



The Hon. Mark Banasiak MLC  
Chair, Portfolio Committee No. 4  
NSW Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

22 April 2024

CC: the Hon. Steve Kamper MLA  
Minister for Sport

Dear Mark,

**Evidence of Witness Appearing Before Committee**

I am writing to bring to the Committee's attention an important matter of witness integrity arising from the PC4 Budget Estimates on 20 February with Minister Kamper and his officials.

There is no point having these Estimates if the witnesses run cover for the government and fail to answer questions directly and honestly. The bureaucrats attending are under oath and have a responsibility to the parliament to provide relevant information as sought by MLCs.

You may recall that I questioned Karen Jones, Chief Executive of the Office of Sport, at length as to whether there was enough land at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre (SIEC) at Horsley Park to accommodate the new proposed racehorse training facility arising from the ATC's plans for selling Rosehill.

Ms Jones was evasive (see attached transcript, pages 12-14), saying "I am not prepared to speculate today about what can and can't fit (on the site)". This was despite her saying she had walked the site with the ATC when obviously, the most basic issue to be addressed was the size of the site. If it was too small then the ATC would have to look elsewhere, that is, creating an embarrassing problem for the Minns Government (following its announcement on 7 December that Rosehill's trainers would be moved to SIEC Horsley Park). I asked Ms Jones, "You walked around the site but you've got no opinion (on whether it is big enough)" and she answered, "No".

I also asked her "What advice have you provided so far" about the SIEC plan, and she replied, "We have not as yet". I then asked, "So there's no work undertaken on the feasibility of it?" and Ms Jones answered, "Not from the Office of Sport".

But the Office of Sport, in fact, did have an opinion and had already provided advice to at least two government agencies. Document D24/15462 (see attached) from Scott Farlow's SO52 about the sale of Rosehill recorded Key Meeting Outcomes when the Office of Sport met with the Greater Sydney Parklands on 25 January. The 3rd and 4th outcomes said the "Office of Sport noted that Investment NSW will be attending the SIEC on 2 February 2024 to review and understand how to accommodate the above proposal, including the extent of required parking areas for cars/horse trailers/RV

vehicles, including accommodation on site. The Office of Sport noted that the above proposal may require additional land to support the new centre of excellence at SIEC."

This is the information Ms Jones should have provided the Committee in response to my questions. That is, the Office of Sport had told the Greater Sydney Parklands that additional land may be required for the ATC/Government proposal; and that a further meeting with Investment NSW had been arranged for 2 February specifically to look at issues concerning the size and scope of the site. Ms Jones should have told us the outcome of the Investment NSW meeting, especially given Investment NSW's carriage of the ATC's Unsolicited Proposal.

I believe Ms Jones has not been frank and honest in her evidence under oath, and the Committee should take appropriate action.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Latham MLC



## Sharon Paudel

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**From:** Oriana Senese <Oriana.Senese@gsp.nsw.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 25 January 2024 7:37 PM  
**To:** Cathy Gorman-Brown; Mark Fulcher; Dave Porter; Nathan Jay; Anthea Gardner  
**Cc:** Ben Tax  
**Subject:** Equestrian Centres across Greater Sydney Parklands - Office of Sport Meeting - Key Outcomes / Actions

**Caution:** External Email

Dear Office of Sport colleagues

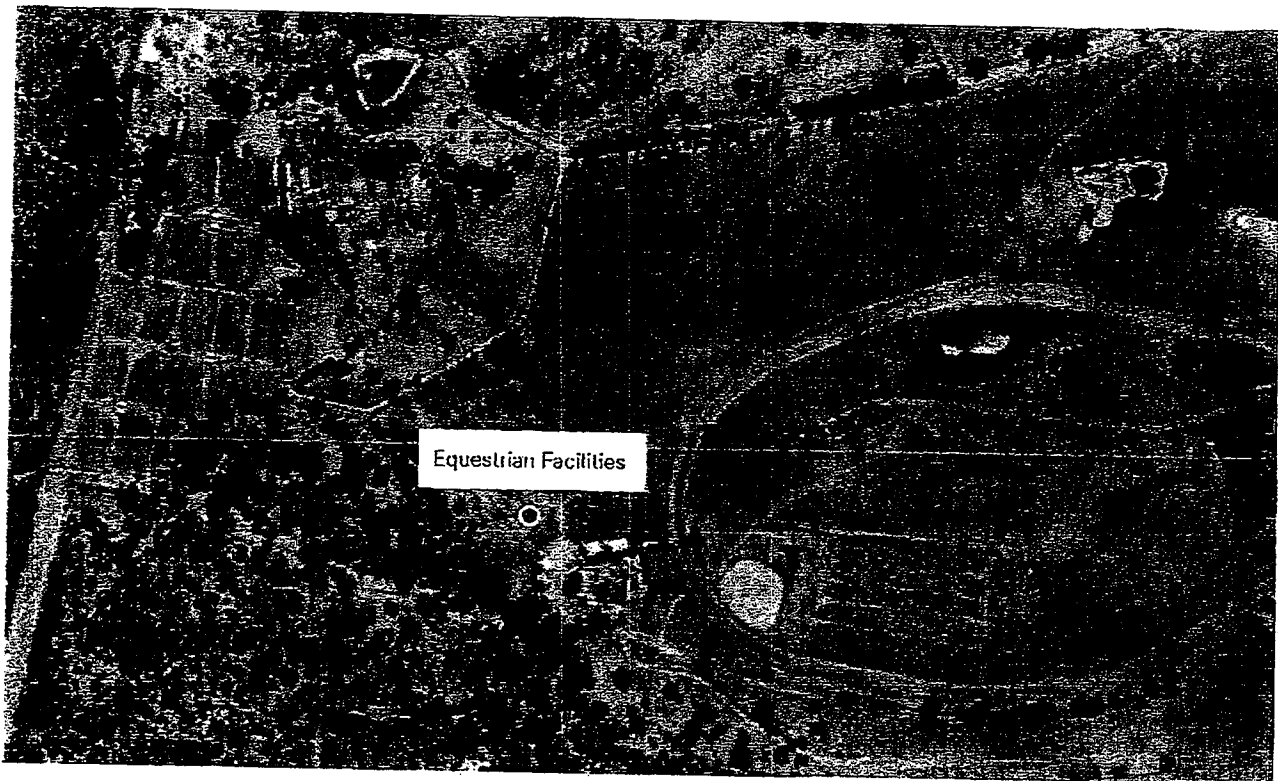
Thank you for meeting with GSP today (25/01/2024) and we appreciated the discussion and advice.

### Key Meeting Outcomes / Actions:

- **GSP noted** the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the following:
  - NSW Govt announcement for SIEC for an understanding of the proposal
  - Seek advice on specialist consultants who could undertake a strategic review of EC's and Horse Agistments within the GSP parklands portfolio
  - Request a site visit and team meeting for the GSP Property Services Team to view SIEC
- **OoS noted** they were only informed a few hours before the NSW Govt. announcement of the Rosehill Racecourse relocation proposal for a centre of excellence horse training facility at Horsley Park to accommodate 300 to 400 horses from Rosehill Gardens stables.
- **OoS noted** that Investment NSW will be attending the SIEC on 2 February 2024, to review and understand how to accommodate the above proposal, including the extent of required parking areas for cars / horse trailers / RV vehicles, including accommodation on site.
- **OoS noted** that the above proposal may require additional land to support this new centre of excellence at SIEC, for further discussion with GSP.
- **OoS agreed** a follow-up meeting would be required to discuss the Lease with WSPT.
- **GSP noted** that there is the Equestrian Centres at Fernhill Estate, Centennial Park, including land in Western Sydney Parklands north of Power St, Glendenning that has horse agistment.
- **OoS noted** that there are a variety of EC's across Greater Sydney – such as SIEC, Camden, Hawkesbury, Cobbitty – adding that the regional venue at Tamworth is the events competitor for SIEC
- **OoS agreed** to provide a plan of the Equestrian Centres across Greater Sydney / NSW.
- **OoS agreed** to provide a list of consultants that can provide advice on equestrian for GSP's leasing strategy review
- **GSP requested** if a site visit and team meeting was possible for Wed. 7 Feb. OoS confirmed that this date was suitable.

Fernhill Estate – more information refer <https://www.westernsyneyparklands.com.au/assets/Fernhill-Estate-Foundation-Plan-of-Management-to-2026-compressed.pdf>

**Equestrian Centre at Fernhill Estate Mulgoa**



Regards

Oriana Senese

**From:** Oriana Senese

**Sent:** Wednesday, 17 January 2024 10:51 AM

**To:** Michael Toohey <michael.toohey@sport.nsw.gov.au>

**Cc:** Nathan Jay <nathan.jay@gsp.nsw.gov.au>; Anthea Gardner <anthea.gardner@gsp.nsw.gov.au>

**Subject:** Equestrian Centres across Greater Sydney Parklands - request for M/Teams Meeting

Hi Michael

Hope you are keeping well and had a good holiday break.

I am reaching out to you to ask if you are available for a short M/Teams meeting to discuss below items:

- Greater Sydney Parklands have on their lands 3 x Equestrian Centres (EC) in Centennial Park, Western Sydney Parklands and Fernhill Estate, as follows:
  - Centennial Park EC lease expires in 2025 – <https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/sports/centennial-parklands-equestrian-centre>
  - Fernhill Estate EC, current tenants on holdover – <https://www.truelocal.com.au/business/fernhill-estate-equestrian-centre/mulgoa>
  - Sydney International EC, within Western Sydney Parklands under the control of Office of Sport with current proposal by NSW Govt. of Rosehill Racecourse relocation with the proposal for a centre of excellence horse training facility at Horsley Park to accommodate the relocation of 300 to 400 horses from Rosehill Gardens stables - <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/proposal-to-relocate-rosehill-racecourse>



We wish to seek your advice on any potential consultants that could help GSP in undertaking a strategic review of our EC's and provide advice on the leasing strategy going forward.

And or work in partnership with Office of Sport in the above proposal at Sydney International EC, do you have a consultant team currently on-board providing advice?

Please let me know of a few date options for M/Teams Meeting.

Thanks kindly

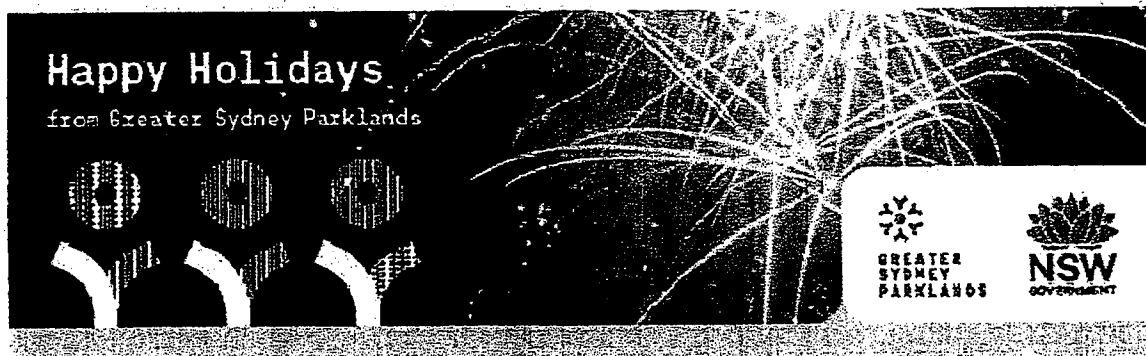
Kind Regards

**Oriana Senese**  
**Senior Manager Property Portfolio**  
**Greater Sydney Parklands**

M [REDACTED] | E [oriana.senese@gsp.nsw.gov.au](mailto:oriana.senese@gsp.nsw.gov.au)

A Level 1, 6 and 8 Parramatta Square , 10 Darcy Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150

*Greater Sydney Parklands acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Lands, Waters and Sky of Greater Sydney and pay our respect to all Elders past, present and emerging. We extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Greater Sydney today.*



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**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** But my question is: Are you aware that in the Northern Territory, ACT, Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria that that information isn't provided in the same way it is in New South Wales where people can be targeted in the way that they have been in New South Wales?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I'm not aware specifically in terms of the differences between the way—what information they do provide and we provide.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** Have you been fully briefed on this issue as well, Minister, or have you sought a briefing from Mr McLachlan?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Probably sought a briefing, yes, and have been spoken to about it, but in terms of the particular detail and the comparison between what data is provided in one State and all the other States compared to ours, you know, I haven't got that sitting in my head—

**The Hon. WES FANG:** It's good to see he's over the detail.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** —in terms of the differences between the data.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** What steps is your department taking that you're aware of, then, to ensure compliance with the privacy protections that have currently been put in place?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Look, Mr McLachlan, again, just to give the correct detail there.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** I won't use Mr Latham's time.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** It's the department.

**The Hon. EMMA HURST:** I will speak with Mr McLachlan this afternoon.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Latham?

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Just back on Wentworth Park, isn't the key fact that the decision of the previous Government to terminate the lease, or not renew it, was predicated on GBOTA wanting to leave Wentworth Park? GBOTA has now flipped and said they want to stay and that they're not making any plans to move anywhere else. It's the pre-eminent greyhound racing facility in the State. It's a big deal, a big project and a lot of money to move them to a different facility, along with the football teams that play in the centre of the racetrack. Why would the Government want to even be thinking about moving GBOTA now that they've said they don't want to move?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** That's right, Mr Latham. That's why we're looking at a variety of options—because there has been an interest to continue. We're looking at what that would look like, how we can better activate and get better value out of that site, and how we could all work together to do that and have a mix, potentially, of community offerings there—maybe even revitalise activity and make it a place that the community can enjoy, and attract tourism to that site.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** I'm a tourist from Western Sydney, but I visit there and really enjoy it, so I hope it stays there. Wouldn't it cost billions for the Government to move the facility, given the cost of the grandstand, the track and the facilities? You couldn't expect GBOTA to do that.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** These are all things—

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** The Government is not examining the billions that are needed to move them to a different facility?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** What we're looking at is getting the best outcome and if it can be a great financial outcome for the State. We should also consider that it's prudent, if we can get a positive outcome there without it being of enormous cost to the State and the enormous cost to move organisations, I think—

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** But there's no work underway on costing moving them to a different site?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Not at this stage, no. Absolutely not.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** On a different relocation proposal, the Government has received an unsolicited proposal from the Australian Turf Club to sell Rosehill racecourse and the land around there for housing, and to move the training facilities, which are quite substantial—it houses the facilities of Chris Waller, Australia's leading thoroughbred racing trainer—to Crown land in and around the Sydney International Equestrian Centre at Horsley Park. What work has been undertaken on the feasibility of that?



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**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I'll pass that on to Karen.

**KAREN JONES:** The unsolicited proposal process is actually managed through the Cabinet Office, not necessarily the Office of Sport. Of course, we are absolutely aware of the desire of the ATC to build a centre of excellence in a co-located fashion at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre at Horsley Park. We are happy to provide advice in relation to that co-location, as well as any sort of consultation process with the stakeholders.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** What advice have you provided so far?

**KAREN JONES:** We have not as yet, because the unsolicited proposal process is in its very early stages, and the Office of Sport—

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** So there's no work undertaken on the feasibility of it?

**KAREN JONES:** Not from the Office of Sport.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** A proper racehorse training track is an enormous space of land, along with the stables, the walking machines and the swimming pools. Is there enough land on this site? I would've doubted there's enough land on this facility to accommodate the relocation. Is that right?

**KAREN JONES:** The actual planning of that facility and the spatial requirements of that facility are not yet defined. I know that the ATC has been doing stakeholder consultation based on their own desires for the area. But in terms of the Office of Sport providing a specific and formal response to that, we have not yet been asked to do so.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** No-one has looked at the feasibility of the size of the land, if equestrian facilities need to be moved out, or the cost of it? Nobody has done anything on it so far?

**KAREN JONES:** I think you'll find that the ATC is currently out there doing some consultation on that. They might already have some spatial plans.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Have they consulted with you?

**KAREN JONES:** We have met with them, and also with the Cabinet Office, in line with the unsolicited proposal process. But for the Office of Sport, we will be providing advice once we are formally asked to.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** What was the outcome of your meeting?

**KAREN JONES:** The outcome of the meeting was a walk around the site—just familiarising everybody with the site.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Do you think there's enough land there for a major training facility?

**KAREN JONES:** I think it's too early to tell at this stage.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Too early to tell.

**KAREN JONES:** Yes, too early to tell.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** What is your own estimation from having walked around the site?

**KAREN JONES:** I don't have the specific dimensions or the plans of what the ATC want to put on that site. Again, that's all through the unsolicited proposal process.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** They want to put on there the training facility that they've got at Rosehill. Could you fit Rosehill on the land that you've got at SIEC?

**KAREN JONES:** I wouldn't say that it is an exact replica of what they would want. Obviously, being the Australian Turf Club, and anybody that would want to move to a new location, they would also like to contemporise their facilities and make sure that they're—

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Yes, make it bigger and more modern.

**KAREN JONES:** I don't know if bigger is also what they're seeking. I think that is a conclusion that, perhaps, you're drawing and not necessarily a position for the Office of Sport to make at this stage.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** I've spoken to some of the trainers, and they're expecting a more modern facility, with updated facilities for their horses, that would be bigger than what they've got at the moment. Could you fit Rosehill onto vacant land at SIEC?

**KAREN JONES:** That's not the proposal. The proposal—



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**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** I'm asking could you? It is certainly what has been spoken of publicly.

**KAREN JONES:** I'm not prepared to comment on that, Mr Latham.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** You walked around the site, but you've got no opinion?

**KAREN JONES:** No, Mr Latham. That's not the proposal. The proposal is for a centre of excellence on our site, not a brand-new racecourse.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** No, the racecourse is the training facility. You understand that they get up in the morning at 4.00 a.m., and they train the horses and run around the track that exists at Rosehill right now. It's a racetrack that's also used as a training facility. Is there enough space for a training facility at site?

**KAREN JONES:** Mr Latham, we will consider the proposal that is put to us through the unsolicited proposal process. I am not prepared to speculate today about what can and can't fit.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** What about the concern of Chris Waller that it's too hot at Horsley Park, and—he'd prefer if Government did this—to relocate to Melbourne, which would be a tragedy for New South Wales racing and tourism and investment and income, because we would lose Australia's best racehorse trainer to another State.

**KAREN JONES:** I would suggest that the temperature difference between Rosehill and Horsley Park is marginal. In fact, we actually have a weather station actually located on our site, so if whoever is making those representations here—sorry, I forgot his name. But whoever is making representations to you, if they want to have a look at that weather station—

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** You forgot his name—Chris Waller.

**KAREN JONES:** Chris Waller. My apologies for that.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** You don't know who Chris Waller is?

**KAREN JONES:** I do know who Chris Waller is.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Have you had any consultation with him to address his concerns? He is talking about moving to Melbourne. I think we need to get ahead of the curve here and make sure we keep Australia's biggest and best racehorse trainer in our State. I mean, the whole V'landys model of racing is we fight against Victoria. I think it's foolish to do so. Why would we be putting forward a proposal now where we lose our biggest and best trainer to the other State that is supposed to be our enemy?

**KAREN JONES:** Mr Latham, I am going to take that more as a comment as opposed to a question.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Fair enough. I suppose it was a comment.

**KAREN JONES:** From the Office of Sport's point of view, we will follow the right process—the unsolicited proposal process—and we will consider the proposal once it's tabled to us.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Is there a timetable for turning the unsolicited proposal into something other than a thought bubble?

**KAREN JONES:** That's a question for the Cabinet Office not for the Office of Sport.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** We unfortunately lost Minister Crakanthorp over this, but has there been any progress with the Hunter-Newcastle sporting precinct redevelopment—a business plan from Venues NSW?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** With Venues NSW, I just want to say that we've focused on our business model over the past 12 months. It's been about getting the greatest financial outcome on our asset base, and it's all about generating and continuing to generate positive revenue moving forward so we can work on upgrading and improvements and changes, whether it's the Hunter or whether it's down on the South Coast at WIN Stadium there and improving those precincts and doing what we can do there. We are currently looking at that at the moment. The Hunter Park redevelopment is a transformational project that the people of Newcastle and the wider Hunter deserve. Venues NSW has concluded the initial stage of planning for the revitalised precinct, including a new entertainment centre and a relocation of harness racing that will result in a connected and thriving sports and entertainment destination, and Hunter Park will attract local, national and international sport and entertainment events and turbocharge the Hunter visitor economy.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** So the Government is committed to this redevelopment. When do you expect the final business plan to be available and made public to the people of Newcastle?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I'll take that on notice, if that's okay.



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**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** On another great sporting venture, are you happy with the success of the UFC, which I find, where I live, very popular. It fills the pubs and everyone is interested in it. Has there been an evaluation of the success of the initial UFC in Sydney, and when is the next one coming up, because we're all looking forward to it?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** That was funded by Destination NSW, but I was exceptionally happy with the success of it.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** What does the evaluation show?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** It was something like 100 million people tuned in to the City of Sydney, and I was quite surprised by the support for UFC by, you know, the amount of women that love the fight, the professional people and the cross-section of the community which really got behind it. We had, I think, 18,000 spectators there on the day, who were able to enjoy the event. The next event, I don't know if the date has been set yet. I'm not sure about that, but Destination NSW will have that information for you. But it was an amazing success and there are another two events under the agreement with the UFC.

**The Hon. MARK LATHAM:** Fantastic. That's great news. Thank you.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Minister, I will pick up from Mr Latham's line of questioning with respect to Rosehill and the Australian Turf Club. You were at a boardroom lunch with the Australian Turf Club on 14 November. Was there any discussion from them about the sale of Rosehill at that stage and the redevelopment for housing?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** There was absolutely no discussion with me in relation to—

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** No? Has anyone had any discussions with you prior to the announcement about the redevelopment of Rosehill for housing?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** There have been general discussions with many people around that. It's been a big-ticket item in the media, so—

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Prior to the announcement—not post the announcement but prior to the announcement?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** No.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** No? No discussions with Morris Iemma or Graham Richardson in that regard?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Absolutely not.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Minister, what is "affordable housing" defined as?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Affordable housing is, essentially, a discounted rental home that can be available to people—you know, for key workers—that require housing.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Okay. So you think that is the actual definition?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Generally. I mean, it's housing that's available for members of the community, such as key workers, that are requiring housing and it has a discount environment. The owner of the property is bound to a discounted framework, and generally—

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Minister, let me help you out with this a little bit. So are you a discount to market rate kind of guy or are you a percentage of income kind of guy when it comes to affordable housing? Where do you think it should line up?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** A percentage.

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Of income?

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** What are you referring to?

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Well, it's affordable housing, so how do you think it should be defined? Is it defined as a discount to market rate or is it defined as a percentage of a person's income?

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Give him some time to read the note first.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I haven't really thought about the definition or which one—how it should be defined, but I'll—

**The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW:** Minister, this is very important because you are in fact—