

Mr David Shoebridge MLC  
Chair, Public Accountability Committee  
Legislative Council  
NSW Parliament  
Sydney NSW 2000  
[public.accountability@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:public.accountability@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Shoebridge,

**Subject:** Clarification of evidence given at the Inquiry into the *Integrity, efficacy and value for money of NSW Government grant programs*.

I write to advise of clarifications to evidence given by myself at the Public Accountability Committee Inquiry hearing on the *Integrity, efficacy and value for money of NSW Government grant programs* on 26 April 2021.

**Clarification of the number of Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund Stage One projects not supported by the Commonwealth**

When asked about the Commonwealth “approved and rejected projects” under the Stage One Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund, I affirmed the statement made by Mr Shoebridge that 10 or 11 projects were rejected by the Commonwealth. The statement is recorded on page 49 of the uncorrected transcript.

I would like to clarify that under the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund Stage One early co-funded projects:

- 52 Bushfire Industry Recovery Package - Sector Development projects were put forward to the Commonwealth. Two of these projects were not supported by the Commonwealth.
- 38 fast-tracked priority local infrastructure projects were put forward to the Commonwealth. Eight of these projects were not supported by the Commonwealth; five were withdrawn or funded from other sources; and three have not been announced.

In total, 72 Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund Stage One early co-funded projects endorsed by the Commonwealth have been announced. The 72 projects consist of 50 Bushfire Industry Recovery Package – Sector Development projects, and 22 fast-tracked priority local infrastructure projects.

**Clarification of the project announced separately to the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund Stage One early co-funding announcement in early November 2020**

When asked about the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund stage one early co-funding announcement made in November 2020, I stated that 71 projects were announced at the time, with one project subsequently being announced separately. I stated that I believed the project announced separately was \$3 million for a package of three community halls. The statement is recorded on page 31 of the uncorrected transcript.



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The \$3 million for the community halls was announced separately on 13 November 2020 after the initial announcement on 2 November 2020. While the project funding amount and the locations specified during the line of questioning was factually correct, I would like to clarify the community halls was included in the initial 71 projects for \$177 million. The project that was withheld in the initial announcement on 2 November 2020 was the \$2.9 million Tumbarumba Mill Optimisation Project submitted by Hyne Timber under the Bushfire Industry Recovery Programs – Sector Development Grants. Stage One early co-funded projects now total 72 projects for \$180 million.

Yours sincerely,

Jonathan Wheaton  
Executive Director, Regional Programs Unit  
Public Works Advisory & Regional Development  
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