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PREMIER – QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

QUESTION –

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Premier, I would like to ask you a couple of questions relating to the issues around additional and extra staff. I would like to go to the PBO election policy costing for your policy Y072, Help Mature Aged Workers Get Back into the Workforce. I note that this proposal relates to 30,000 free TAFE qualifications for mature age workers who have been made unemployed. Can you tell me how many more people you are hoping will take up a TAFE course based on this free qualification scheme?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I am pleased with all those announcements we have made because learning should be a lifelong journey. What we are seeing in the digital age is that it is not just young people who are seeking new opportunities to reskill or upskill, but also people of all ages. In fact, the Ministers responsible, especially the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, have it as one of their targets to support lifelong learning, and not only for young people. In addition to the policy we announced, we also have, as you know, 100,000 free apprenticeship courses. One of my proudest days in relation to apprenticeships was when I met some workers on the north-west—

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Thank you, Premier.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I just want to give the example. She was in her 40s.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: But I would like you, if you would—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: No, I just want to give the example.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Would you give me an answer to my question? I am running out of time for this question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Certainly. I just want to give the example that she was in her 40s and was learning to be an electrician in her 40s and working on the metro project. So they are the examples that I love. In relation to what the take-up has been of that specific opportunity, I will take that on notice because I am not sure of the figures.

Mr REARDON: I would take it on notice.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: We can either get you the answer during the course of these hearings; but I could not tell you exactly what the take-up rate has been.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I appreciate that, because if you go on and look at the PBO's election costing of your policy, it says: The program does not increase demand for enrolments under the Smart and Skilled/Targeted Priorities caps (and have implications for funding availability). As the policy is targeted to a relatively small cohort of mature aged, unemployed individuals, the PBO consider this assumption to be reasonable. So we have got an extra—or another—30,000 free qualifications, and yet the PBO confirms not a single increase in demand. I do not know how that works.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I will have to take that on board, but I would suggest this: If you are a government that is serious about lifelong learning, are you suggesting we should not be supporting programs for more mature people to get back into the workforce?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I think he is suggesting it is an illusory promise, Premier.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I think what he is suggesting is he is questioning—because if the PBO makes a question about demand, that is its prerogative. What I would say is, with an ageing population, even though—and I make this point very clearly—we have the

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lowest unemployment in the nation and we have the highest jobs growth, I know that many people are worried about job security.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Premier, I am suggesting that this is a mirage. I am offering you the opportunity to explain what is the use of a policy to increase training in schools when, according to the Parliamentary Budget Office, not one single extra person will take up training based on your policy. Please explain to me.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Certainly. I do not believe that to be the case, but I do not understand why the Labor Party would criticise us for potentially having 30,000 people take up—

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Premier, it is not a criticism.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: No, it is.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It is a question. I am giving you the opportunity to answer it.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Thank you. I will answer it by saying that I am more than happy to take that on notice, but I would find it extremely disappointing if, for example, a body like the PBO, whose primary focus is to cost promises, says there is no demand for something. We can choose not to take that advice. What we say to all of our citizens is it does not matter how old you are, if you want to study at TAFE and reskill yourself and have the chance to get back into the workforce, nothing makes me feel happier—

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: That is a total misrepresentation of what the PBO has said.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: It is exactly what you are asking.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: They are saying you have 100,000 free TAFE and vocational education and training qualifications that you are giving out and yet, on the assumptions that your party gave, not a single extra person will take up a course based on the assumptions you have given to the PBO. They are your assumptions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How is this a budget question? How is this anything to do with budget estimates?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It is the Parliamentary Budget Office.

The CHAIR: The question is fine. Please let the Premier answer it.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: Can I just make sure Hansard records this—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: They record everything.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: —that the Labor Party is not comfortable with the fact that we are providing 30,000 opportunities for older people to reskill—

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: Premier, I am sure Hansard can hear you.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: No, I am just making the point.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: You are just taking up time.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: They are the most professional team in the room.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: And I respect them deeply, but I am just making the point that the question you are asking seems to be skewed in its motivation.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can Hansard also record that you are unable to answer the question?

Mr Reardon has not been able to answer the question.

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: I will ask him to answer the question.

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The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: None of the bureaucrats have been able to answer the question. Your way of answering it is to attack me for asking you a question and giving you an opportunity to respond.

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: Mr Primrose, as you might note, very early on in my answer I said I was happy to take it on notice because I did not know what the take-up rate was of that program. But I am certainly questioning why—just because somebody says there is no demand for something does not mean governments should not open opportunities for older people to reskill.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It is your assumptions that are incorrect, are they not?

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: No, my assumption is that there is a demand for older people to want to have access to free courses so they can improve their skills. Nothing makes me feel happier than when I go to a Service NSW centre and meet people in their 60s who have retrained, got back into the marketplace and are helping fellow citizens provide public services.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: You are the Premier who has just advised us that "extra" does not mean "additional".

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: I do not even understand what you are saying, but I will pass it on to Mr Reardon.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Let's go back to the nurses.

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: I will pass it on to my secretary to answer that question.

Mr REARDON: In terms of the take-up rate, we said we would take that on notice.

ANSWER:

This is a matter for the Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education.

QUESTION –

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: My question relates to whether you have had discussions with your Deputy Premier, given his public statements, in relation to the removal of the cap on the number of containers and the State government fee payable on container exports?

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: I do not disclose private conversations I have had with colleagues but I will make this point publicly: You would need to triple container movements at the Port of Newcastle before any penalties came into play. So I say to those communities that want to increase their container movements at the point, there is capacity to triple that under the current arrangements. I also stress that our Government has invested more in ports, intermodals and airports than any other government in the history of the State. It is no secret that when we defined our port strategy the Port of Newcastle was our primary coal port. Having said that, and I stand to be corrected, from the last report I read you would need to triple existing container movements before any financial impediments came into place. Therefore I say to the community, please continue to produce, please continue to do what you are doing. What I love about Newcastle and the Hunter is that because of our Government's investment, notwithstanding how that area votes, we are investing record amounts in that region and the diversity of the economy and the economic growth in that region are unprecedented. It used to be a one company town and now it has a diverse economy specialising in many service industries in addition to those traditional industries. Unless I am mistaken, there would need to be a significant

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increase in the number of containers moving to and from that port before any type of financial impediment was struck.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Will you table that report, Premier?

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: It has been on the public record. It is not a report.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can you provide a copy?

Ms GLADYS BEREJKLIAN: It was information provided on the public record but I am happy to take on board any further updates on that.

ANSWER:

I refer you to the Inquiry into the impact of Port of Newcastle sale arrangements on public works expenditure in NSW.

QUESTION –

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Will you take on notice if there is any particular regional areas where there are concerns around the length of time and if there is a significant variation from the mean?

Mr REARDON: First, I will advise what is available on the public record and furnish you with a copy. There is the State of the NSW Public Sector Report that we put out annually about all 400,000 of us as employees. Some of that goes to the time to recruit being an issue. In terms of the recording of the time to recruit for the department, as I said, I will try to furnish you with what I can, even during the hearing if possible.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: One of the concerns—and I have no evidence for this—in some regional communities is that there are extended recruitment time frames and that that is being used as part of the fulfilment of the 3 per cent efficiency dividend. I do not know—I do not have any evidence—but I would ask that maybe you could look at possibly addressing that concern either now or just through the information you can provide.

Mr REARDON: Nor do I, in terms of evidence of what you have just raised there. Ours would be if we have a job advertised and it is a job that is required in a town, we fill it and that is what we should do. But as I said, for Premier and Cabinet—either the department and/or our cluster—I will try and provide you with it.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I appreciate that. Thank you.

ANSWER:

Time to fill roles in metropolitan areas averages at 42 days and time to fill roles in regional NSW averages at 61 days. The internal processes to fill roles are the same. However, the differences in time to fill are likely due to a number of factors:

- Advertisement periods are longer in regions in order to reach a broader number of talent.
- There can be limited availability of candidates to fill specialised roles
- There can be greater time taken to accept roles due to possible relocation and negotiation conversations.

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QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Okay. That is fair enough. So then we go to August. You have conducted hearings and interviews with witnesses in relation to the investigation. Were all of those persons you have spoken with inside the subject agency or were they a mixture of people in the agency and people outside of the agency?

Mr BARNES: Certainly people within the agency were interviewed under oath. I can check that. I do not think there would be any difficulty answering that question in an honest tone.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: If you could take that on notice and come back?

Mr BARNES: Yes, certainly.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Okay. And then in August again you conducted more interviews. Again, I would like to know if it was a mixture of people at SafeWork and people outside of SafeWork.

Mr BARNES: Certainly.

ANSWER:

I am advised that responses to questions taken on notice by the NSW Ombudsman have been provided directly to Budget Estimates Secretariat.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Okay. Is the nature of that complaint that somehow the work of SafeWork itself has been compromised, in terms of the enforcement work it does?

Mr BARNES: I would need to, first, satisfy myself as to whether that is an accurate description and, secondly, satisfy myself whether it is appropriate that that be put on the public record. So I will come back to you in relation to that.

ANSWER:

I am advised that responses to questions taken on notice by the NSW Ombudsman have been provided directly to Budget Estimates Secretariat.

QUESTION –

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What were the budget bids for each of the independent statutory bodies that they gave to you for the current budget? What were their requests and how did they compare with what they eventually got?

Mr REARDON: I can take on notice anything I can take on notice. But I have to say that the response to that will be that their bids do go towards a Cabinet process, as is the case for every other agency.

ANSWER:

The budget process is coordinated by NSW Treasury under a mandate from the Expenditure Review Committee of the Cabinet. Submissions by agencies, including

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independent statutory bodies, which are inputs into that process are Cabinet-in-Confidence.

QUESTION – Sydney Football Stadium

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: At the time the budget of \$729 million was set, was the concept design in place or was the budget set before the concept design?

Mr DRAPER: I will check and come back to you, if I can, during the course of the hearing. But I believe that the concept design was developed after the original budget was developed. I will confirm that later on.

ANSWER:

The Sydney Football Stadium Redevelopment was announced in November 2017. Following the announcement, a concept and reference design were developed and refined. This allowed the stadium proposal to be sufficiently costed to inform the Strategic Business Case and subsequent Final Business Case. Throughout this process, the design and costing of the new stadium went through a series of Gateway reviews and assurance processes overseen by Treasury. The assurance process ensured that the designs were consistent with the approved budget for the project.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: When did you become aware that Revenue NSW had referred that data breach to the Privacy Commissioner?

Mr REARDON: I would not know if I became aware of that for some considerable period of time. It was not something that was, frankly, top of my pile at the time.

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

Mr REARDON: Okay. I am not sure if I am going to be able to clarify when.

ANSWER:

I [Secretary of DPC] first became aware of the data breach through its being reported in the media, however I am unable to confirm the date on which I became aware that Revenue NSW had referred the data breach to the Privacy Commissioner. Revenue NSW has confirmed that at no time did it interact with the Department of Premier and Cabinet or myself in relation to this matter.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Yes, it does. In relation to one of the priorities—making housing more affordable—the target is said to be to deliver 61,000 housing completions on average per year. The information on the website says that there have been over 65,000 housing completions in New South Wales over the 12 months to June 2018. But the press

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release put out by the planning department in October last year talks about having 42,000-odd new homes built during the 12 months to August 2018. Can you reconcile those two figures?

Mr REARDON: I can take it on notice. I just do not have the three figures. The one thing I will say— just to clarify—is that the Premier's Priorities for 2015 to 2019 were tracked throughout, right up to the State election. We continued to track them afterwards. There are 14 across lifting education standards, keeping children safe, breaking the cycle of disadvantage, improving the health system, better environments, a world-class public service and better customer service, of course. You will note in that I did not talk about the housing approvals number. Some of them are becoming business as usual back into a cluster. That is one of them. We will continue to track that with Planning, Industry and Environment but I will come back to you on the reconciliation of any numbers. I have the app for the Premier's Priorities and the website with me. If I can get any information during the hearing I will come back to you.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: What I want to suggest is that the housing completions target in the Premier's priority does not take into account demolitions; it is not a net addition to the housing stock measurement. In fact, when you look at the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] about net increases in housing stock, for the year ending June 2016 the net increase in housing in New South Wales was 3,028, the year to June 2017 it is 3,086, and the year to June 2018 it is 3,142. Those are net increases in housing stock when you look at completions and you factor in demolition. The Premier's priority of 61,000 completions is, at best, an incomplete measurement. It is misleading in the sense that it does nothing about housing affordability and it does not even show the true picture about an increase in housing stock. It is simply a misleading indicator, is it not?

Mr REARDON: I will deal with the last bit. No, it is not. But I will not drift into policy of housing affordability; it is not my place to do so.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Just before you do that, the priority is making housing more affordable. All it is measuring is completions, but it does not actually even measure net additions to stock.

Mr REARDON: All I was saying is I am not going to comment or have an opinion on those things.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: But it is about making houses more affordable in New South Wales, is it not?

Mr REARDON: I will just go to the input to indicate.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: You give the answer.

Mr REARDON: We pool together our data sources. We use that. We are very transparent about those. They sit on websites. They got reported on endlessly during 2015 to 2019. I think you have a data source. I do not know how it intersects, how it might be used. I am happy to take that on notice about the ABS. I

ANSWER:

The Premier's *Making housing more affordable* Priority uses the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) Building Activity data as the nationally recognised measure of residential construction activity. This is the best available data source for measuring state wide residential construction.

As stated on the Premier's Priorities webpage, performance on the Priority is reported as gross completions across all of NSW, as sourced from the ABS Building Activity data and

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is reported by financial year <https://www.nsw.gov.au/improving-nsw/premiers-priorities-2015-2019/>.

The NSW Housing monitor reports specifically on net residential completions, but only for the Greater Sydney area. In addition, it is noted that the media release from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment is for 12 months to September 2018, rather than the 2017-18 financial year data reported for the Premier's Priority.

QUESTION –

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Who is on the steering committee? You referenced a steering committee.

Mr REARDON: I will take that on notice. I do not know. If I can provide it to you pretty quickly I will.

ANSWER:

The Public Interest Disclosures Steering Committee is established under section 6A of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* and comprises the following members (or their nominee):

- the Ombudsman, who is to be the chairperson of the Steering Committee
- the General Counsel, Department of Premier and Cabinet (and when unavailable, the Director, Parliamentary Matters, Integrity and Accountability, Department of Premier and Cabinet) as nominee of the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet
- the Auditor-General
- the Chief Commissioner of the Independent Commission Against Corruption
- the Chief Commissioner of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission
- the local government investigating authority
- the Commissioner of Police
- the Information Commissioner
- the Public Service Commissioner

The functions of the Steering Committee include providing advice to the Minister on the operation of the Act and recommendations for reform.

QUESTION –

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: We can argue about transparency about a process to which there is no public visibility at a later point, but that sounds to me like a process with no public visibility. It also is not quite the issue I was asking about, Mr Reardon. I was asking about the changes to the law which will put fresh and additional reporting obligations, and the resourcing impact of that on the Electoral Commission.

Mr REARDON: I think I made my comment. I am not aware of the change to law. I can take it on notice, but I am just not aware.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I would appreciate that.

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ANSWER:

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring the highest level of integrity in all electoral matters by supporting the NSW Electoral Commission's work.

The NSW Electoral Commission received \$121.9 million in the 2019-20 NSW Budget, directly through the Appropriations Act approved by the Parliament. This reflects the cyclical budget with no major election to be held in 2019-20.

QUESTION –

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Mr Reardon, you mentioned in June a "certain number". Can you tell me what that certain number was?

Mr REARDON: Out of the 18 June 2019 budget?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes.

Mr REARDON: I will take it on notice.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I understand

ANSWER:

Total whole of government savings allocated to the Premier and Cabinet out of the 18 June Budget was \$20.7 million.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Have House notes been prepared by your agency for the Premier to use in Parliament about the matter?

Mr REARDON: I would have to take it on notice. Again I am not aware but I will take it on notice just so I can give you a yes or no.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: When you come back to us can you indicate if you did prepare those notes when that had happened?

Mr REARDON: If I can.

ANSWER:

There has not been a House Note prepared by DPC for the Premier specifically for this matter. Privacy matters are the responsibility of the relevant Department and Minister.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I appreciate all of that but I still do not think you have given an answer to the question about why the employment of people with disability has reached an all-time low in the New South Wales public sector.

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Mr REARDON: All I have indicated to you is that that phenomenon is national in terms of the public services. I really do not know why.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Are you doing any research to try to understand what has happened?

Mr REARDON: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER:

The Public Service Commissioner has advised:

The estimated representation of people with disability in the public sector for 2008 to 2018 is found in the workforce profile report 2018 in Figure 5.3:

<https://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/reports---data/workforce-profile/workforce-profile-reports/workforce-profile-report-2018/chapter-five>. The 2019 workforce profile data indicates this decline has been arrested, with the proportion remaining steady at 2.5%. The Public Service Commission's research efforts are focused on increasing the proportion of government sector roles held by people with a disability in the future.

QUESTION –

Mr REARDON: In terms of the People Matter Employee Survey engagement survey that we undertake, I will give you an example from our department and cluster. We focus on two or three things a year. We focus on them firmly. In the last few years we have focused on flexibility and diversity inclusion. Diversity inclusion in our cluster as a focal point has continued to increase. People in the Department of Premier and Cabinet, in particular, believe that diversity inclusion is fairly strong. They believe that flexibility within the cluster is fairly strong. When we focus our attention and measure, we get results. As with the Premier's priority around the measurement of how many people with disability join our cluster, I can assure you that we will put considerable focus—both in my cluster and every other cluster at secretary level—into that issue. With regard to specific interventions, we will do some research to understand why people with disability do or do not join the New South Wales public service. We have gotten better and better with our data sources over the years. To give you an example of that, the customer satisfaction results that we continue to measure for ourselves across the board have improved quite a bit. We would like them to continue to improve because we like satisfied customers. We measure ourselves not just against ourselves but also against airlines, energy retailers and banks—you name it. We go fairly well in comparison to those. When it comes to focusing attention on our people—if it means people with disability or, more broadly, diversity of the racial or any other diversity of our cohort—we will put the time and effort into that to ensure we get it right. I am not going to sit here now and give you a couple of off-hand solutions to basically—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take it on notice and give us a direct answer on these things.

ANSWER:

The Public Service Commissioner has advised:

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\$1.2 million is available in the current financial year to deliver initiatives to make Government sector jobs more accessible to people with disability and to improve workforce data on disability and mental health. These initiatives include:

- Targeted recruitment programs
- Removing barriers to recruitment
- Improving access to timely workplace adjustments
- Improving the accessibility of workplaces and ITC systems, and
- A communications and training program to build an inclusive workplace culture.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: What is the dollar value of that particular function in your budget for this year and ongoing years? For the administration of the admin funding arrangements?

Mr SCHMIDT: So \$6.4 million for the capital build of the actual new system, but the administration of the existing funding arrangements—we will get you a figure.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: Maybe if you could take it on notice.

Mr SCHMIDT: We will take it on notice.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: Break it down by staff costs, capital expenditure on new systems and so on. When do you expect to bring a new system online? Have you got a timetable for that?

Mr SCHMIDT: On notice, if you could.

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: Thank you.

ANSWER:

Q1: What is the dollar value of that particular function in your budget for this year and ongoing years for the Administration of the admin funding arrangements?

NSWEC advises \$3.9m is allocated as Recurrent funding to this function (FDC) in 2019/20. For the ongoing years this amount will increase by the Treasury advised annual wage increases and be reduced by the efficiency dividends and other savings measures levied on the NSWEC. Other funding provisions for Council Integrity Measures and LG Act Offences totalling \$1.5m presently cease at 30 June 2020.

Q2: NSWEC confirm \$6.4m is the Capital amount provided for the build of the 'Funding, Disclosure & Compliance Online System' in 2019/20.

Q3: NSWEC advises the breakdown of costs for staff costs of the annual operating expenses for the FDC function is \$3.7m salaries and \$0.2m Other OPEX.

Q4: When do you expect to bring a new system online? Have you got a timetable for that?

NSWEC advises that it ran an information session for interested service providers in August and anticipates issuing a Request for Tender for the development of an online disclosures system for political participants by the end of October 2019. The NSWEC will

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consider whether there is scope to implement some functionality of the new system in phases.

QUESTION –

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am sorry; it was simply a lack of time. I am asking you this. I assume that the department gives the Premier advice about what needs to be disclosed and what does not need to be disclosed. The requirement for disclosure is "where a matter may be considered by the Minister, whether formally or informally, in his or her role as portfolio Minister or as a member of Cabinet". So I am wondering if matters that fall outside the formal scope of the Premier's portfolios, but may relate to other Ministers' portfolios—whether or not those meetings are also disclosed.

Mr REARDON: I can take on notice the provisions and the criteria et cetera, but I would only repeat my answer about the Premier.

ANSWER:

The publication of ministerial diaries is governed by Premier's Memorandum 2015-05 *Publication of Ministerial Diaries and Release of Overseas Travel Information*.

The Memorandum states that published diaries should include details of all scheduled meetings of a Minister involving the discussion of a matter that may be considered by the Minister, whether formally or informally, in his or her role as portfolio Minister or as a member of Cabinet.

All Ministers, including the Premier, must disclose meetings involving the discussion of matters that fall outside the formal scope of their portfolios if those matters may be subject to consideration by Cabinet.

QUESTION –

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will ask the broader question. Did LECC come to your department with a bid for greater funding?

Mr REARDON: They may have. The nature of those discussions I do not know, Mr Shoebridge. My staff would meet with the agencies. Our chief financial officer would meet with the agencies, as would our chief people officer. The nature of bids et cetera, I am unaware.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Would you be able to find it out by discussions with officials and take the question on notice?

Mr REARDON: I can certainly find it out. What I can provide you with, I will remind—

ANSWER:

The LECC did not come to DPC with a bid for any additional funds for 2019-20.

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QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Mr Reardon, I am trying to make your job easier. I am going to invite you to take on notice and then give us an explanation about why that document, the one I have specified, has not been returned?

Mr REARDON: Could you repeat the document?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: It is the review of UrbanGrowth conducted by Jim Betts in 2016 or 2017. It is paragraph (g) of the call for papers, I think on 8 August. I do not believe it has been returned. Certainly I do not see it in the indexes.

Mr REARDON: I will take on notice what you have just said.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And I am happy to be wrong.

Mr REARDON: That is fine, but also I will respond to that, as I am required to do in terms of the standing orders first, Standing Order 52.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There is one additional question, Mr Reardon. I think you have responsibility for the Special Commissions of Inquiry Act, it falls within the Premier?

Mr REARDON: I will have to seek clarification on that.

ANSWER:

In response to the resolution of the Legislative Council under Standing Order 52 made on 8 August 2019 concerning the recruitment of the CEO of Landcom, and the motion passed by the Legislative Council on 22 August 2019 amending that resolution, the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet delivered documents referred to in that resolution to the Clerk of the Parliaments on 29 August 2019. Further documents from Landcom referred to in that resolution were delivered to the Clerk of the Parliaments on 5 September 2019.

Certification letters were provided by relevant officers certifying that, to the best of their knowledge, either all documents held and covered by the terms of the resolution had been provided or that no documents were held. These were provided to the Clerk of the Parliaments. The Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet also certified that to the best of his knowledge all documents held by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and covered by the terms of the resolution were provided.

The Premier is allocated responsibility for the administration of the *Special Commissions of Inquiry Act 1983*.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Mr Reardon, returning to the issue of standing orders and the logistics associated with them, I think it was not the last report but the report before by the Hon. Keith Mason, QC, who is the independent arbiter of these matters for the upper House, that given the number of recurring issues he foreshadowed or suggested that a roundtable discussion involving the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Presiding Officers of the upper House and possibly some of the usual suspects involved in the causation of

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Standing Order 52 orders being made occur to try to iron out some of the procedural issues that keep coming up.

ANSWER:

DPC would be prepared to participate in any meeting to discuss procedural issues relating to a call for papers under Standing Order 52, and will consider and respond to any invitation to participate in any such meeting if and when an invitation is received.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Mr Reardon was talking about the use of resources in responding to the Standing Order 52 calls for papers. Is that conversation or roundtable something that DPC would happily or otherwise engage in?

Mr REARDON: I am not aware of the recommendation. Right now we are responding to Standing Order 52s, so we are in a bit of virtuous circle on that. We are responding to them as quickly as we can and as efficiently as we can. I have got no advice in front of me about that recommendation.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Could I ask you to take that on notice and maybe come back to us?

Mr REARDON: I will take on notice that I will go and review that recommendation and see what it has to say. I will do that.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Once you have read that, would you then respond to the Committee about your willingness to have DPC participate in such a roundtable?

Mr REARDON: I will review it first.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: But you will give it some response?

Mr REARDON: I will review it first.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Madam Chair, could I get a better response? I think I am entitled to an answer.

The CHAIR: The witness has given his response.

Mr REARDON: I thought I was responding.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: You said you would review it.

Mr REARDON: I will review it. I do not know what it says. You are asking me about a document I have just indicated—

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am not asking you to tell us what course of action you will adopt, I am just saying you will come back to us once you have reviewed it.

Mr REARDON: Sure, in terms of taking it on notice though.

The CHAIR: You will need to provide a response, even if it is not necessarily the one that is sought.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: That is right. Thank you. Mr Reardon, how many Aboriginal public servants who completed the New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet's Aboriginal Career and Leadership Development Program have been promoted to permanent—as permanent as they get—State Emergency Service positions?

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Mr REARDON: You might be referring to the Aboriginal leadership program through the Public Service Commission?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Yes.

Mr REARDON: I believe there have been 10 cohorts go through that program. I have been to the graduation of a few of those programs. They are significant leaders and continually surprise in terms of their style of leadership. I am often saying in the last few years that I am learning more about leadership off Indigenous leaders than the other way around. They have a unique form of leadership and they enrich the New South Wales public service through diversity inclusion like few others. How many have actually moved around is something that I started a conversation with in Premier and Cabinet just last year because there are amazing people coming through that program and it is incumbent upon the leadership to reach out and communicate with those folks. We actually brought in a system where we caught up with a lot of that leadership to try to take the mystique out of central agency work for them. We recruited one leader into our place off that program from a completely different frontline background to our organisation. I will take on notice how many have actually had mobility and how many have taken on more senior leadership projects. And we will respond as fulsomely as we can to that because that is a program I am very, very committed to, as is Emma Hogan.

ANSWER:

DPC would be prepared to participate in any meeting to discuss procedural issues relating to a call for papers under Standing Order 52, and will consider and respond to any invitation to participate in any such meeting if and when an invitation is received.

The Public Service Commission has advised:

Employee mobility is tracked using the Government Employee Number (GEN). To date, ACLDP participants have not been required provide their GEN, due to concerns around privacy. Therefore, the number of graduates who have been promoted cannot be provided. The PSC-run Leadership Academy will include provision on GEN this as an opt in feature in the application process of the new ACLDP programs.

Between 2014 and 2018 the number of Government Sector Aboriginal employees at the Senior Executive level increased from 57 to 87.

QUESTION –

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Mr Reardon, how many Aboriginal persons were displaced when the senior officer grade in the public service was deleted? I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Mr REARDON: Just so I am clear with what I am taking on notice, when the Government Sector Employment Act was enacted and again at the 2013 level or later?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: At the 2013 level, but also any subsequent information you have. Thank you.

Mr REARDON: I will take it on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Thank you.

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ANSWER:

The Public Service Commission has advised:

The PSC cannot confirm the number of Aboriginal Senior Officers displaced. In 2014 there were 15 Aboriginal Senior Officers, 13 Aboriginal Senior Executives in the Public Service, and 207 Aboriginal employees at the 11/12 grade and equivalent. In 2019 there were no Aboriginal Senior Officers, 31 Aboriginal Senior Executives in the Public Service, and 323 Aboriginal employees at the 11/12 grade and equivalent.