

2017 Budget Estimates Question on Notice

E10 Fuel for Thought Question

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I have a specific question. How much money has been allocated for the Government's E10 Fuel for Thought advertising campaign? You might have to delve into some background papers to get that information.

The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS: I am not saying anything.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Do you want the Hon. Dr Peter Phelps to comment?

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: No. I am happy for the staff to look for that information and to provide it later in the session.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We will have a look. However, it might be more appropriate to ask that question of the portfolio Minister. If we can access the information we will provide it. However, we may speak to the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation because it would fall within his portfolio.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: Minister, has anyone on your team found the Government's allocation for the E10 Fuel for Thought advertising campaign line item? Has anyone tracked it down?

Answer

This question would be more appropriately directed to Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation.

E10 Fuel for Thought Question

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We are still working on tracking down that important piece of information, but when we have it we will provide it to you.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I will put it on notice. Ms McLiesh said that, despite your supply efforts, stamp duty growth is anticipated and market growth, although slower, is anticipated. With wages stagnant and energy prices rising, would you agree that housing affordability is only going to go backwards in this State?

Answer

This question would be more appropriately directed to Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation.

Costs for the Challenge to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) Determination

Question

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Over the last couple of years I have asked questions of the Treasurer about the cost of the challenge to the Australian Energy Regulator [AER] determination, led by Ausgrid, Endeavour and Essential Energy. As at last year it was \$2.3 million. Now that those proceedings are finalised, could you provide the total cost of the challenge to the AER determination?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Are you happy if I take that on notice?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take that on notice. When you provide a global figure, can you also break that down to barrister or legal firms, consultancies—all the constituent amounts that you have?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: In relation to the AER?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: The AER challenge.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yes.

Answer

The decision to appeal the AER's 2015 Determination was a matter for the electricity distribution businesses.

**Agency conducting market research for FESL
Question**

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: How much did it cost?

Ms McLIESH: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am reading your annual report. Was it the work undertaken by SenateSHJ?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I have the figure for the market research—\$240,000.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Who provided it? What was the agency or the names of the people?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Would you be happy for us to take that on notice?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes. What were the results? Did it say that people would have a favourable reception of this proposal?

Ms McLIESH: A range of issues were covered in the market research. Overall there was support for the concept of the reform and the principle of moving from an insurance-based levy towards a property-based levy—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Did you gauge attitudes to this specific proposal and not to—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Hold on, Dr McLiesh is trying to finish a sentence. We are happy to provide evidence but if we are going to get asked questions here today—

Answer

The agency that Treasury engaged to conduct market research was JWS Research.

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Local Government Costs
Question**

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Has local government asked your Government to pay them money to compensate for the costs they have incurred for your botched scheme?

Ms McLIESH: Local government have been compensated for all of the implementation costs associated with the reform.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: How much?

Ms McLIESH: This is part of the overall implementation arrangements for the reform. In terms of the overall payments made to local government—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Ms McLIESH: I will take that and come back very shortly.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And to provide us with figures by local council area if you can?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yes, we will get that. We will take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Treasurer, a Transport for NSW document received by the Opposition dated April this year gave an estimated total cost for the Sydney Gateway project as being between \$1 billion to

Answer

In 2016-17 Treasury provided a total of \$11,136,184.55 to reimburse NSW councils for their FESL implementation costs.

Follow-the-dollar legislation

Question

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: So you will not rule it out. What justification do you have for ignoring the advice of the Audit Office of New South Wales to introduce follow-the-dollar legislation in New South Wales?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That is not a matter for my portfolio.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: To be fair, \$3 billion or more in public money is being spent on outsourcing services in New South Wales, and that figure is expected to increase. This relates to financial accountability and how that money is allocated and spent, and how the Government ensures that it is being used appropriately. I believe New South Wales is different from most other States in Australia that are moving to introduce enabling legislation. Surely you would want the highest level of accountability with regard to public expenditure?

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Point of order: This is a budget estimates hearing dealing with the Treasurer's portfolio responsibilities. This issue probably falls within the Premier's portfolio.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I think it is the Premier's or Minister Kean's responsibility.

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: That someone might or might not have an opinion does not bring it within the realm of this Committee.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: To the point of order—

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Of course you would jump, but I have not finished. This matter plainly falls outside the Treasurer's direct responsibilities and it should be ruled out of order.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: To the point of order: Unlike other Ministers, the Treasurer is the architect and custodian of the entire budget. Surely there would be very few areas of the budget—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Does that mean you can ask me anything?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Pretty much. If it is above your pay grade, please say so. Mr Field is entitled to ask the question. If the Treasurer does not know the answer, he can take it on notice or say that he does not know.

The CHAIR: It is up to the Treasurer to determine whether it is within his portfolio responsibilities.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: My understanding is that this is the responsibility of either the Premier or the Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation, and that they are looking at it at the moment. I will take the question on notice and I or the relevant Minister will provide a detailed response.

Answer

This question would be more appropriately directed to the Premier and Minister for Innovation and Better Regulation.

Flexible workplace, Performance of industrial Relations Commission

Question

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Last year the former Minister in answer to supplementary questions said:

NSW Government agencies are developing initiatives to implement the NSW Government's policy that 100 per cent of public service jobs will be flexible by 2019 on the basis of 'if not, why not'.

Will you provide the Committee with a report on how the Government is progressing with the implementation of this policy?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And if not, why not?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I would like tangible examples of changes that have occurred in the past 12 months, in particular.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: To ensure that we provide the Committee with the most detailed progress report possible, I will take that question on notice. However, I assume that significant progress would have occurred because the innovation in our public sector is probably world leading. I expect to provide evidence of a strong result.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And if not, tell us why not.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: With pleasure.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Are all the members of the Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales performing all of their statutory duties, including dealing with industrial disputes? I am happy for you to take that question on notice.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I will.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Will the commission remain at 47 Bridge Street, or does the Government still have plans to move it the Administrative Decisions Tribunal building or even to the Fair Work Commission building?

Answers

Flexible Working

The Public Service Commission has developed a sector-wide response to the commitment to make all roles in the NSW government sector flexible in some form on the basis of "if not, why not", for consideration by Government.

Performance of IRC

All members of the NSW Industrial Relations Commission are performing their statutory duties.

Inspectors in Illawarra and Newcastle-Hunter region

Question

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Will you take on notice how many occasions those inspectors have been in the Illawarra region and the Newcastle-Hunter region over the past 12 months?

Ms TELFER: Yes. I will take that question on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Quite serious concerns were raised in another committee, which was looking at dust disease issues in New South Wales, about the rise of silicosis and the fact that a series of workers— some as young as in their early forties and late thirties—are being struck down with silicosis, which in many cases is sadly a terminal disease. These workers are acquiring silicosis through work in the manufactured stone industry. They are finishing off commercial stone products, building kitchen benches and

Answer

NSW Industrial Relations employs inspectors for compliance purposes. These inspectors regularly conduct compliance activities the Central Coast, Newcastle and Hunter Region.

Network Transaction costs

Question

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take this on notice as well, but can you also inform the Committee of the total transaction costs for the sale—or, as you would put it, the long-term lease—of Transgrid, Ausgrid and Endeavour—in other words, the total transaction costs?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yes. I can give them to you now.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Can you also break that down to strategic and financial advice, legal advice, public relations [PR], advertising, probity services—all the constituent parts that make up the total figure?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I might pass to the Secretary because I think he would have the breakdown of costs.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Again, if you do not have them to hand, I am happy to take that on notice.

Answer

The NSW Government publishes all procurement activities in accordance with the NSW Procurement Policy Framework for NSW Government Agencies (July 2015 Version 4). Please refer to the published figures for transaction costs of all contracts entered into prior to June 2015. This can be found here: <https://tenders.nsw.gov.au/> Post June 2015, in accordance with the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 No 52, Schedule 1 (14), contracts are no longer required to be publicly disclosed as they contain information in connection with Network transactions.

Privatisation of government assets

Question

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Treasurer, your Government has privatised more than \$50 billion of public assets over the last six years.

The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS: Government assets.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Government assets. Yesterday I think the finance Minister said the Government held \$142 billion in public assets. That means you have privatised something like 26 per cent of total government holdings. Is that about right? If that is not right, what do you say the figure is? I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I can take the figure on notice but I am not going to accept the

Answer

This matter would be more appropriately directed to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property.

Property Sales

Question

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: The finance Minister said there was more than a billion dollars in further property sales planned. Do you agree? You do not disagree with that? That is about right? Is that the total list of privatisations you have prepared for the next 19 months?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Sorry, I am talking more transactions.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: That is okay.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Did you want to expand that definition?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: A total figure. I am happy for you to take it on notice to give us a total Government picture.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Like assets?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Yes, total assets.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Like, for example, an old fire station would count as an asset sale?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: If you were going to sell it, yes. I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I will take that on notice and I will liaise with the finance Minister.

Answer

This matter would be more appropriately directed to the Minister for Finance, Services and Property.

icare

Question

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Of course. When you answer that, if that figure is correct, could you indicate what will happen to those six and a half thousand people; how many are going to the National Disability Insurance Scheme [NDIS]; how many are going to dispute settlement procedure [DSP]; and what will happen to the balance of people?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We have those figures, if you would like me to briefly provide them

ANSWER

Please refer to my answer given at Budget Estimates hearing.