

**The University of Sydney responses to Questions on Notice and Supplementary Questions received from the  
NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee no. 3 - Education  
as part of its inquiry into the future development of the NSW tertiary education sector**

Questions	University of Sydney response																																																									
<p><b>Questions taken on notice (from transcript)</b></p> <p>Is there a difference in the pass rates at Sydney university between domestic and international students? If so, what is that difference? (The Hon. MARK LATHAM, p.8)</p>	<p>The following table summarises the success rates* of domestic and international students (undergraduate and postgraduate by coursework) at the University of Sydney for 2017-2019:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Students</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Course group</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td rowspan="3"><b>Domestic</b></td> <td>PG (Cw)</td> <td>95.19%</td> <td>95.56%</td> <td>95.79%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UG</td> <td>90.92%</td> <td>91.44%</td> <td>91.84%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>91.86%</b></td> <td><b>92.36%</b></td> <td><b>92.72%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3"><b>International</b></td> <td>PG (Cw)</td> <td>95.14%</td> <td>94.39%</td> <td>95.09%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UG</td> <td>87.13%</td> <td>87.20%</td> <td>87.23%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>91.62%</b></td> <td><b>91.05%</b></td> <td><b>91.33%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td></td> <td><b>91.77%</b></td> <td><b>91.82%</b></td> <td><b>92.09%</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* The University defines 'success rate' as measuring academic performance by comparing the equivalent full-time student load (EFTSL) of units passed to the EFTSL of units attempted.</p> <p>The following table summarises the years it took for Higher Degree by Research (HDR) students to complete their degree, for the submission years 2017-2019:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Submission year</th> <th style="text-align: left;">HDR students</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Average time (years) to submission (consumed EFTSL)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>Domestic</td> <td>4.121</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>International</td> <td>3.770</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>Domestic</td> <td>4.119</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>International</td> <td>3.738</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>Domestic</td> <td>4.066</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>International</td> <td>3.685</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Students	Course group	2017	2018	2019	<b>Domestic</b>	PG (Cw)	95.19%	95.56%	95.79%	UG	90.92%	91.44%	91.84%	<b>Total</b>	<b>91.86%</b>	<b>92.36%</b>	<b>92.72%</b>	<b>International</b>	PG (Cw)	95.14%	94.39%	95.09%	UG	87.13%	87.20%	87.23%	<b>Total</b>	<b>91.62%</b>	<b>91.05%</b>	<b>91.33%</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>91.77%</b>	<b>91.82%</b>	<b>92.09%</b>	Submission year	HDR students	Average time (years) to submission (consumed EFTSL)	2017	Domestic	4.121	2017	International	3.770	2018	Domestic	4.119	2018	International	3.738	2019	Domestic	4.066	2019	International	3.685
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<p>What do you understand to be the current proportion of your staff that are on insecure terms? (Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE, p.8)</p>	<p>Of our nearly 19,000 staff, approximately 10,000 are employed on a casual basis. This includes graduate students and professionals from a range of fields who teach on a casual basis. Of the other 9,000 staff, approximately 43% (FTE) (or 46% headcount) of our fixed-term and continuing staff are employed on a fixed-term basis. This includes staff working on externally funded projects.</p>																																																																			
<p>The percentage of international students on your campuses, the percentage of revenue derived from international students and the source country percentage of international students over the last three years. (The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW, p.16)</p>	<p>The two tables below contain the enrolment and revenue percentages for 2017 - 2019:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="898 363 1503 552"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">International Student Enrolment Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>38%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>42%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="898 587 1503 746"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">International Revenue Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2017</td> <td>54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>58%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>63%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The top 10 source countries of international students are listed below as are all the other source countries grouped together as the University has students from up to 140 countries:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="887 882 1536 1406"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Home country</th> <th colspan="3">% of enrolments</th> </tr> <tr> <th>2019</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2017</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>China</td> <td>66.51%</td> <td>64.37%</td> <td>63.35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>United States</td> <td>5.17%</td> <td>5.27%</td> <td>5.61%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hong Kong</td> <td>3.39%</td> <td>3.49%</td> <td>3.54%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Singapore</td> <td>3.09%</td> <td>3.65%</td> <td>3.72%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>India</td> <td>2.86%</td> <td>2.77%</td> <td>2.33%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Canada</td> <td>2.01%</td> <td>2.25%</td> <td>2.28%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Indonesia</td> <td>1.34%</td> <td>1.37%</td> <td>1.49%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Korea, Republic of</td> <td>1.17%</td> <td>1.28%</td> <td>1.52%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Malaysia</td> <td>1.10%</td> <td>1.43%</td> <td>1.60%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vietnam</td> <td>0.93%</td> <td>0.89%</td> <td>1.03%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Others</td> <td>12.43%</td> <td>13.21%</td> <td>13.55%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	International Student Enrolment Percentage		2017	35%	2018	38%	2019	42%	International Revenue Percentage		2017	54%	2018	58%	2019	63%	Home country	% of enrolments			2019	2018	2017	China	66.51%	64.37%	63.35%	United States	5.17%	5.27%	5.61%	Hong Kong	3.39%	3.49%	3.54%	Singapore	3.09%	3.65%	3.72%	India	2.86%	2.77%	2.33%	Canada	2.01%	2.25%	2.28%	Indonesia	1.34%	1.37%	1.49%	Korea, Republic of	1.17%	1.28%	1.52%	Malaysia	1.10%	1.43%	1.60%	Vietnam	0.93%	0.89%	1.03%	Others	12.43%	13.21%	13.55%
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<p>Where does the 20 per cent cut leave your pay now, Dr Spence? (Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE, p.19)</p>	<p>The 20% reduction in remuneration was an amount of \$166,453. The Vice-Chancellor's total pay will be disclosed in the University's annual report after the end of the 2020 financial year.</p>
<p><b>University of Sydney</b></p>	
<p>1. Why is the university involved in Taylor's College?</p>	<p>The University's Foundation Program is delivered by Taylors College. The Foundation Program is a joint venture between Study Group Australia and the University of Sydney.</p>
<p>2. How many students come from Taylor's College into Sydney University courses each year and what IELTS scores, on average, have they received?</p>	<p>Students enter Taylors College based on IELTS and then - in line with the National Standards for Foundation Programs - must complete the English language program associated to Standard 4 prior to entering the University. The average over the last five years is 1,088 students entering University courses each year.</p>
<p>3. Why is there so little transparency about the operations of the College, such as publication of an Annual Report?</p>	<p>Taylors College is owned by Study Group Australia which is a privately held company.</p>
<p>4. What contact does the University have with representatives of the Chinese Government in the management of the College?</p>	<p>None, as there is no involvement of the Chinese Government in the management of the college.</p>
<p>5. With the impending return of international students after COVID, will the university be: (a) adopting a different approach to financial risk management and, if so, what will that approach be? (b) capping foreign student numbers either overall or in certain courses? (c) going back to its previous open door policy on foreign student numbers, with no change? (d) adopting a different approach to Chinese student numbers in light of concerns about Chinese political interference in Australia, and the deteriorating diplomatic relationship between the two countries? If so, what will the new approach be?</p>	<p>International students are an important part of our vibrant campus community and the University looks forward to welcoming them back to campus as soon as it is possible to safely do so.</p> <p>Efforts to diversify the source countries of our international student enrolments, including strategies focused on India and South East Asia, were underway before the pandemic, and are ongoing.</p> <p>As noted below, we have recently opened three offices in India and have employed recruitment staff in Malaysia, Vietnam and Indonesia. Our second largest source of international students is from the USA and we continue to try to grow this cohort.</p>
<p>6. What type and how many foundation programs does your university run?</p>	<p>We have one program - the University of Sydney Foundation Program (USFP) - which is delivered by Taylors College with academic oversight provided by the University of Sydney.</p>

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<p>7. How many overseas students have been involved for each of the past 3 years and which countries did they come from?</p>	<p>The table below is a count of new international students enrolled in the University of Sydney Foundation Program for the past three years, distinguished by citizenship:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="790 244 1117 804"> <thead> <tr> <th>Citizenship</th> <th>USFP students</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>China PRC</td><td>3699</td></tr> <tr><td>Hong Kong SAR</td><td>169</td></tr> <tr><td>Vietnam</td><td>106</td></tr> <tr><td>Indonesia</td><td>74</td></tr> <tr><td>South Korea</td><td>72</td></tr> <tr><td>Taiwan ROC</td><td>62</td></tr> <tr><td>Malaysia</td><td>36</td></tr> <tr><td>Macau</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>Myanmar (Burma)</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>Singapore</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>Pakistan</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>Cambodia</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>Bangladesh</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>Japan</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>Iran</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>United Arab Emirates</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>Mongolia</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>Philippines</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>Thailand</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>United States</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>India</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td><i>Other 30 Countries</i></td><td>51</td></tr> <tr><td><b>Grand Total</b></td><td><b>4470</b></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Citizenship	USFP students	China PRC	3699	Hong Kong SAR	169	Vietnam	106	Indonesia	74	South Korea	72	Taiwan ROC	62	Malaysia	36	Macau	17	Myanmar (Burma)	27	Singapore	23	Pakistan	23	Cambodia	20	Bangladesh	20	Japan	15	Iran	11	United Arab Emirates	12	Mongolia	7	Philippines	6	Thailand	8	United States	6	India	6	<i>Other 30 Countries</i>	51	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4470</b>
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<p>8. What was the minimum IELTS score?</p>	<p>Taylor's College English Language Entry Requirements state that students are expected to test at these IELTS scores at orientation:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="784 935 1881 1034"> <thead> <tr> <th>Course</th> <th>Extended (72 weeks)</th> <th>Standard (52 weeks)</th> <th>Intensive (39 weeks)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>IELTS (Academic)</td> <td>5.0 (no band less than 5.0)</td> <td>5.5 (no band less than 5.5)</td> <td>6.0 (no band less than 5.5)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Course	Extended (72 weeks)	Standard (52 weeks)	Intensive (39 weeks)	IELTS (Academic)	5.0 (no band less than 5.0)	5.5 (no band less than 5.5)	6.0 (no band less than 5.5)																																								
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<p>9. How many of these Foundation overseas students were ultimately admitted to university courses (last 3 years please)?</p>	<p>The following table shows the number of University of Sydney Foundation Program international students who enrolled at the University:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="784 1157 1352 1409"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Number of students enrolled</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2018</td> <td>1240</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>1313</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020</td> <td>1209</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Number of students enrolled	2018	1240	2019	1313	2020	1209																																								
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<p>10. Universities are significant economic hubs, due to their physical presence. Have you done any modelling on job losses on campus - not academics, or professional staff, but in the retail, food and other outlets? I understand they often aren't run by the university, but they are almost solely reliant on them.</p>	<p>The University has not conducted any modelling specifically for job losses on campus.</p> <p>In May, we commissioned modelling to estimate the flow-on effects to the NSW economy from the impacts of reduced students and diminished University expenditure. The report can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>11. What efforts have you made to diversify the make-up of your university's international students in recent years?</p>	<p>We have active strategies in place targeting India and South East Asia. We have recently opened three offices in India and have employed recruitment staff in Malaysia, Vietnam and Indonesia. Our second largest source of international students is from the USA and we continue to try to grow this cohort.</p>
<p>12. Have you piloted or introduced any innovative ways to support online learning either here or overseas as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? For example, learning hubs.</p>	<p>Yes - in addition to making available extensive information and advice about online study and assessment, and ensuring that students have been able to access study space and computers on campus throughout the crisis, we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Made computers available to borrow and provided bursaries and loans, including funds to purchase a laptop or other study equipment.</li> <li>- Introduced a new 'Peer Support Advisor' program, where later-year students are trained to support commencing students (especially those offshore) in navigating their studies during the COVID-19 period. Students can talk to a peer advisor via an enquiry form &amp; 1:1 Zoom calls and weekly online Zoom sessions covering common questions.</li> <li>- Run a suite of rapidly developed and targeted professional development programs for staff to support the move to remote teaching, including virtual workshops, consultations, guides and extended helpdesk, professional development intensives over the Winter break.</li> <li>- Held an open virtual symposium for teaching staff after Semester 1 on 'Teaching well and supporting students during COVID-19', attended by staff from many different universities and featuring many examples of innovative teaching practice and a student panel.</li> <li>- Adapted experiential and project-based learning to a remote format.</li> <li>- Hosted a <i>Student Innovation Challenge</i>: held using a new online format to allow students to pitch their innovative projects to judging panels and to showcase their work via an online platform, supporting students in developing their presentation and entrepreneurial skills and providing opportunities for networking.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developed three online units open to all higher degree by research students to equip them with broad skills and to contribute to their job-readiness in a post-pandemic economy.</li> <li>- Developed virtual multidisciplinary units with students and industry partners engaging locally and internationally.</li> <li>- Trialled a virtual Communities of Practice approach for the development of transferrable skills and professional identity by students undertaking fourth year Industry and Community Project Units.</li> <li>- Introduced the <i>Regionate Innovation Challenge</i>: a new online outreach program for high school students in regional areas to learn about interdisciplinary innovation methods and how to apply them to local issues.</li> </ul>
<p>13. WSU has recommended a conditional waiver of payroll tax for NSW universities. Would you support a waiver? What conditions would you support being attached to this waiver?</p>	<p>Notwithstanding our not-for-profit status, the University of Sydney pays an annual payroll tax bill of approximately \$77 million to the State Government.</p> <p>Given the University's mission of outstanding education and impactful research, this payroll tax bill translates to a direct reduction of investment in those pursuits and discourages employment of staff who may support these endeavours.</p> <p>The University supports the waiver being unconditional.</p>
<p>14. Have you been invited or participated in any NSW government trade delegations in the past five years? Could you please provide a list of any delegations you have participated in?</p>	<p>No, however, we were invited and agreed to participate in Minister Birmingham's trade delegation to India earlier in 2020 but had to withdraw due to COVID-related priorities. The Vice-Chancellor participated in Premier O'Farrell's trade visit to China in 2011, as part of a private sector delegation.</p>
<p><b>Questions for all the Vice Chancellors:</b></p>	
<p>15. What is the current amount in your reserve fund/general reserve fund?</p>	<p>The University currently holds a semi liquid financial asset reserve of \$427 million. The reserve represents roughly eight months of payrolls. The University has an issued debt of \$600 million.</p>
<p>16. What is the stated purpose of your reserve fund/general reserve fund? Where is this stated?</p>	<p>The reserve fund was established by the University Senate to serve the following purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- protect and guarantee staff entitlements e.g. long service leave</li> <li>- to provide a collateral fund to support our debt</li> <li>- to protect against unforeseen circumstances in the event of unfunded redundancies (a university cannot raise new capital)</li> <li>- recognise our obligation for intergenerational equity to future staff.</li> </ul> <p>This can be found in the minutes of the relevant Senate meeting.</p>

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17. How much of the money in reserve has restrictions on how it can be spent?	<p>The reserve is under the governance of the University Senate. Its release is limited to the purposes described above.</p> <p>The University also holds an endowment bound by approximately 4,000 individual trust deeds. This money can only be spent on specific objects of the trusts and cannot be spent on general University operations.</p>
18. When was the last time you drew upon your reserve/general reserve? How much did you draw upon and for what purpose? When would you usually draw upon your reserves?	Income from the reserve and some of the University property is used to service debt interest on bonds.
19. Is your general reserve more valuable than the total deficit you expect to achieve in the next five years due to COVID-19? How much more valuable?	No - we do not anticipate that we will make actual financial losses over this period.
20. Do you plan to draw upon your reserve/general reserve in order to cover some or all of your total deficit over the next five years? If so, how much do you plan to draw upon? If not, why are you not planning to use your reserve/general reserve to cover some or all of your deficit?	We would draw on this reserve for emergency payroll funding or to pay redundancy/restructuring costs. There is no firm number to this requirement at this stage.
21. What measures do you plan to take to cover your losses in revenue due to COVID-19, and why have you chosen those measures rather than choosing to draw upon your reserves/general reserves?	It is not clear how long the impact of the crisis will prevail. We have reduced cost and capital expenditure and have chosen to do so to preserve our capacity to pay out employee entitlements should this be necessary in the event of restructuring.
22. What proportion of job cuts at your institution are estimated to be a result of a drop in student enrolments?	At this stage, we have not cut jobs as a result of a drop in student enrolments; rather we have left vacancies unattended.
23. How many highly paid executive staff will be made redundant in your institution?	We are in the process of navigating change plans with the NTEU which will determine the number of highly paid staff that will leave the University. A number of management roles have been held vacant, including that of Provost, and the Executive have incurred a 20% pay reduction.
24. Will they be offered voluntary redundancies?	This will be determined through the change consultation process.

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25. How have your sources of corporate funding been affected by COVID?	Credit is tighter given the uncertainty around the University's funding from the Commonwealth and international student income.																																																																
26. To what extent have your other sources of funding been affected - reduced or increased, and by how much?	Student accommodation remains partially vacant with some space set aside for quarantine and others having reduced capacity to accommodate distancing. Campus retail and commercial activity combined with accommodation vacancy is forecast down approximately \$50 million from normal expectations.																																																																
<p>27. What restrictions exist on funding – for what amounts, from what sources and what are those restrictions?</p> <p>(a) Please provide a breakdown of aggregate funding from all sources for the previous three years and forward estimates for the next three years including:</p> <p>(b) government funding,  (c) corporate donations,  (d) bequests,  (e) commercial activities carried out by the University,  (f) student fees - both domestic and overseas,  (g) academic grants (provide sources), and  (h) all others.</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="790 400 2011 683"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="790 400 857 424">Notes</th> <th data-bbox="857 400 1429 424">Funding / Income (in millions)</th> <th data-bbox="1429 400 1518 424">2017</th> <th data-bbox="1518 400 1608 424">2018</th> <th data-bbox="1608 400 1697 424">2019</th> <th data-bbox="1697 400 1877 424">2020 (forecast)</th> <th data-bbox="1877 400 2011 424">2021-2023</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 424 857 472"></td> <td 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Income</td> <td data-bbox="1429 520 1518 544">22</td> <td data-bbox="1518 520 1608 544">18</td> <td data-bbox="1608 520 1697 544">19</td> <td data-bbox="1697 520 1877 544">15</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 544 857 568"></td> <td data-bbox="857 544 1429 568">Student Fees – Domestic and Overseas (incl Student Amenities)</td> <td data-bbox="1429 544 1518 568">1,094</td> <td data-bbox="1518 544 1608 568">1,222</td> <td data-bbox="1608 544 1697 568">1,398</td> <td data-bbox="1697 544 1877 568">1,433</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 568 857 592">2</td> <td data-bbox="857 568 1429 592">Research Grants (ARC, NHMRC, Other)</td> <td data-bbox="1429 568 1518 592">317</td> <td data-bbox="1518 568 1608 592">346</td> <td data-bbox="1608 568 1697 592">378</td> <td data-bbox="1697 568 1877 592">376</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="790 592 857 616"></td> <td data-bbox="857 592 1429 616">All Others, fines, cost recoveries, funded positions etc</td> <td data-bbox="1429 592 1518 616">188</td> <td 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of which restrict expenditure to a specific purpose.  2: Research grant income is tied to specific grant purposes and must be acquitted to the funder only for the purpose for which the grant was made.</p> <p data-bbox="790 836 2011 884">2021-2023 Income: Please note that these figures are only indicative and that given the changing environment this year and in 2021-2023, the University is not in a position to give more detail.</p>	Notes	Funding / Income (in millions)	2017	2018	2019	2020 (forecast)	2021-2023		Government Funding (Cwlth Grants, State Govt Grants, CGS, RBG)	524	520	526	529	See notes	1	Donations and Bequests	80	81	78	104	1	Endowment Income	142	136	213	0		Business and Commercial Income	22	18	19	15		Student Fees – Domestic and Overseas (incl Student Amenities)	1,094	1,222	1,398	1,433	2	Research Grants (ARC, NHMRC, Other)	317	346	378	376		All Others, fines, cost recoveries, funded positions etc	188	197	224	150		<b>Total</b>	<b>2,368</b>	<b>2,521</b>	<b>2,836</b>	<b>2,608</b>	<b>8,321 –</b>							<b>8,752</b>
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