

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

THE LEGISLATURE

QON1

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is the total cost of installing those new security barriers?

The PRESIDENT: I do not have that exact figure with me. Mr Webb may have the information with him, but if he does not I will take the question on notice.

Mr WEBB: The security barriers are part of a prior security project and that was a little under \$1.9 million, but I will have to take the breakdown of the specific component for the security barriers on notice.

QON1 ANSWER

The total cost of the security barriers on both level 6 and 7 is \$589,655.

QON2

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is the update on disability access to the Legislative Council public gallery? In the interim can we have a policy in place that allows people in wheelchairs to get priority access to the President's Gallery if they cannot get access to the public gallery?

The PRESIDENT: In my short time as President I have on two occasions given immediate approval for people in wheelchairs to be within the President's Gallery.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Yes, I know. One of those was a request from me and I am grateful. Can we have a standard protocol so the staff and MPs are aware that can be the default position?

The PRESIDENT: If they cannot contact me, I am happy to look at that and that is a very good suggestion.

QON2 ANSWER

Consecutive Presidents have consistently provided access to the President's Gallery for people in wheelchairs.

As noted in my answer during the Budget Estimates hearings, in the relatively short time I have been President I have ensured access on two such occasions. It is helpful to me and the Chamber Support team, to be advised in advance that someone needs access to the President's Gallery so that any arrangements that need to be made are so arranged.

The access to the Legislative Council chamber to people with disability is a concern to me and I will continue to work with the Department in facilitating accessibility to the Chamber.

QON3

The CHAIR: With all the renovations and the special security facilities on level seven, what is the future of the Queen's portrait? At the moment it is not on display.

The PRESIDENT: Which one are we talking about?

The CHAIR: The large one.

The PRESIDENT: My understanding is that they are finalising the maintenance of the portrait and it should be returned within two or three weeks.

The CHAIR: Why not install it in the original setting that was approved by the painter, in the public area? It is now in a place where the public cannot see the portrait; it is inside the security barriers.

The PRESIDENT: I will take that on notice. That is a good question. I am happy to have a discussion to understand exactly where it is going. I had focused earlier in relation to strangers. They have been returned in a much better condition than previously. The crest will be returned in the next couple of weeks as well. I will take your question on notice.

QON3 ANSWER

The Queen's portrait has been reinstalled on Level 7. The Portrait is now on display on the public side of the foyer.

QON4

The PRESIDENT: The visit was actually planned by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. It did not go through the President's office, so I did not really have any control over that. I will investigate why. I take it you mean the gate the vehicle could have driven into?

The CHAIR: Yes.

The PRESIDENT: I will examine why the gates were not open.

QON4 ANSWER

I am advised that since the Gatehouse was built there have been very few occasions on which the centre gates have been opened. It has been the practice that the centre gates should only be opened for the Governor, members of the Royal Family and national heads of state. Such occasions have included visits of the Governor of New South Wales and the Duke of Gloucester. When this has occurred, 2 or 3 of their immediate support or security staff have also entered through the centre gates with the remainder of larger delegations proceeding through the Gatehouse as normal.

It has been practice that VIPs and dignitaries, other than the Governor, the Royal Family and heads of state, to enter through the Gatehouse as was the case for His Holiness, Pope Tawadros II.