affected small businesses have the opportunity to remain sustainable following the termination of their contracts with merged Councils?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP.

Payroll Tax

184. How much did the Government allocate in the 2016/17 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

185. How much did the Government allocate in the 2017/18 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

186. How much did the Government spend in the 2016/17 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

187. How much did the Government spend in the 2017/18 budget for the payroll tax rebate scheme?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

188. Why has the Government allocated \$135 million less in the 2017/18 budget?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

189. Has the payroll tax rebate scheme attracted less interest from small businesses across NSW than was expected?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

190. What is the average cost to a small business of an audit of the Government's Payroll Tax rebate by their own accountant?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

191. Does the Government conduct external audits of those in the Payroll tax rebate scheme?

(a) If so, how long does an average Government triggered external audit take?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

192. What is the completion rate of data entry for customers (that is once they have commenced entering data, how many are able to complete the transaction without time outs) for the Government's Payroll Tax portal?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer, the Hon. Dominic Perrottet MP.

Impact of the Storms on Small Businesses in the Tweed

193. How many businesses were impacted adversely by the Storms in the Tweed, including impacts on:

- (a) Telecommunications?
- (b) Internet access?
- (c) Damage to buildings?
- (d) Damage to land and fencing?
- (e) Damage to plant and equipment?
- (f) Inability to access properties?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Troy Grant MP, however, the NSW Small Business Commissioner has been very proactive in supporting flood affected small businesses throughout the Northern Rivers region, since April 2017.

Mobile Business Connect advisory services were available immediately after the flood waters subsided. The OSBC has provided support over the last six months including at the Disaster Recovery Centre in Murwillumbah, conducting street walks to listen to business owners, providing guidance and connecting business owners to available support, including helping them to complete applications for Category C grants and subsequently working with the Financial Ombudsman Service so that their insurance claims could be reviewed as a priority.

194. How many of these businesses were covered by the appropriate (flood, business interruption, storm) insurance?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Troy Grant MP.

195. How many claims were refused?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Troy Grant MP.

196. Did the Minister advocate with the Insurance industry on behalf of small businesses where claims were refused?

ANSWER:

The NSW Small Business Commissioner has been very proactive in supporting flood affected small businesses throughout the Northern Rivers region. The Commissioner has met with and spoken to many small businesses whose claims were refused and is acting as an advocate for these businesses, commissioned an independent hydrology report for consideration by the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS), worked with the FOS to help set up a streamlined review process and met with insurance service providers to advocate for small businesses where claims were refused.

197. What other government assistance were they eligible for?

ANSWER:

Category C grants of up to \$15,000, jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the NSW Government, are available for flood-affected small businesses in four Tweed Shire local government areas. Category C grants of up to \$10,000 are available for flood-affected small businesses in an additional eight Tweed Shire local government areas. Grants of up to \$25,000 were made available under the Northern Rivers Business Recovery Program for businesses with more than 19 full time equivalent employees. A concessional loan for small businesses is available through the Rural Assistance Authority and free business advice sessions are available through the Business Connect service.

198. How Many businesses approached the government appointed Small Business Commissioner

ANSWER:

In the Tweed, 46 businesses approached the NSW Small Business Commissioner in relation to insurance issues, 6 businesses sought assistance with their application for the Northern Rivers Business Recovery Program grant and over 100 businesses received assistance with the Category C relief funding from the Office of the NSW Small Business Commissioner.

199. How did the Minister ensure that small businesses who were not assisted by the Small Business Commissioner were aware of eligibility for payments?

ANSWER:

Small businesses were made aware of eligibility for payments through numerous channels including Business Connect, Tweed Shire Council, Murwillumbah District Business Chamber, Burringbar Community Association Inc., the Murwillumbah Recovery Centre, local media, Members of Parliament and the Recovery Coordinator.

200. How many businesses closed as a result of the storms and what were the reasons given?

- (a) Business interruption?
- (b) Irrecoverable damages?
- (c) Failure to have landlords repair business premises?

ANSWER:

According to the NSW Department of Industry North Coast Floods Business Survey, which was open for three weeks immediately following the storms, 36.6 per cent of the 993 survey responses were from businesses located in Tweed. Of the Tweed responses, only 1.4 per cent indicated that the business expected to close.

201. Are Farmers Small Businesses?

ANSWER:

In NSW there are farmers that are considered small businesses. For the purpose of the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (Determination 2017) there is a separate definition for primary producer and small business. This definition can be found publically at <https://www.disasterassist.gov.au/Documents/Natural-Disaster-Relief-and-Recovery-Arrangements/NDRRA-determination-2017.PDF>

202. How does Primary Industries communicate with farmers - email, letter?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries.

203. Does the Department have a comprehensive list of all farms in the Mid North Coast Electorate?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries.

204. How many farmers have had to reduce their stock levels after the storms?

- (a) What was the average number stock levels were reduced by?
- (b) What was the average sale price?
- (c) If they have repurchased, what was the average cost of buying?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries.

205. How many farmers lost stock in the storms?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries.

- (a) What was the average stock levels?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries.

206. Did the Minister apply for Category C funding after the storms?

ANSWER:

This information is publically available. A press release with this information has already been issued and can be found at

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/2017/further-assistance-for-flood-affected-communities-in-the-north-coast-of-nsw.html>

207. What is the government doing to advocate for small farm owners who work off farm to provide a living wage while they are establishing their properties, or those transitioning to retirement and supplementing their income with superannuation to ensure they are eligible for natural disaster payment from the Federal Government under Category C Funding?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon Troy Grant MP.

208. What were the stock levels of Tweed cattle farms in 2011, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 financial years?

ANSWER:

This matter falls under the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Primary Industries.

Office Administration

209. How many staff are in your ministerial office?

(a) What was the average salary for staff members in your office during 2016-17?

(b) What is the estimated average salary for a ministerial staffer in your office in 2017-18 based on current appointments?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 15.

210. How many blackberries/iphones/smart phones are assigned to your staff?

(a) For each phone, how much was each bill in 2016-17?

(b) How many phones have been lost or replaced due to damage in your office?
i. What is the cost of replacing those phones?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 16.

211. How many iPads or tablets has DPC assigned to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?

(a) What was the cost of providing iPads or tablets to your Ministerial Office in 2016-17?

(b) How many iPads or tablets have been replaced due to lost or damage in 2016-17?
i. What was the cost of replacing these devices?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 17.

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

(a) What is the cost of this?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 18.

213. Have any floral displays or indoor plants or potplants been hired or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?

(a) If so, what was the cost of these items?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 19.

214. Have any floral displays or indoor plants or potplants been purchased for display in your ministerial office in 2016-17?

(a) If so, what was the cost of these items?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 20.

215. What was the total cost of all subscriptions by you and your staff to online news services, newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals in 2016-17?

(a) What are these services/newspapers/magazines/journals/periodicals?
i. Who is the subscriber for each of these?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 21.

216. What was the total amount your office spent on stationery?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to 22.

217. What was the total value of all gifts purchased for use by you and your office in 2016-17?

(a) What were the gifts purchased?

i. Who were they gifted to?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 23.

218. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?

(a) What is the monthly cost of this?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 24.

219. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?

(a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 25.

220. What was the total bill for your office in 2016-17 for:

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 26.

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 27.

Hospitality

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 28.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 29.

Labour Hire Firms

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 30.

Media and Public Relations

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 31.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 32.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 33.

228. By how much has the number of media or public relations advisers employed for each of your portfolio agencies increased since 2011-12 to the current date?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 34.

229. By how much has the expenditure on media or public relations advisers employed for each of your portfolio agencies increased since 2011-12 to the current date?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 35.

230. Have you had media training or speech training?

(a) If yes, who paid for it?

(b) If paid by taxpayers, what was the amount paid in 2016-17?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 36.

Facebook

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 37.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 38.

Overseas Trips

233. Were any of your overseas trips in the last financial year paid for in part or in full by using public money?

(a) If so, did any of your relatives or friends accompany you on these trips?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 39.

234. Have you undertaken any official overseas travel that was privately funded?

(a) If so, what was the nature of these trips?

(b) Who paid for these trips?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 40.

Department/Agency Travel

235. What was the total expenditure in 2016-17 by Departments/agencies within your portfolio on:

- (a) Taxi hire
- (b) Limousine/private car hire
- (c) Hire car rental
- (d) Ridesharing services

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 41.

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 42.

Consulting

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 43.

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

- (a) Social media
 - i. And the cost of these services
- (b) Photography
 - i. And the cost of these services
- (c) Acting training
 - i. And the cost of these services
- (d) Ergonomics
 - i. And the cost of these services

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 44.

Department/Agency Staffing

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 45.

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 46.

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 47.

242. What was the expenditure on internal legal counsel employees employed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio in 2016-17?

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 48.

243. How many redundancies were processed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2016-17?

- (a) Of these redundancies, how many were:
- i. Voluntary
 - ii. Forced
- (b) What was the total cost of all redundancies?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 49.

244. Have any staff who received a redundancy in the last two years undertaken any paid work or provided any paid services for the agency with which they were formerly employed?

- (a) What was the nature of these works/services?
- (b) What was the total cost of these works or services?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 50.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 51.

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

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 52.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 53.

Smart Phone Accounts

248. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have an iTunes account?

(a) What was the total expenditure in 2016-17 on iTunes?

i. What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through iTunes?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 54.

249. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have an Android account?

(a) What was the total expenditure in 2016-17 on Android?

i. What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through Android?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 55.

Websites Visited

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 56.

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 57.

Merchant fees

252. Please provide a list of all transactions where customers need to pay a merchant fee on credit and/or debit card payments in your Department/agency.

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 58.

253. Please provide the percentage and/or amount of the merchant fees applied to all credit and/or debit card payments/transactions in your Department/agency.

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 59.

254. What was the total amount paid in merchant fees on credit and/or debit card payments in your Department/agency in 2016-17?

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 60.

Probity Auditor

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

ANSWER:

Refer to answer to Question 61.