



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 7 – PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-2026

Supplementary questions

Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment

Climate Change, and Energy, and Environment, and Heritage
(Sharpe)

Hearing: Friday 29 August 2025

Answers due by: 5.00 pm Thursday 25 September 2025

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BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-2026

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

Questions from Dr Amanda Cohn MLC
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Wood heaters

- (1) The EPA are conducting local government behavioural change research to support the move away from wood heaters. What are the details of this research?
 - (a) What is the implementation timeline of the research findings?
 - (b) Is there publicly available information about the research?
 - i. If so, where?

Veolia

- (2) The EPA has recently varied an existing pollution reduction program attached to the Woodlawn Landfill Environment Protection Licence in response to elevated salinity, nutrients, TDS and PFAS confirmed at Allianoyonyiga Creek, Crisps Creek and Mulwaree River. In addition, Veolia has previously breached their environment protection license at the Woodlawn Eco Precinct. Veolia are the proponents of an energy -from-waste incinerator. Is Veolia required to comply with EPA regulation of its existing activities before approval of its proposed incinerator?

Questions from the Opposition

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENERGY

Questions to Minister Sharpe

- (3) On Page 58 of Transgrid's *Meeting System Strength Requirements in NSW PACR*, it is stated: "Transgrid expects regulations to be made by the NSW Government that expressly override Transgrid's obligations under the NER in relation to the system strength for the first 5.84 GW of IBR within Central West Orana REZ." When did the Minister first become aware that Transgrid was seeking release from its system strength obligations for part of CWO REZ? Who communicated this to you?
- (4) Does the Minister believe that the recent amendments to the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment (EII) Act* have achieved the effect of this regulation change anticipated by Transgrid?

- (5) On page 62 of Transgrid's PACR, it is stated: "Network synchronous condensers are assumed to be available to be in-service from March 2029. This is considered the earliest credible timing and assumes fast progression through regulatory and procurement processes." Can the minister clarify whether the government's efforts to "move them as quickly as possible" is expected to be able to meet this timeline?
- (6) Has Transgrid at any time since 2020 approached the Government seeking \$700 million, or any other financial support, for system strength or related projects? If so, when, how much, and what was the Government's response?
- (7) During Budget Estimates, the Minister said "There's a need for five synchronous condensers. We're trying to move them as quickly as possible." Can the minister confirm which five synchronous condensers these are? (Relative to the locations, sizes outline in the map from Transgrid's PACR)
- (8) Does the Minister accept that the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Amendment (Priority Network Projects) Bill 2025* was necessary to allow orders to be placed for synchronous condensers?
- (9) Can the Minister confirm that the Project Assessment Conclusions Report for System Strength in NSW — now under dispute — was the intended mechanism by which costs for system strength infrastructure would ultimately be recovered from consumers?
- (10) Was the Minister made aware of any correspondence from the Australian Energy Regulator on the 30th or 31st of July that indicated a heightened risk of objections being raised to Transgrid's PACR?
- (11) It has been reported that multiple small businesses across the Riverina report they have not been paid, or have faced months-long delays in being paid, for work on Transgrid's \$3.6 billion EnergyConnect project in The Weekly Times by Nikki Reynolds on 26 August 2025. Will the government ensure that contractors are paid promptly, rather than being passed back and forth between Transgrid and their contractor Elecnor?
- (12) On 8th of January 2025, Transgrid released an update confirming that they had entered into a new "fixed price contract with Elecnor" after Elecnor had previously left the project at a project cost approximately \$1.5billion higher than originally anticipated, and approved by the regulator. On the 10th of January, an AER official wrote to a representative of Transgrid regarding PEC saying "it would be good if we could get more information on how much the overspend is and how much is intended to be included in the reopener as previous meetings noted that Transgrid was not intending to include all of the PEC overspend in the

reopener.”(FOI 1008087). Is the government aware of how much of the Project Energy Connect overspend is, and how much Transgrid will be able to recover through the regulatory process, and when this will occur?

- (13) Will the NSW government guarantee it will not intervene in Project Energy Connect, by declaring this project a priority network project and issuing directions for its completion, thus removing it from the RIT-T framework, through which it has already been assessed?
- (14) Has the NSW government been in discussion with the Australian Energy Finance Corporation regarding the financial position and credit rating of Transgrid?
- (15) Has the NSW government been in discussion with the Future Fund regarding the financial position and credit rating of Transgrid?
- (16) Does the government claim that the completion of Project Energy Connect at the new higher price is in the best interest of consumers?
- (17) Does the government maintain that the NSW Roadmap is still on track to deliver lower cost electricity to NSW electricity consumers?
- (18) Can the government explain how Transgrid would be able to fund the completion of Project Energy Connect under fixed price contracts without impairing their financial position in the absence of further financial or regulatory assistance?
- (19) Has Transgrid indicated to the government, either to the Minister or to EnergyCo, that they would be subject to a credit ratings downgrade, fall into breach of bond covenants, or become insolvent should they be required to meet their obligations to provide system security without the passage of recent updates to the EII Act?
- (20) Did Transgrid ask the NSW government to completely cover the cost of the five synchronous condensers that the minister referred to as needing to be advanced as soon as possible?
- (21) Does the Minister maintain that the compressed air solution in Broken Hill is in consumers best interests?
- (22) Has the government received any information which could indicate that Transgrid is currently trading insolvent, or that at some point in the future will become insolvent without receiving cash injections from equity holders, government, or legislative intervention such as the recent amendments to the EII Act?

- (23) The Minister has said in Estimates that she is “very familiar” with Mr Redman’s repeated warnings that Transgrid cannot invest if it blows its credit rating. Given that knowledge, has your Government investigated Transgrid’s credit rating and solvency and its capacity to meet its NER obligations?
- (24) Can the government rule out taking an equity position in Transgrid if necessary to secure the timely acquisition of system security equipment?
- (25) When will the Minister decide whether an extension to Eraring will be necessary?
- (26) If an extension to Eraring is necessary, will consumers be able to avert expenditure on synchronous condensers and other system security investments that are currently being advanced on the assumption that Eraring will close in 2027?
- (27) If the Minister makes directions for the procurement of system strength equipment under the updated Electricity Infrastructure Investment act, will this remove those investments from the RIT-T process being advanced by Transgrid for those investments?
- (28) The Minister has said “I really hope that if there is other legislation that is required, you will support it as necessary.” Is the Minister planning on advancing further legislation to ensure system security is maintained? Is it possible that the previous bill was incomplete, insufficient, or incompatible with other parts of regulation or legislation?

Questions to EnergyCo CEO

- (29) On Page 58 of Transgrid’s *Meeting System Strength Requirements in NSW* PACR, it is stated: “Transgrid expects regulations to be made by the NSW Government that expressly override Transgrid’s obligations under the NER in relation to the system strength for the first 5.84 GW of IBR within Central West Orana REZ.” When did EnergyCo first become aware that Transgrid was seeking release from its system strength obligations for part of CWO REZ?
- (30) Does EnergyCo believe that the recent amendments to the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment (EII) Act* have achieved the effect of this regulation change anticipated by Transgrid?
- (31) Transgrid disclosed in page 28 of its system strength PADR that “in early 2023 EnergyCo informed [Transgrid] that it planned to 'self-remediate' system strength for Stage 1 of the CWO REZ (5.84GW of IBRs) as part of its build, which will be implemented by ACEREZ”. On what date in early 2023 did EnergyCo first inform Transgrid of this decision?
- (32) Can EnergyCo publicly release the full text of the 24 October 2023 letter to Transgrid which confirmed this arrangement?

- (33) On page 30 of the Transgrid's PACR, it is stated in regard to the timing of synchronous condensers for CWO REZ: "The updated timing was provided by EnergyCo in April 2025." Can EnergyCo clarify what that timing is, and what new information drove the update?
- (34) Does the update in the timing for these seven CWO REZ synchronous condensers affect or drive the schedule need for other synchronous condensers outside the CWO REZ?
- (35) On page 8 of Transgrid's PACR it is stated about the credible portfolio options: "Portfolio options 1 - 3 rely heavily on gas re-dispatch to meet the need in years 2028/29 and 2029/30. Transgrid's market modelling includes a daily NEM-wide gas constraint (consistent with AEMO's 2024 ISP) and a specific additional pipeline constraint for two NSW gas generators (consistent with GHD advice). However, a comprehensive assessment of gas pipeline capacity and gas supply availability was out of scope for this assessment. As such, modelling may over-estimate the possible re-dispatch of gas, which may result in an underestimate for forecast risks of system strength gaps." Has the government commissioned modelling which incorporates credible constraints on the redispatch of gas which could find a closer estimate the risk of system strength gaps?
- (36) Does the government have any credible plans which could close the full extent of probably system strength gaps without the extension of Eraring?
- (37) Why did EnergyCo determine that ACERENZ, rather than Transgrid, should take on responsibility for synchronous condensers and system strength procurement for the Central-West Orana REZ?
- (38) How does EnergyCo justify handing this obligation to ACERENZ was in the best interests of consumers, given Transgrid is legally responsible under NER clause S5.1.14?
- (39) On page 3 of the August 2025 Summary report of the Revenue Determination for the ACERENZ – Main Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone network project, it is stated that "In preparing this summary report, we provided ACERENZ and EnergyCo an opportunity to identify information which they claim should not be disclosed. We have considered the requirements of clause 53(6) of the EII Regulation in our decision to publish this summary report." Can EnergyCo clarify which information they claimed should not be disclosed in the summary report, and why it should not be disclosed?
- (40) Is there any precedent for the full Revenue Determination to be withheld from the public?

- (41) Can the government explain why the “Return on capital” column in table 7.1 of the Summary Report is populated entirely with zeros, when it would be expected that the owner-operator of the infrastructure would receive some return on capital?
- (42) Under what powers of the *Electricity Infrastructure Investment Act 2020*, as in force prior to the August 2025 amendments, did EnergyCo authorise ACERERZ to procure and contract for seven synchronous condensers?
- (43) If ACERERZ fails to deliver or maintain the synchronous condensers, who is ultimately accountable to consumers – ACERERZ, Transgrid, or the Minister?
- (44) What rate of return does EnergyCo expect ACERERZ to receive for synchronous condenser investments, and how does this compare with Transgrid’s regulated WACC under the AER’s Rate of Return Instrument?
- (45) In the Revenue Determination for ACERERZ CWO REZ project, the rate of return, capital cost build-up, CEFC loan terms, 35-year revenue schedule, expiry payment and adjustment mechanisms were withheld. The AER notes in page 2 of the Determination the “non-disclosure claims from EnergyCo and ACERERZ” in withholding such information. Why did EnergyCo consider it appropriate to ask the AER to conceal these items from consumers, when households will ultimately fund them, and why should public interest not prevail over ACERERZ’s claims of confidentiality?
- (46) How much of ACERERZ’s synchronous condenser and system strength costs will be funded by consumer bills versus generator access fees?
- (47) Why did EnergyCo support splitting system strength procurement across multiple different solutions of different size for the first 5.84GW of CWO REZ (7X240MVA, plus one 1050MVA Transgrid SynCon), with the remainder still to be determined, rather than bulk purchasing larger units through Transgrid to capture economies of scale?
- (48) In Transgrid’s PACR on page 58 it is stated: “Transgrid does not have confirmation on who will remediate IBR beyond the first 5.84 GW within Central West Orana REZ. As such, this PACR assumes that Transgrid is responsible for remediating future IBRs in the REZ”. When will EnergyCo determine the approach for the remainder of the ~14GW IBR projected in the CWO REZ?
- (49) Transgrid stated on page 32 in the system strength PACR that “Transgrid will not commit to the procurement of system strength solutions for New England REZ until EnergyCo’s approach has been confirmed.” What approach has EnergyCo taken to system strength

procurement in New England? If no decision has yet been made, when will EnergyCo decide and publicly announce its approach?

(50) What are the driving factors in determining EnergyCo's approach?

ENVIRONMENT

Coastal IFOA Protocol Changes

(51) Minister, can you confirm whether the recent changes to the greater glider protocol under the Coastal IFOA were formally signed off by both yourself and the Minister for Agriculture, as required under the Forestry Act 2012?

(a) If not, on what statutory authority did the EPA act unilaterally to impose new conditions?

(52) Do you accept that the EPA's protocol changes have materially reduced the volume of harvestable timber available under existing wood supply agreements?

(a) If so, why were these changes not brought to Cabinet or jointly approved at ministerial level before being enforced?

(b) Isn't it the case that the EPA, as a regulator, is tasked with enforcing the CIFOA – not rewriting its balance of environmental and wood supply obligations without ministerial approval?

(c) Do you believe this sets a precedent for the EPA to unilaterally change protocols with significant economic consequences without elected ministerial oversight?

(d) Why were industry stakeholders not consulted before these new protocols were imposed, given the clear impact on contractual supply obligations and mill operations?

(e) Will you commit to tabling the legal advice the EPA relied upon to justify making these changes without ministerial sign-off?

(f) Minister, are you aware that mills on the South Coast are already operating under capacity because of reduced wood supply, and these changes will worsen that situation?

(g) What assessment has been made of the job losses caused directly by these EPA-driven changes?

- (h) If it is established that the EPA exceeded its statutory powers in making these changes without ministerial approval, will you review exclusions put in place by under those new protocols.

Questions to the EPA

- (53) Can you confirm what statutory trigger or threshold event required the EPA to rewrite the site-specific protocols for greater glider protections under the Coastal IFOA?
- (54) Were any Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) or prosecution actions issued against Forestry Corporation in relation to alleged non-compliance with the previous greater glider protocols?
- (55) If no PINs or prosecutions were issued, what was the regulatory rationale for rewriting these protocols?
- (56) Isn't it the case that the previous protocols were already enforceable under the CIFOA framework, and changes were therefore discretionary rather than mandatory?
- (57) Did the EPA seek or obtain joint ministerial approval before issuing these new protocols, given their significant material impact on contracted wood supply?
 - (a) If not, why not?
- (58) Did you provide a briefing to the Minister ahead of those changes?
- (59) Did you recommend joint ministerial sign off as is required under the Forestry Act for those major protocol changes?
- (60) If they didn't meet the threshold for joint ministerial sign-off given the significant impact they have had on wood supply, what is your advice on what the threshold is for the EPA to make significant changes to the CIFOA.

Questions to the Secretary of DCCEEW

- (61) Why did the Department permit the EPA to introduce significant amendments to the CIFOA protocols at a time when the Government has committed to major forestry policy reform, including the new Forestry Industry Roadmap and the establishment of the Great Koala National Park?
- (62) If there were no penalties or compliance failures necessitating urgent change, what was the justification for fast-tracking new protocols instead of aligning them with these broader policy frameworks?

- (63) Has the Department undertaken an impact assessment of these changes on wood supply agreements, mill operations, and regional jobs before they were implemented?

Procurement Process – Improved Native Forestry Method

- (64) Minister, what was the procurement process used to appoint the consultant from ANU to develop the Improved Native Forestry Method?
- (65) Was the engagement subject to a public tender? If not, why was a direct appointment made?
- (66) What probity advice was sought to justify bypassing a public tender?
- (67) Which specific exemption under the NSW Procurement Board Directions was relied upon to justify direct sourcing?
- (68) Will you table the probity documentation?
- (69) Are you aware that the consultant directly appointed has publicly called for the end of public native forestry? How does the Government reconcile this with the requirement for independence?
- (70) How can the Government guarantee impartiality when the consultant has published material advocating against the very industry being regulated?
- (71) Why weren't consultants with alternative or balanced perspectives invited to tender?
- (72) Can you confirm whether other universities, consultancies, or forestry experts were considered for this engagement?
- (73) Was any market testing done to determine value for money?
- (74) Why was there no open process to allow other providers to compete?
- (75) Will you release the contract and terms of reference in full?
- (76) Does the Minister accept that commissioning an academic with a predetermined position undermines confidence in the process and suggests the outcome was pre-determined?
- (77) Why has the Improved Native Forestry Method excluded analysis of substitution effects, such as increased imports of hardwood from countries with weaker environmental standards?
- (78) Minister, how do you respond to concerns that this appointment process reflects anti-competitive behaviour, a lack of transparency, and poor governance, and risks undermining confidence in both NSW procurement integrity and forest carbon policy?

Native hardwood supply shortages

(79) Minister, on the 19 March 2025 – you stated in in an answer to question without notice in the house, quote:

Pentarch claims that decision is due to shortfalls in supply and that, year to date, the Forestry Corporation has only delivered 63 per cent of its contracted log volume. As I said previously in my answer, that is not a result of the koala hubs or the pending decision relating to the Great Koala National Park. Forestry Corporation has had challenges meeting its contracted log volumes for a number of years due to the 2019-20 bushfires, wet weather, flooding and other factors. From 2021 to 2024 the Koolkhan mill has been receiving less timber than their contracted supply. That lower supply is not a result of any decision regarding the Great Koala National Park.

- (a) Minister, where did you receive your advice that a lack of wood supply to forestry corporation customers on the NSW North Coast and a stand-down of timber workers at the Koolkhan Mill was due to exclusively to natural disasters?
- (b) Was it one of your advisors here that provided this advice?
- (c) Minister, do you stand by your previous comments in the house?
- (d) Minister, tabled is one of many letters from Forestry Corporation to its customers describing the exact reasons for the shortfall in delivery of contracted wood to its customers. They include:
 - the establishment of 106 ‘koala hubs’ in the Great Koala National Park (GKNP) assessment area;
 - the issuing of Site Specific Biodiversity Conditions (SSBCs) for Southern Greater Gliders;
 - impacts on hardwood plantation production in relation to unique and special wildlife values under the Plantation and Reafforestation Act 1999;
 - impacts on native forest production resulting from legal challenges by third parties, contentious areas and forest protests; and
 - recent Ministerial Direction of 17 December 2024.

Minister, in light of this, do you want to correct your statement at all?

Assessing change in tree composition on state forests

- (80) Minister, do you have access to briefings from the NSW Natural Resource Commission?
- (81) Do you believe there is scientific consensus about the independent work done by the NRC and contributors to their projects like the University of Newcastle?
- (82) Have you received a briefing on the latest work by the NRC who review the Coastal IFOA for the Government – it's titled "Assessing Change in Tree Composition in State Forests"?
- (83) Given this work directly affects and overlaps the assessment process for the creation of a Great Koala National Park will it be included as key information in the boundaries and creation of a new national park?

INTEGRITY OF THE INFM METHOD

Questions for the Secretary of DCCEEW

- (84) Can the Department explain how the INFM Method can credibly meet the Offset Integrity Standard of *Additionality*, when the NSW Government has already announced the conversion of up to 176,000 hectares of public native forest into a new National Park in the North East — meaning any carbon abatement would have occurred irrespective of the method?
- (85) Given that the INFM Method is explicitly inapplicable in Victoria and Western Australia (where native forest harvesting has already ceased) and both Queensland and Tasmania have ruled it out, how can the Department justify its claim that this method meets the Scale criteria of the Offset Integrity Standards? Isn't it simply a boutique mechanism, increasingly limited to a narrow footprint in NSW?
- (86) Has the Department conducted a quantitative estimate of the maximum carbon abatement the INFM Method could generate *within NSW only* — particularly factoring in the land to be converted to National Park — and how does that justify continued investment of public resources into progressing this method?
- (87) Has the Department provided any advice to the Minister that the INFM Method has multiple risks involved and should not proceed due to clear evidence it fails to meet core Offset Integrity Standards, particularly given the simultaneous creation of a large reserve that renders the credited activity redundant?
- (88) Is the Department aware that under the Offset Integrity Standards, carbon credits must only be issued for emissions reductions that *would not have occurred without the project* — and how

does the Government reconcile that with its public policy to halt harvesting on a growing portion of public forest estate for other reasons, thereby precluding additionality?

- (89) Can the Department provide transparency around how baseline scenarios will be established under this method, given the widespread decline in native forest harvesting volumes and viability over the last decade in NSW? What evidence can it provide that these baselines won't be artificially inflated to generate non-additional credits?
- (90) Does the Department concede that, far from promoting new abatement, the method risks shifting harvesting pressure onto private native forests or plantation imports — effectively displacing emissions rather than reducing them — and if so, how can the method meet Australia's international climate credibility requirements?
- (91) Why is the Department continuing to develop this method when it is now clear that the vast majority of the eligible area will be exempt due to conversion to protected tenure or already unviable forestry operations? Is this a case of policy being driven by ideological opposition to forestry rather than evidence-based carbon abatement?
- (92) Can the Department confirm whether any internal or external review has been conducted to assess the INFM Method's compatibility with the Offset Integrity Standards — and if so, will that advice be made public?
- (93) Why is the Department prioritising a method that fails on multiple fronts — additionality, scale, and long-term carbon integrity — instead of supporting scalable plantation expansion methods that store more carbon, provide long-lived products, and meet Australia's timber needs?
- (94) Will the Department acknowledge that by reserving forests already slated for harvesting cessation — and then attempting to claim carbon credits for it — it risks undermining public confidence in the credibility of the ACCU Scheme, both in NSW and nationally?
- (95) What modelling has been undertaken on the potential for carbon leakage, including economic and emissions displacement effects, as harvesting pressure moves from public native forests to private landholders or overseas markets? Has the Department quantified these risks?
- (96) What guardrails has the Department (DCCEW) put in place to manage the clear conflict on interest in the National Parks and Wildlife Service continuing to pursue a carbon method — where they will benefit from future conversion of tenure under the method — where it is obvious it does not meet the regulated integrity standards.

- (97) Have any concerns been raised with the department from within government or from stakeholders about NPWS being the lead agency to oversee this project?

Toorale Station

- (98) Is the “Toorale water management infrastructure operating and maintenance plan June 2022 - June 2024” still the current operating and maintenance plan (OMP) for Toorale Station?
- (99) In that OMP, the National Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible for managing and operating the works at Toorale. Is that still the case or is the DCCEEW Conservation Programs Heritage and Regulation Group (CPHR) responsible?
- (100) What is the relationship between the National Parks and Wildlife Service and CPHR Group and what are their respective roles in relation to the management of regulating infrastructure at Toorale?
- (101) How many CPHR Group staff are based at Toorale Station or in the NPWS Bourke area?
- (102) Considering the OMP is dated June 2022 to June 2024, and machinery of government changes affecting National Parks and DCCEEW came into effect on 1 January 2024, and the current Intersecting Streams Unregulated River Water Sharing Plan came into effect on 1 July 2024, why is the OMP still not updated?
- (103) To your knowledge, has DCCEEW or its predecessor agencies ever been issued with a stop work order by NRAR before, at Toorale or anywhere else?
- (104) Are you aware of complaints about a low flow or now flow event on the Warrego River downstream of Toorale Station in April 2024?
- (105) Does that OMP require maintaining instream flow connectivity between the Warrego and Darling rivers as Demand priority 1, and flows to the Western Floodplain as a Demand priority 2?
- (106) According to the operating and maintenance plan, Toorale operators need to maintain 330 megalitres per day (ML/d) as the “minimum passing flow requirement” at the Louth gauge. According to the Water NSW Water Insights web site it dipped below that on 17 April last year, bottomed out at 297.9 ML/d on 18 April, and didn’t get above 330 ML/d until 5:30 PM on the 19th. What was the cause?

Native Vegetation Mapping

(107) Minister, your own department has acknowledged that the current Draft Native Vegetation Regulatory (NVR) Map is inaccurate. As awareness of the map grows, so too does evidence of widespread errors. Acknowledging this:

- (a) Minister, how many requests for free NVR map reviews has your department received in the past 12 months?
- (b) What is the total cost of these reviews to the Government?
- (c) In what percentage of cases do reviews result in changes to the NVR map?
- (d) Minister, why are you pursuing legislative changes, such as the proposed amendments to the Land Management Code, before ensuring the maps are accurate?
- (e) What resources have you invested in to ensure satellite imagery is supported by thorough ground-truthing during NVR map reviews?

Regarding land mapped as Category 2 Sensitive Regulated (Pink):

(108) Minister, why has the NSW Government not utilised Bionet data to cross-check and validate the accuracy of the CEEC mapping, in addition to conducting on-ground inspections?

(109) Minister, regarding properties zoned as Category 2 – Sensitive Regulated Land (‘pink’) under the Native Vegetation Regulatory Map:

- (a) What specific steps have been taken to ensure landholders are adequately informed about the basis for this zoning, especially in light of no dedicated onsite flora and fauna surveys?
- (b) Given that affected landholders are not entitled to compensation, how does the NSW Government justify this position when the zoning materially reduces the equity and productive use of their properties?
- (c) Minister, how does the NSW Government plan to address landholder concerns about the potential inaccuracies or lack of comprehensive survey data underpinning these regulatory decisions?
- (d) In the absence of farmers, Minister, what resources have you deployed to protect Category 2 Sensitive Regulated areas from threats such as feral animals, weeds, erosion, and increased fire risk?
- (e) How often is the health of CEEC verified on the ground (through ground truthing) by departmental staff?

Regarding West Wyalong and Tallimba, where broombush and eucalyptus oil farmers have gone a year without income due to Category 2 Sensitive Regulated (Pink) mapping:

(110) Minister, how long is the review of the area's CEEC status expected to take?

(a) Why have you not ordered a temporary halt on penalties for Bland Shire farmers so they can resume work while the CEEC status review is underway?

(111) A group of more than 40 Bland Shire farmers travelled to NSW Parliament for the 'Pink Zones' forum and spoke candidly about the financial and emotional toll this was having on their community. Minister, why did you not attend the forum despite a month's notice, and why have you decline all invitations to meet with farmers in West Wyalong?

(a) Minister, you have previously stated that the Government will not compensate these farmers for lost income. Why not?

(112) Farmers have also warned of the rapid spread of parasitic Strangle Vine across Broombush and Blue Mallee plantations, which they say is at an epidemic level without active management from farmers. Minister, what resources have you invested in to combat Strangle Vine and protect Broombush and Blue Mallee in the state's south in the absence of farmers?

(a) Why has Strangle Vine not been reclassified as an Invasive Native Species?

Land Management Code – Education and Consultation

(113) Minister, what education, training, or support has the NSW Government provided to ensure that all farmers are adequately informed and equipped to understand the Land Management Code and interpret native vegetation mapping on their properties?

(a) Where and how has this been conducted?

(114) Can the Minister explain why there has been limited on-the-ground validation (ground-truthing) and meaningful consultation with affected landholders and local communities prior to the release of these proposed changes?

(115) Minister, how does the NSW Government acknowledge the risk that restricting landowners' ability to manage their land may contribute to the degradation of the very ecosystems the proposed changes claim to protect?

(116) Minister, how does the Minister respond to concerns that the introduction of a new invasive native species test will restrict farmers' ability to manage woody vegetation efficiently,

potentially leading to delays in treatment, increased compliance costs, and adverse environmental outcomes?

Land Management Code – Impact on Agriculture

- (117) Minister, can you provide details on any discussions or consultations that have taken place between your office and the Minister for Agriculture concerning the proposed changes to the Land Management Code and native vegetation mapping?
- (118) Minister, how have these discussions addressed the potential impacts on the agriculture industry, including farm productivity, land use, and long-term sustainability?
- (119) Minister, what is the justification for reducing authorisation periods under the Code from 15 years to 7 or even 3 years?
- (120) Minister, how does the NSW Government address concerns from farmers who rely on long-term certainty to operate viable and sustainable agricultural businesses?
- (121) Minister, how has the NSW Government conducted any comprehensive assessment of how these proposed changes will impact the overall management, planning, and viability of farming operations in affected regions?

Land Management Code – Financial Impacts to Landholders

- (122) Minister, how does the Government anticipate the proposed changes to the Land Management Code will affect land values when farmers decide to sell properties affected by new restrictions?
- (123) Minister, will the NSW Government consider providing rate relief or other financial concessions where land is effectively "locked up" under the revised Code, rendering it unavailable for productive agricultural use?
- (124) Minister, for land that is effectively locked up under the revised Land Management Code, how will these changes affect farmers' ability to access, claim, or benefit from carbon credits associated with their land?
- (125) Minister, what support or guidance will the NSW Government provide to ensure farmers can navigate any new requirements or restrictions relating to carbon credit schemes?
- (126) Can the Minister explain the rationale for the proposed removal of set-aside discounts, and how the NSW Government expects farmers to respond to having more land effectively locked up in perpetuity, with limited or no productive use?

Sustainable Farming and Re-growth of Vegetation

- (127) Can the Minister provide details on how the proposed amendments to the Land Management Code will modify existing regrowth management laws and what this means for farmers' ability to manage regrowth vegetation?
- (128) Minister, how will these changes affect farmers' rights and obligations concerning the clearing, thinning, or treatment of regrowth vegetation on their properties?
- (129) Minister, will the proposed amendments introduce additional restrictions or compliance burdens that might delay regrowth management, and if so, what measures will the NSW Government implement to minimise adverse effects on farm productivity and environmental health?
- (130) Minister, how has the NSW Government evaluated how these changes could impact invasive species control, fire risk management, including bushfire mitigation, and the operational costs faced by farmers?
- (131) Minister, who will be tasked with managing critical environmental threats such as bushfire risk mitigation, feral animal control, and weed infestations within Critically Endangered Ecological Communities (CEECs), especially where private landholders are legally restricted from carrying out such interventions?

HERITAGE

TOD Heritage Scope

- (132) How many sites within TOD precincts contain heritage items that are excluded from TOD planning controls?
- (133) What is the total dwelling capacity lost due to these heritage exclusions across all TOD precincts?
- (134) What is the cost of determining which sites contain excluded heritage items?
 - (a) How many site determinations have been disputed or required revision?
- (135) How many TOD sites contain a mixture of Heritage Conservation Area land and excluded heritage items?
- (136) What is the average cost of assessment for these mixed sites?
- (137) How many applications have been withdrawn due to the complexity of mixed heritage constraints?

- (a) What is the average processing time for mixed heritage constraint sites?
- (138) What is the total number of contributory, neutral, and detracting buildings identified within TOD Heritage Conservation Areas?
- (139) How many contributory buildings have been approved for demolition since May 2024?
- (140) How many councils have individually listed contributory buildings to protect them from TOD since March 2023?
- (141) What is the estimated heritage significance value of contributory buildings approved for demolition?
- (142) How many council staff across NSW are qualified to assess TOD applications within Heritage Conservation Areas?
 - (a) What is the average council processing time for TOD heritage applications since May 2024?
 - (b) How many councils have exceeded statutory timeframes for TOD heritage assessments?
 - (c) What is the longest processing time recorded for a TOD heritage application?
- (143) How do council assessment outcomes vary for similar TOD applications in comparable Heritage Conservation Areas?
 - (a) What percentage of TOD heritage applications are approved across different councils?
 - (b) How many councils have developed additional heritage requirements beyond state requirements?
 - (c) What is the cost variation between councils for similar TOD heritage assessments?
- (144) How many councils have requested additional state funding to build TOD heritage assessment capacity?
 - (a) What additional training has been provided to council staff for TOD heritage assessment?
 - (b) How many council heritage assessment positions remain vacant across NSW?
 - (c) What is the average salary cost for qualified heritage assessment staff?
- (145) How many heritage professionals in NSW are qualified to provide advice on TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas?

- (a) What is the average cost of heritage professional advice for a TOD application?
 - (b) What is the average wait time to engage a qualified heritage professional?
 - (c) How is the geographic distribution of heritage professionals across metropolitan and regional NSW?
- (146) How many TOD applications have been delayed pending availability of heritage professional advice?
- (a) What qualifications are required to assess whether developments are "appropriate to context" in Heritage Conservation Areas?
 - (b) How many different professional specialties may be required for a single TOD heritage application?
 - (c) What is the total professional advice cost for a typical TOD development in a Heritage Conservation Area?
- (147) What criteria determine when a Heritage Impact Statement is required for TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas?
- (a) What percentage of TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas have required Heritage Impact Statements since May 2024?
 - (b) What is the average cost of preparing a Heritage Impact Statement?
 - (c) How many Heritage Impact Statements have been rejected and required revision?
- (148) Who is qualified to prepare Heritage Impact Statements for TOD applications?
- (a) How many qualified practitioners are available across NSW?
 - (b) What is the average preparation time for a Heritage Impact Statement?
 - (c) How many TOD applications have been refused due to inadequate Heritage Impact Statements?
- (149) Since the Department published TOD a heritage guidance document in May 2024, has the average council processing time for Heritage Conservation Area applications decreased?
- (a) What was the average processing time before May 2024 versus after?
 - (b) How many councils have formally adopted the May 2024 guidance?
 - (c) What was the cost of developing and distributing this guidance?

- (150) How many clarification requests about TOD heritage processes has the Department received since the May 2024 guidance was published?
- (a) What are the most frequently asked questions about the guidance?
 - (b) How many updates or amendments to the guidance have been required?
 - (c) How many councils have reported ongoing confusion despite the guidance?
- (151) How many TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas still require Heritage Impact Statements despite the May 2024 guidance stating they "may be required"?
- (a) What percentage of councils continue to routinely request Heritage Impact Statements?
 - (b) Has the guidance reduced the variation in Heritage Impact Statement requirements between councils?
- (152) How many separate guidance documents must applicants consult for TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas?
- (a) What is the total page count of all relevant heritage guidance materials?
 - (b) How many councils lack current Heritage Conservation Area character statements?
 - (c) When were existing Heritage Conservation Area character statements last updated on average?
- (153) How many pre-application meetings with councils are recommended for TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas?
- (a) What is the average cost of pre-application consultation processes?
 - (b) How many councils charge fees for pre-application TOD heritage advice?
 - (c) What percentage of applications proceed without recommended pre-application engagement?
- (154) What criteria define "design excellence" for TOD developments in Heritage Conservation Areas?
- (a) Who is qualified to assess design excellence compliance?
 - (b) What additional cost does design excellence assessment add per dwelling unit?
 - (c) How many design excellence assessments have resulted in application refusal since May 2024?

- (155) What constitutes an adequate "interpretive approach" for new buildings replacing contributory heritage buildings?
- (a) What additional professional expertise is required to design interpretive approaches?
 - (b) How many TOD applications have been required to revise their interpretive approach?
 - (c) What is the cost differential between interpretive design and standard apartment design?
- (156) How many TOD developments have been required to incorporate heritage interpretation elements?
- (a) What is the average cost of heritage interpretation requirements per development?
 - (b) How many interpretive approach proposals have been rejected as inadequate?
 - (c) What ongoing maintenance costs are associated with heritage interpretation elements?
- (157) How many TOD applications in Heritage Conservation Areas have failed clause 5.10 LEP assessments since May 2024?
- (a) What are the most common reasons for clause 5.10 assessment failure?
 - (b) What additional assessment time does clause 5.10 add to standard TOD processing?
 - (c) How many clause 5.10 assessment decisions have been appealed?
- (158) How do councils interpret "not adversely affected" under clause 5.10 for TOD developments?
- (a) What percentage of councils have consistent interpretation of adverse effect?
 - (b) How many TOD applications have been approved despite heritage concerns under clause 5.10?
 - (c) What measurable criteria exist for determining adverse heritage impact?
- (159) How many TOD heritage decisions have been appealed to the Land and Environment Court since May 2024?
- (a) What percentage of appeals have been upheld in favour of heritage protection?
 - (b) What is the average cost to applicants of heritage-related TOD appeals?
 - (c) What is the average time from council refusal to final appeal determination?

- (160) How many approved TOD developments in Heritage Conservation Areas have been subject to judicial review?
- (a) What is the success rate of legal challenges to TOD heritage approvals?
 - (b) What is the average legal cost for defending TOD heritage decisions?
 - (c) How many approved developments have been delayed pending heritage litigation?
- (161) What legal advice has the government received regarding potential conflicts between TOD SEPP controls and Local Environmental Plan heritage provisions?
- (a) What is the estimated cost of defending heritage-related legal challenges to TOD decisions?
 - (b) Has any budget allocation been made for potential court cases?
- (162) What is the average dwelling yield reduction in Heritage Conservation Areas within TOD precincts compared to non-heritage constrained areas?
- (a) What percentage of original TOD housing targets have been achieved in Heritage Conservation Area precincts?
 - (b) How many dwelling units have been lost due to contributory building retention requirements?
 - (c) What is the cost per dwelling increase due to heritage requirements in TOD precincts?
- (163) How many TOD sites have been excluded from development due to heritage significance since May 2024?
- (a) What was the original dwelling capacity of excluded sites?
 - (b) What alternative sites have been identified to replace this lost capacity?
 - (c) What additional infrastructure cost is involved in developing alternative sites?
- (164) What percentage of TOD heritage assessment processes utilize digital systems versus manual processes?
- (a) How many separate databases must assessors access for TOD heritage applications?
 - (b) What is the average system downtime affecting heritage assessments per month?
 - (c) How many assessment steps require manual calculation or measurement?
- (165) How many heritage assessment criteria were developed before 2010 and remain unchanged?

- (a) What is the average age of guidance documents used for TOD heritage assessment?
- (b) How many heritage databases cannot interface with current planning systems?

Auditor General's Report in State Heritage Assets

- (166) Have all the recommendations from the 2023 NSW Auditor's Report on Heritage NSW being implemented? If not, why not?
- (167) How many State Heritage Register records have been updated since the 2023 audit finding that only 9% had been updated since 2015?
 - (a) What budget allocation exists for register updates in 2025-26?
 - (b) How many records are targeted for update in 2025-26?
- (168) What percentage of listed heritage assets now contain physical condition ratings?
 - (a) What is the timeline to achieve 100% condition rating coverage?
 - (b) What is the annual cost of this program?
- (169) What percentage of Heritage NSW staff have current conflict of interest declarations?
 - (a) What budget allocation exists for improved governance systems?
 - (b) What ongoing compliance costs are included in 2025-26?
- (170) What resources have been allocated to monitor delegated heritage decisions by other government entities?
 - (a) What is the annual cost of this monitoring function?
 - (b) How many delegated decisions were reviewed in 2024-25?
- (171) What were Heritage NSW FTE staffing levels in:
 - (a) March 2023?
 - (b) June 2023?
 - (c) June 2024?
 - (d) June 2025?
 - (e) What is the budgeted FTE level for 2025-26?
- (172) How many Heritage NSW staff are located in regional NSW offices (excluding Newcastle and Wollongong)?

- (a) What percentage of total workforce does this represent?
 - (b) How has this changed since March 2023?
 - (c) What is the budget allocation for regional office operations?
- (173) How many additional FTE positions will be created in 2025-26?
- (a) How many will be based in regional NSW offices?
 - (b) What is the budget allocation for staffing increases?
- (174) What changes have been made to Heritage Council of NSW membership since March 2023?
- (a) What changes have been made to the Heritage Council's committees and advisory bodies, including:
 - i. State Heritage Register Committee?
 - ii. Approvals Committee?
 - iii. Heritage Advisory Panel?
 - iv. Technical Advisory Panel?
 - (b) What is the annual cost of Heritage Council operations, including all committees and advisory panels?
- (175) What is the total remuneration package for Heritage Council members and all committee/panel members?
- (a) Have there been changes to member remuneration for the Heritage Council and its committees (State Heritage Register Committee, Approvals Committee, Heritage Advisory Panel, and Technical Advisory Panel) since March 2023?
 - (b) What is the annual cost of the new Chairperson position and any committee chair positions?
 - (c) What are the specific remuneration arrangements for members of each committee and advisory panel?
- (176) What recommendations from the Heritage Council and/or its committees have been rejected, knocked back, or not adopted by the Minister since March 2023?
- (a) Provide a comprehensive list of all recommendations from the Heritage Council that were not accepted by the Minister, including:
 - i. Date of recommendation

- ii. Nature of the recommendation
 - iii. Reason given for rejection/non-adoption
 - (b) Provide a detailed breakdown of rejected recommendations from each committee and panel:
 - i. State Heritage Register Committee: List all heritage listing recommendations rejected or not proceeded with
 - ii. Approvals Committee: List all development approval recommendations overturned or not accepted
 - iii. Heritage Advisory Panel: List all policy or strategic recommendations not adopted
 - iv. Technical Advisory Panel: List all technical guidance or assessment recommendations rejected
- (177) Has Heritage NSW conducted heritage needs assessment for regional NSW since March 2023?
- (a) iWhat were the findings?
 - (b) What additional budget allocation is required to address identified needs?
- (178) What percentage of 2025-26 heritage budget is allocated to regional NSW (excluding Newcastle and Wollongong)?
- (a) What percentage of state-significant heritage items are located in these regions?
 - (b) How do these percentages compare to 2024-2025 and 2023-2024?

Section 170 Heritage & Conservation Registers

- (179) How many NSW Government agencies have current s170 Heritage and Conservation Registers?
- (a) What was the compliance rate since March 2023, March 2024, June 2025?
 - (b) How many agencies are non-compliant?
 - (c) Please provide a list of all agencies that are non-compliant as of June 2025.
- (180) Is there a specific budget allocation exists for Heritage NSW to monitor s170 register compliance?

- (a) Is there a specific Team that exists within Heritage NSW to monitor s170 register compliance? If so, what is their FTE staff profile?
 - (b) What enforcement actions have been taken since March 2023?
 - (c) What penalties have been applied for non-compliance?
- (181) What is the total value of heritage assets recorded in government agency s170 registers?
- (a) What percentage have current conservation management plans?
 - (b) What percentage have funded maintenance schedules?

Heritage Act & Planning System Interaction

- (182) What budget has been allocated to improve Heritage Act and Environmental Planning & Assessment Act integration?
- (a) How many development applications since March 2023 have been subject to both Heritage Act and TOD planning controls?
 - (b) What is the average assessment cost for these dual assessments?
- (183) What budget allocation exists for developing heritage guidance materials for councils?
- (a) How many guidance documents have been produced since March 2023?
 - (b) What is the timeline for completion of remaining guidance materials?
- (184) How many heritage-related planning appeals have been lodged since March 2023?
- (a) How many involved conflicts between heritage protection and housing supply requirements?
 - (b) What was the success rate for heritage protection arguments?

Heritage Tourism & Economic Outcomes

- (185) What is the 2025-26 budget allocation for heritage tourism initiatives?
- (a) How is this allocated between regional NSW (excluding Newcastle and Wollongong) and metropolitan areas?
 - (b) What is the projected return on investment for each region?
- (186) What performance indicators measure heritage tourism success?
- (a) What baseline economic data exists?

- (b) What improvement targets have been established for 2025-26?
- (187) What budget allocation exists for Heritage NSW-Destination NSW partnerships
 - (a) What shared funding arrangements are in place?
 - (b) What measurable outcomes have been achieved since March 2023?
- (188) What percentage of recommendations made by the Heritage Council for listing items on the State Heritage Register to the Minister were assessed within the statutory timeframe in 2024-25? Please provide a list of every decision and the number of days between the Council's recommendation and the Minister's decision.
 - (a) How does this compare to 2023-24 performance? Please provide a list of every decision and the number of days between the Council's recommendation and the Minister's decision.
 - (b) What is the current performance for 2025-26? Please provide a list of every decision and the number of days between the Council's recommendation and the Minister's decision.
- (189) What is the current average heritage application assessment cost?
 - (a) How has this changed since March 2023?
 - (b) What cost reduction targets exist for 2025-26?
- (190) How many heritage applications are currently in the assessment backlog?
 - (a) What is the total estimated value of developments affected by assessment delays?
 - (b) What additional resources are allocated to reduce backlog in 2025-26?
- (191) What percentage of heritage decisions made under delegation have been subject to quality assurance review?
 - (a) How many decisions have been found to be inconsistent with Heritage Council expectations?
 - (b) What corrective actions have been implemented?

Ministerial Conduct and Compliance questions

- (192) Can the Minister confirm compliance with the Grants Administration Guide across all portfolios since March 2023?

- (a) Have all grant decisions been documented in accordance with the Guide's requirements?
 - (b) Have all grant assessment processes followed the mandatory procedures outlined in the Guide?
 - (c) Can you table all internal compliance reviews conducted since March 2023?
- (193) Have all grants administered by the Minister's offices been subject to appropriate probity measures as required by the Grants Administration Guide?
- (a) How many grants have been assessed by independent probity advisors since March 2023?
 - (b) What is the total cost of external probity advice across all portfolios since March 2023?
 - (c) Can you table all probity reports and advice received?
- (194) Have all conflict of interest declarations been completed for grants processes involving the Minister or her staff since March 2023?
- (a) How many conflict of interest situations have been identified and managed?
 - (b) Can you table all conflict of interest registers maintained by the Minister's offices?
 - (c) What processes are in place to monitor ongoing conflicts of interest?
- (195) What probity and conduct training have the Minister and ministerial staff completed since March 2023?
- (a) Can you provide details of all training courses, dates, and participants?
 - (b) What is the total cost of probity training across the Minister's offices?
 - (c) How frequently is refresher training conducted?
- (196) Have all ministerial staff completed mandatory ethics and conduct training?
- (a) Can you table training completion records for all staff since March 2023?
 - (b) What disciplinary or corrective actions have been taken for non-compliance with conduct requirements?
 - (c) How many staff have been reminded of their obligations under the Ministerial Code of Conduct?
- (197) Will the Minister table all records of ministerial vehicle usage since March 2023?

- (a) Can you provide details of all official and private use of ministerial vehicles?
 - (b) What is the total cost of ministerial vehicle usage including fuel, maintenance, and driver costs?
 - (c) How many occasions has the ministerial vehicle been used for non-official purposes?
- (198) Can you table all travel expenses claimed by the Minister and her staff since March 2023?
- (a) What is the total cost of domestic and international travel?
 - (b) How many family members have accompanied the Minister on official travel?
 - (c) What processes exist to approve and monitor travel expenses?
- (199) Can the Minister confirm that all dealings, decisions, and conduct have been above board and ethical since March 2023?
- (a) Have any complaints or concerns been raised about ministerial conduct?
 - (b) What processes exist for reporting and investigating conduct concerns?
 - (c) Can you confirm that no disciplinary actions or corrective measures have been required?

CFMEU meetings

- (200) Since 28 March 2023, have you met with the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU) that was not disclosed in accordance with the Premier's Memorandum M2015-05 Publication of Ministerial Diaries and Release of Overseas Travel Information?

ETU meetings

- (201) Since 28 March 2023, have you met with the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) that was not disclosed in accordance with the Premier's Memorandum M2015-05 Publication of Ministerial Diaries and Release of Overseas Travel Information?

Ministerial disclosures to The Cabinet Office

- (202) On what date did you last update/make a ministerial disclosure to the Premier and the Secretary of The Cabinet Office?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Employees

(203) In relation to redundancies, will this be made available in your respective Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports

(204) Do you have plans to print the 2024-25 annual report(s) for each department / agency in your portfolio?

(a) If yes, what is the budgeted expenditure for printing for each department / agency?

State Records Act

(205) Have you and your ministerial office had training and/or a briefing about the State Records Act from State Records NSW and/or The Cabinet Office and/or Premier's Department?

(a) If yes, when?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Gifts and Hospitality Register

(206) Does your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) have a gifts and/or hospitality register?

(a) If yes, is it available online?

i. If yes, what is the website URL?

Ministerial staff disclosure of gifts and/or hospitality

(207) Does your ministerial office keep a register of gifts and/or hospitality for staff to make disclosures?

(a) If yes, what is the website URL?

(208) Have any staff members in your office been the recipient of any free hospitality?

(a) What was the total value of the hospitality received?

(b) Are these gifts of hospitality declared?

Ministerial Code of Conduct

(209) Since 28 March 2023, have you breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

(a) If yes, what was the breach?

Senior Executive Drivers

(210) As at 1 August 2025, how many senior executives in your portfolio department(s) / agency(s) have a driver?

GIPA Act - Disclosure Log & Ministerial Offices

(211) Does your Ministerial Office have a disclosure log in accordance with the Government Information (Public Access Act) 2009?

(a) If yes, what is the URL?

GIPA Act - Disclosure Log & Departments/Agencies

(212) What is the website URL for the Government Information (Public Access Act) 2009 disclosure log each of your portfolio department(s) / agency(s)?

TikTok

(213) Are you on TikTok?

(a) If yes, do you access TikTok from a NSW Government device?

Signal

(214) Are you on Signal?

(a) If yes, do you access Signal from a NSW Government device?

(b) If yes, does Signal comply with the State Records Act?

Training

(215) Since 28 March 2023, have you had training from an external stakeholder that included an invoice and payment paid for using your ministerial budget?

(a) If yes, what is the description of training?

(b) If yes, how much?

Parliamentary Secretary & Ministerial Vehicle

(216) Has your Parliamentary Secretary ever used a Ministerial driver from the pool?

(a) If yes, why?

Media releases and statements

(217) 215. Are all the ministerial media releases and statements issued by you publicly available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases?>

(a) a) If no, why?

Overseas Travel

(218) As Minister, do you approve overseas travel for public servants from your portfolio department(s)/agency(s)?

Data Breaches

(219) Does your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) keep a register of data breaches in accordance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection (PPIP) Act?

(a) If yes, what is the website?

Discretionary Fund

(220) As Minister, do you have a discretionary fund?

(a) If yes, what department(s) / agency(s) administer it?

(b) If yes, what is the website URL detailing expenditure?

Airline Lounges

(221) Are you a member of the Qantas Chairmans Lounge?

(222) Are you a member of the Virgin Beyond Lounge?

Ministerial Overseas Travel

(223) Since 28 March 2023, have you formally applied to the Premier to travel overseas?

(a) If yes, was this application accepted?

Private Jet Charter

(224) Have you travelled on a private jet charter in your Ministerial capacity?

(a) If yes, was this value for money for taxpayers?

Ministerial Office renovations

(225) Since 28 March 2023, has your Ministerial Office at 52 Martin Place been renovated?

(a) If yes, how much was the expenditure?

Conflict of Interest

(226) Since 28 March 2023, have you formally written to the Premier with a conflict of interest?

(a) If yes, why?

Questions from Ms Sue Higginson MLC
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CLIMATE CHANGE

Guide for Large Emitters

(227) Do you think the Guide for Large Emitters has changed the way that new coal expansions are assessed and determined?

(a) If yes, how would you describe those changes?

(b) What impact do you think the Guide has had to date on the assessment and/or determination of new coal expansions?

(228) What is NSW EPA's responsibility - as lead climate regulator in NSW - in a situation where a proposed new coal-mine expansion is found by the EPA to be incompatible with meeting legislated climate targets?

(229) Would the NSW EPA have a responsibility to clearly state in advice to either NSW DPHI or the NSW IPC that the NSW EPA objects to the project going ahead?

Bowdens Mine

(230) Will you commit to meeting with the Mudgee community with regard to the lead mining exclusion zone?

(231) Will you work with other relevant Ministers and genuinely consider making the Mudgee region a lead mining exclusion zone?

(232) Recent Local Land Service mapping around the proposed Bowdens mine and its proposed transmission route has mapped numerous greater gliders there. Your department has responsibility to advise on major developments, and it would make sense that you would be required to look at their assessments for the transmission line. Have you done that yet?

(233) Are you satisfied that the proponent of the development has done a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of the transmission line area?

(a) In your view, is a desktop analysis sufficient?

- (b) The desktop analysis done by the proponent makes no mention of greater gliders, in contradiction with the Local Land Services maps. Will you be raising this issue with the proponent?
- (234) Have the assessments for this mine not been updated to reflect current statutory requirements?
 - (a) If yes, when?
 - (b) If not, why not?
- (235) The original EIS assessment for the mine was done in 2020 and undertaken before the greater glider was declared endangered and found no greater gliders in or near the mine site. The Department of Planning has advised advocates that they need to help Planning to alert them of any aspect of the project that needs updating. Are environmental assessments the job of your Department or of the community?
- (236) Have you been asked by the Department of Planning to ensure that its assessments of the greater glider and any other endangered or vulnerable species declared since the original assessments are up to date?
 - (a) If so, on what date?
- (237) Given that a Department of Planning brief for Secretary Fishburn states that the Bowdens lead mine application will “include a high-level assessment of the powerline as offsite enabling infrastructure, along with updated statutory consideration”, are you satisfied this process has occurred?
 - (a) In this case, what do you consider to be a high-level assessment?
 - (b) Does the assessment incorporate an updated statutory consideration?

Redbank Proposal

- (238) Are you aware that the ‘Restart of Redbank Power Station’ proposal currently before the Independent Planning Commission is seeking approval to burn native vegetation obtained via land clearing to produce energy?
- (239) Are you aware that the NSW Labor policy platform states ‘Labor recognises that burning timber and cleared vegetation for electricity is not carbon neutral and is neither clean or renewable energy, and therefore forms no part of a credible strategy for reducing greenhouse emissions’?

- (a) Is the Redbank proposal consistent with this?
- (240) What is Labor's timeline for implementing your policy to 'introduce legislation to prohibit the burning of any forests and cleared vegetation for electricity?'
- (a) Will this commitment be fulfilled by the end of the term?

Closing the Gap

- (241) Have you read the Jumbunna Report into Closing the Gap?
- (242) What is your response to recommendation 8b, which posits that climate change impacts on First Nations communities should be included in the National Agreement on closing the gap?
- (a) Do you support this recommendation?
- (b) What steps have you taken to support this recommendation?

ACCUs

- (243) How many submissions have you received against proposed changes to the application of ACCUs under the Improved Native Forest Management scheme?
- (a) How many submissions have you received in favour?
- (b) Were any of those submissions from fossil fuel corporations or lobbyists?
- (244) Can you rule out generating any ACCUs from the proposed 176,000 hectares of Great Koala National park that have already been promised protection?
- (a) If not, why not?
- (245) Have you done any modelling on how many carbon credits could be generated from areas originally proposed within the 176,000 hectares of Great Koala National Park?
- (a) Has any modelling been provided to the coal, oil or gas industry?
- (b) Have you had any conversations with lobbyists or donors from this industry about changes to ACCUs?

ENVIRONMENT

Koala Strategy

- (246) Where is the Review of the NSW Koala Strategy up to?

- (247) By what date will we know the outcomes of the Review?
- (248) How much of the 190 million dollar NSW Koala Strategy funding envelope to 2026 is still unspent?
- (a) What amount for each of the 4 Pillars have remaining funds available?

NSW State of the Environment Report

- (249) Why does the NSW State of the Environment Report not support Local Government Area-Scale breakdowns?
- (a) Will you commit to ensuring this occurs?
- (250) How can you justify an eight-month delay in the tabling of the 2024 State of the Environment Report?
- (251) What specific steps have you taken to address the 2024 Report's finding that 36 new species have been added to the threatened species list since 2020 and a 5% increase in the number of animal species threatened with extinction have been added?
- (252) What specific steps have you taken to address:
- (a) significant losses to woody and non-woody native vegetation?
- (b) increasing rates of soil acidification?
- (c) plummeting levels of organic carbon in our soil?

Budget Allocation for Environment

- (253) How can you justify underspending on environment protection by \$446 million?
- (a) Will you commit to restoring this funding in the next budget?
- (254) Why is this budget allocation for environment protection the lowest it has been since the newly-formatted budget papers commenced in 2016?
- (255) How is a lower budget allocation for environment protection under Labor than when the Coalition left office consistent with the Minns Labor Government's commitment to better environmental protections?

National Parks Estate Plan

- (256) What is the timeline for the development and publication of the new establishment plan?

- (257) Will NSW reach the national target of 30% by 2030 across a comprehensive, adequate and representative range of landscapes?
- (258) What is the current CAR % achieved, with the recent additions to the National Parks estate?
- (259) What was the CAR % achieved in:
- (a) 2020?
 - (b) 2021?
 - (c) 2022?
 - (d) 2023?
 - (e) 2024?
 - (f) 2025?

WIRES Review

- (260) Can you please provide an update on the review of the Wildlife Rehabilitation Sector?
- (261) Are you concerned about a disconnect between the POCTAA legislation and the NSW Codes of Practice (which wildlife carers operate under).
- (262) Can you please describe the way in which the following considerations will be included in the review:
- (a) Whether the POCTA Act is suitable for use in prosecuting cases against wildlife rescuers who care for already compromised wildlife?
 - (b) How referrals by WIRES to RSPCA for actions against wildlife volunteers can be given more oversight?
 - (c) The connection between WIRES and the RSPCA?
 - (d) How to mitigate bias in cases where RSPCA coordinate raids and prosecutions?
 - (e) Stand alone legislation providing for matters relating to wildlife care, rescue and rehabilitation in NSW?

Lost City Environmental Assessment

- (263) Did the National Parks and Wildlife Service construct the Lost City Walking Track using swamp offset payments made by Centennial Springvale?
- (a) How much was spent on its construction?

- (b) How much was spent on its ancillary works?
- (264) In accordance with the Biodiversity Offset Scheme, will the National Parks and Wildlife Service now pay offset compensation for its removal of threatened plant species?
- (a) Will offset compensation be paid for clearing an easement through a nationally endangered shrub swamp
 - (b) Will offset compensation be paid for clearing of native vegetation that was undertaken in association with the construction of the Lost City Walking Track completed at the end of 2024?
- (265) If the National Parks and Wildlife Service did not pay or will not pay offset compensation, why is it that Centennial Springvale is required to pay \$2 million per swamp for 'greater than negligible environmental consequences' when the National Parks and Wildlife Service does not even publicly exhibit its potentially damaging activities unless there is an 'increased risk of local extinction' to threatened species populations and endangered communities?
- (266) Is not the clearing of a nationally endangered shrub swamp, possibly paid for by swamp damage offset payments, a controversial action to take during reserve establishment?
- (a) Did this action not require public exhibition of the Review of Environmental Factors for the extension of the Lost City Walking Track?
- (267) Is the National Parks and Wildlife Service constructing the Pagoda Walk during 2025/26, using swamp offset payments made by Centennial Springvale?
- (268) In accordance with the Biodiversity Offset Scheme, will the National Parks and Wildlife Service pay offset compensation for the removal of threatened species, endangered ecological communities and clearing of native vegetation associated with the construction of the Pagoda Walk due for completion in 2025/26?
- (269) Does any part of the Pagoda Walk pass through nationally endangered shrubs or hanging swamps?
- (a) Is this not a controversial action to take during reserve establishment?
 - (b) Does this action not require public exhibition of the Review of Environmental Factors for proposed extension of the Pagoda Walk?
- (270) Will you require the public exhibition of Review of Environmental Factors for visitor facilities in national parks and reserves where a proposed activity is likely to cause 'greater

than negligible environmental consequences' to threatened species, endangered communities or other important heritage values, such as geodiversity?

(271) Why has the Minns government continued to ignore the recommendations made by independent consultants, AUSTECO Environmental Consulting, commissioned by the EPA following the 2019/20 fires?

- (a) Will you commit to adopting the recommendation to “protect all unburnt and lightly burned areas from logging for 20-120 years”
- (b) Will you commit to adopting the recommendation to “protect 50% of the least burnt area of every logging compartment across the entire landscape”
- (c) Will you commit to adopting the recommendation to “develop new conditions that ensure permanent protection of large forest patches across regions and landscapes that capture and include fire refuges...old growth and link all retained forest patches larger than 5 hectares in size in a network of permanent wildlife corridors”?

Koala Translocations

(272) On what precise date did you become aware that 54% of koalas translocated from the Upper Nepean to South East Forest had died?

- (a) What steps did you take in response to becoming aware of this?
- (b) When did the Department first become aware of this?

(273) On what precise date did you become aware that 3 koalas translocated in the Northern Rivers Region had died?

- (a) What steps did you take in response to becoming aware of this?
- (b) When did the Department first become aware of this?

(274) On what date did koala translocations halt in New South Wales?

(275) What scientific evidence do you have that koala translocations are an appropriate method of habitat management?

ENERGY

Decarbonisation Road Map

- (276) Given your Departmental website states that the government “will consult publicly with all interested stakeholders in 2025 to develop the gas decarbonisation roadmap.” Can you clarify when this will begin?
- (277) Will you consider incentives like those that the Victorian Govt has just announced for food processing etc, to help those industrial sectors which are most easy to electrify?
- (278) Are you going to set targets for gas demand reduction, as Vic and ACT have done? If so, how will you be arriving at those?
- (a) If not, why not, it’s obviously best practice.
- (279) In regard to industrial gas demand reduction work that feds are doing, how will NSW align with that work?
- (a) Is the NSW government pursuing a similar strategy for disaggregating industrial gas use into industry sub-sectors?
- (b) Given the Federal timeline for Industry Sector Plans is due September 2025, will public consultation occur later this year?
- (280) Given the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water are carrying out public consultation on important draft regulatory changes relating to gas supply and pipeline projects in NSW, including two proposed guidelines one on the Authority to Survey and the other on Compulsory Acquisition for pipeline projects, would you please confirm that you will not permit Santos to invoke the Authority to Survey along the Queensland Hunter Gas Pipeline Route while the two guidelines and draft amendments to regulations are under public consultation and not yet in place?
- (281) The Government has consulted on a Renewable Fuel Scheme for large energy users which if finalised could support alternatives to natural gas. What is the status of this renewable fuels strategy?

HERITAGE

AHIP Orders

- (282) How many cultural sites have been destroyed in New South Wales since you became the Minister?
- (283) How many Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit Applications were made last financial year?
- (a) How many were granted?

- (b) How many were refused?

Northern Rivers Cultural Heritage

(284) Are you aware of South Sea Islander Graves destroyed during the construction of the Tweed Valley Hospital?

- (a) If so, what steps have you taken to protect cultural heritage?

(285) Are you aware of the development proposal for the Cudgen Connection development's Cultural Heritage Advice Report, "Whilst it does not formally form part of the proposal the use of the 'environmental parklands' outside the northern boundary of Lot 6 is the ACH feature of the development. This area is mapped as a known burial site and any development or use of the area should therefore be contemplated only with extreme caution,"?

- (a) What steps are you taking to protect South Sea Islander heritage with relation to this development?

(286) What steps has the Minister taken to ensure the repatriation of the Aboriginal Breastplate belonging to Jack Kibbeen, the man who named the Northern Rivers town of Wollongbar?

Private Native Forestry

(287) How many compliance checks of Private Native Forestry operations have been conducted since 1 March 2023?

- (a) When were these checks conducted?

- (b) What were the outcomes of these checks?

(288) How many Private Native Forestry operations have been and are being investigated for breaches of approvals since 1 March 2023?

- (a) When were they investigated?

- (b) What were the outcomes of these investigations?

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Rooftop PV uptake

(289) A recent report by the Nature Conservation Council on jurisdictions' energy transition progress found that bolstering uptake of rooftop PV in NSW can reduce the need for as much investment in large scale generation and storage capacity and transmission infrastructure, particularly in the short term. Given that rooftop PV uptake in NSW is below

the national average, what is the Minister doing to ensure that we not only meet our targets for rooftop PV installations, but also accelerate uptake of rooftop solar beyond this?

Community batteries and Energy Security Corporation

- (290) The Federal Government has funded the roll out of 400 Community batteries across the nation, which involves giving funding to Distributed Network Service Providers (DNSPs). The NSW Energy Security Corporation has an investment mandate that includes community batteries as a potential for project funding. However there is a lack of transparency, consumer protections or consistency in terms of how much consumers can save, whether they will need to pay a membership fee, and who benefits. Does the government have plans to investigate introducing regulations and/or standards to ensure government-funded community batteries are transparent, consumer-centric and come with strict standards for DNSPs, to ensure communities get the benefits?
- (291) Community batteries have not been proven to be an economic use of government investment. They cost on average \$1,400 per kWh to install (plus co-contributions from DNSPs) whereas a behind-the-meter household battery costs about \$900 to \$1,300 per kWh to install, and even less with the federal rebate. Even after the DNSPs receive government funding, they are recovering further costs from consumers via monthly membership fees. How will the \$1 billion allocated for the Energy Security Corporation address these issues and ensure that it is consumers who benefit, and not the DNSP's profits?
- (292) Utilising existing transmission infrastructure within the local distribution network is a great way to save on costs and reduce the risk of delays for renewable energy projects. NSW's cities and towns have plenty of existing underutilised rooftop space including on large commercial and industrial buildings. How is the Energy Security Corporation being tasked to fund this low cost, quick to roll-out renewable energy capacity?
- (293) The focus of the Consumer Energy Strategy is on accessibility to cheaper, cleaner renewable energy for households who are locked out. How will the funding for the Energy Security Corporation serve the interests of these households, as opposed to that of big businesses?
- (294) Businesses can already access rebates for joining a Virtual Power Plant (VPP). How will the Energy Security Corporation invest in VPPs without doubling up on benefits to big businesses as opposed to households (and small businesses)?

Coal ash

- (295) Can you please provide an update on the status of the government's implementation of recommendations from the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into costs for remediation of sites containing coal ash repositories, including data completed or expected to be completed and reasons for any deviation between what was recommended and what has been or is intended to be implemented?

Information available re energy rebates

- (296) The consumer energy space can be difficult to understand and navigate. With so many different schemes and rebates on offer, what are you doing to ensure people in the community can easily access information about energy rebates available to them?
- (297) Electricity pricing can be difficult for the average consumer to understand, which makes it easy for retailers to overcharge. What are you doing to advocate at a federal level for a fairer and more equitable energy system, including preventing customers from being overcharged by providers?

Regional equity access to rebates and schemes

- (298) The NSW Government's Energy Saving scheme (ESS) & Peak Demand Reduction scheme (PDRS) aim to encourage energy efficiency to reduce costs and satisfy peak demand while minimising the need for expensive upgrades to the electricity grid. What is the government doing to ensure people living in regional areas are able to equitably access rebates and schemes?
- (a) Is any work being done to increase transparency, for example by advising providers to report the price of Energy Savings Certificates (ESCs) and Peak Reduction Certificates (PRC) on which the rebates have been calculated?
 - (b) Is any work being done to set clear standards and specifications for installers?
 - (c) Is any work being done to clarify information around terms of rebates and participation in schemes?
 - (d) Is any work being done to provide a system whereby customers can fulfil the requirements (such as a date stamped photo of the installation and a letter signed by the installer that the system fulfils all the stated requirements) for customers unable to access full and fair rebates from local installers?

- (e) Is any work being done to review the method of calculating ESC and PRC, where the reverse cycle system replaces radiant heaters that are expected to consume 4 times as much electricity as an efficient reverse cycle system?

Home Energy Saver Program

- (299) In the Consumer Energy Strategy, there is an action scheduled for delivery in 2025 for “designing and delivering a new \$238.9 million Home Energy Saver program to help customers cut their energy bills and reduce their emissions”. This action makes up about 82% of the overall Consumer Energy strategy funding, however the details of it are not clear. What exactly is the Minister’s plan with this program?
- (300) Can you please break down the allocation of the \$238.9 million to implement the Home Energy Saver program, including any funds spent so far as well as plans for implementation?
- (301) Through the Home Energy Saver program, how will the government progress household electrification and improve energy efficiency for those who need it most?
 - (a) How does the government plan to reach hard to electrify households, including low income households, regional households and renters?

Consumer Energy Strategy

- (302) What is the reason for the delay with implementing actions in the strategy?
- (303) In response to questions on notice received in July 2025, the Minister confirmed that as of 30 June 2025, only \$7.27 million of the allocated \$290 million has been spent on Strategy implementation. Given it has been nearly a full year since the strategy was launched and the \$290 million was announced, can you please explain why only such a small amount has been spent?
 - (a) Can you please provide a breakdown of where the \$7.27 million was spent?
- (304) The Consumer Energy Strategy includes uptake targets as well as new funding programs. Can the Minister please report on progress made to date towards the following targets, and whether the government is on track to meet these targets?
 - (a) 3,400 MW of virtual power plant participation by 2035 and 10,000 MW by 2050?
 - (b) One million solar and battery homes by 2035?
 - (c) Energy saving upgrades made to 24,000 social homes by March 2027?
 - i. How many of these social homes have had solar panels or a battery installed?

- (305) The Consumer Energy Strategy also commits to investigate introducing minimum energy efficiency performance standards for rental housing in 2025, which Victoria and the ACT have already achieved. Can the Minister please give an update on how this is tracking?
- (a) Can the Minister confirm whether minimum energy efficiency performance standards will be introduced as part of the transition to mandatory disclosure of Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme (NatHERS) home energy ratings?
 - (b) When will the government take action to require retrofitting whenever a tenanted property is sold, a new tenancy agreement is signed or a major renovation is undertaken?
- (306) The Consumer Energy Strategy commits to supporting the introduction of national smart EV charging standards and vehicle to grid standards in NSW. Can the Minister please provide an update on this?
- (a) How is Vehicle-to-grid (V2G) adoption tracking, and how is the NSW Government encouraging adoption through regulation and standards?

Vales Point pollution rules

- (307) Can the EPA please confirm whether Vales Point power station has stayed within Group 5 nitrogen oxide limits under Clean Air regulations since its exemption expired in October 2024?
- (308) Mr Beaman confirmed in the March 2025 Budget Estimates hearing that if Vales Point power station remains open beyond 2029, it would have to achieve Group 6 limits or apply for an exemption. However, EPA legal advice released under GIPA EPA 1038 indicates that Vales Point will not transition to Group 6 under Clean Air regulations. Could the EPA please clarify which is true?
- (a) If in fact Vales Point is not required to comply with Group 6, can the Minister please explain how the government will address this loophole to ensure all coal power stations are required to meet the same Group 6 standards?

Gas Decarbonisation Roadmap

- (309) What is the reason for the delay in introducing a Gas Decarbonisation Roadmap?

Energy Accounts Payment Assistance (EAPA) review

- (310) When will the review into EAPA rebates be finalised?

- (a) When will a report be published?

Power station contamination

(311) Can the Minister please explain why residents of Budgewoi, Buff Point, Halekulani, San Remo, Doyalson and Lake Munmorah and other suburbs and settlements close to the Significantly Contaminated Land on the former Colongra/Munmorah power station site have not received information about the contamination?

- (a) Has the Minister liaised with NSW Health and the Health Minister regarding this significantly contaminated land and importance of informing surrounding residents to take precautionary measures such as not using bore or groundwater?

(312) Can the Minister provide an update on the timeframe and process to be used for decontamination of the site at Colongra/Munmorah?

(313) Are employees at the Waratah Super Battery being fully informed of the risks of PFAS exposure?

Renewable Energy Zones (REZ)

(314) At the recent hearings for the Inquiry into the Impact of Renewable Energy Zones (REZ) on rural and regional communities and industries in New South Wales, the Committee heard concerns about a lack of trusted information in communities to help them navigate renewable energy development in their regions. Does the Minister agree that there is a need for better information to be made available in communities to support them to navigate and secure ongoing benefit from renewable energy?

- (a) Does the Minister agree that a lack of information is contributing to poor social licence for renewable energy development within communities?
- (b) Several community groups and organisations working on the renewable energy transition within REZ advocated for the implementation of Local Energy Hubs as a solution to this issue. Has the Minister considered the Local Energy Hubs proposal to address information gaps and barriers to social licence around renewable energy?
- i. If yes, has the Minister considered a role for the NSW government in funding or co-funding Local Energy Hubs in key areas hosting renewable energy infrastructure?

(315) In relation to the recently announced ACERERZ/[EnergyCo Community Information Centre in Mudgee](#), what is the NSW government doing to ensure the information provided by the centre is independent and trusted by the community?

(a) What other actions is the NSW government taking to address barriers to social licence within the Central West-Orana and other REZ, particularly relating to generation projects?

(316) What role does the NSW government see for EnergyCo in holistically supporting communities with active outreach and information on the energy transition above and beyond transmission infrastructure?

Coal royalties

(317) What percentage of state coal royalties is being delivered to coal reliant communities to transition through the Future Jobs for Investment Fund and the Royalties for Rejuvenation fund?

(a) How will these statewide programs be split between the four coal communities?

Undergrounding of powerlines

(318) As NSW electrifies, communities are becoming increasingly reliant on a stable electricity grid. Blackouts are likely to continue where street trees and trees on private land are overhanging power lines, particularly with the increased severity of weather events. What action is the NSW government taking to ensure energy companies prioritise undergrounding of powerlines, in order to protect the network and to allow for increased urban forest canopy?

Energy transition

(319) What is the NSW government doing to support state and local government owned buildings and fleets to decarbonise and transition to renewable energy?

(a) Does the NSW government intend to mandate that all State and Local Government buildings and fleets be powered by renewables by 2030?

i. If not, why not?

(320) How much funding is the NSW government allocating to ensure that new builds are being built to climate resilient and energy independent and efficient standards?

- (321) When will the NSW government "draw a line under" coal and gas project approvals, and stop approving new projects or extensions?
- (322) Given that gas exploration is banned in NSW waters, what is the NSW government doing to advocate for a ban on gas exploration in federal waters and other states' waters as an urgent priority?

Questions from Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC

NSW Environmental Water

- (323) Has the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) been receiving general correspondence from the community and industry groups calling for water for the environment to be metered to the same standard as irrigation water?
- (a) If so, was this communication from a specific sector or industry group, or stakeholders in water management?
 - (b) Would you categorise the groups or individuals who have been making calls for water for the environment to be metered as being from the irrigated agricultural community?
 - (c) Did DCCEEW receive a specific piece of communication regarding the requirement of water for the environment to be metered that triggered DCCEEW to seek legal advice on the matter?
 - i. If so, who sent this correspondence?
- (324) Have you sought any legal advice on different ways in which environmental watering could be undertaken in compliance with the regulations and water sharing plans?
- (325) What legal advice, if any, do you have on the implications of lapsed Water Sharing Plans on the delivery of environmental water?
- (326) Has the Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) threatened prosecution if any environmental watering proceeds?
- (327) Has NRAR made you or the Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation division of your Department aware of the Memorandum of Litigation Involving Government Authorities?
- (a) If so, when?

- (328) What processes have been put in place to prevent or detect borrowing against unused environmental water accounts to underwrite general security allocations owned by other water users?

ICAC Referral

- (329) Has the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) notified you, the Conservation Programs, Heritage and Regulation (CPHR) division or any individuals in CPHR about a referral to ICAC from the member for Barwon?

Broken Hill lead contamination

- (330) When were you first briefed on Mark Taylor's report "Environmental Lead Risks at Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia: Sources, Exposures and Forward Solution"?
- (a) Who else attended the meeting at the time of your first briefing on the report?
 - (b) Were you briefed on the report and plans for its release on subsequent occasions? If so, please provide details of each briefing, including timing and attendees.
- (331) Mark Taylor's report, "Environmental Lead Risks at Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia: Sources, Exposures and Forward Solution", included a recommendation to "Determine and set an acceptable trigger value for Pb in deposited dust and introduce environmental licensing regulations limiting Pb in deposited dust". What, if any, steps have the EPA undertaken to act on this recommendation?
- (a) Please detail any work that has been done or is underway to identify a trigger value for lead in deposited dust.
 - (b) Please detail any environmental licensing regulation changes that have been or are being progressed to limit lead in deposited dust.
 - (c) Please document any changes made to the environmental licences for the lead mines in Broken Hill to limit lead in deposited dust.
- (332) Mark Taylor's report, "Environmental Lead Risks at Broken Hill, New South Wales, Australia: Sources, Exposures and Forward Solution", included a recommendation to "Continue dust deposition monitoring and continue to investigate ways to mitigate dust deposition". What has been done to progress this recommendation?
- (a) Please detail any work undertaken to monitor dust deposition in Broken Hill, since the publication of the report.

- (b) Please detail any work undertaken to investigate ways to mitigate dust deposition, since the publication of the report. Please include details of:
 - i. All mitigation methods investigated
 - ii. The methodology used
 - iii. The effectiveness of each mitigation method in reducing dust deposition.
- (333) Please describe all air quality monitoring activities being undertaken and/or analysed by NSW EPA in Broken Hill between 2020 to the present date.
- (a) Does the EPA currently have funding to conduct and/or analyse air monitoring in Broken Hill? If so, please provide details of the total amount of funding, the activities it covers and the period it covers.
- (334) What roles and/or responsibilities does the EPA have in relation to the remediation of contaminated sites?
- (a) Please outline all remediation activities that the EPA have undertaken in relation to the remediation or abatement of lead contamination in Broken Hill since 2020. For each activity please describe:
 - i. The site where remediation or abatement occurred
 - ii. The time period when remediation or abatement activities took place
 - iii. The remediation or abatement method used
 - iv. The lead contamination levels before and after abatement.

Bowdens Silver Mines

- (335) The EPA recommended that Bowdens be required to prepare an air quality management plan as part of their conditions of consent. What, if any, role will the EPA play in assessing the adequacy of this plan?
- (336) Should Bowdens Silver Mines be approved by the Independent Planning Commissioner. what roles and/or responsibilities, if any, would the EPA have in relation to:
- (a) The development of a remediation strategy for any lead contaminated sites that may occur as a result of mining activities?
 - (b) The remediation of lead contaminated sites that may occur as a result of mining activities?

Peabody Metropolitan Coal Mine

- (337) Since the determination of the Environment Protection Authority v Metropolitan Collieries Pty Ltd [2025] case in March this year, what, if any, actions have the EPA taken to ensure that Peabody is now acting in accordance with its environmental licence and not committing offences under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997?
- (a) Please provide details of any compliance or enforcement activities undertaken at the Peabody metropolitan site.
 - (b) Please provide details of any monitoring for potential pollution in the vicinity of the mine, including Royal National Park.

PFAS contamination in the Belubula River and surrounding areas

- (338) What, if any, protocols do the EPA have in place for testing foam for PFAS?
- (339) Has the EPA undertaken any total oxidisable precursor assay (TOPA) testing as a part of any of the surface water or ground water sampling activities undertaken in the Belubula River and nearby sites since May 2024?
- (a) Does the EPA have any plans to introduce TOPA testing in future sampling efforts, to detect PFAS precursor compounds?
- (340) Has the EPA undertaken any human health and/or environmental risk assessments to assess the risks associated with PFAS contaminated foam?
- (a) Please confirm whether the EPA has undertaken any assessment of the potential risks to fish from consuming PFAS contaminated foam. If yes, please provide details of the assessment and all results arising from the assessment.
 - (b) Please confirm whether the EPA has undertaken any assessment of the potential risks to cattle from consuming PFAS contaminated foam. If yes, please provide details of the assessment and all results arising from the assessment.
- (341) Please provide an explanation of why it took almost eight months to release findings from fish testing conducted in the Belubula River and surrounding waterways in January 2025.
- (a) Please provide an explanation for why a warning to the community about the risks of eating contaminated fish was not issued until August 2025, despite testing of fish occurring in January 2025.

- (b) Has the NSW Government done anything to address the likely sources of contamination in fish in these rivers?
- (342) Has the EPA undertaken an assessment of the potential risks to human health from consuming PFAS contaminated water?
- (a) If so, please provide details of how this assessment was undertaken and the outcomes of the assessment.
 - (b) Please provide a copy of all results arising from such an assessment.
- (343) Has the EPA undertaken an assessment of the potential risks to human health from consuming PFAS contaminated fish in excess of the recommended amounts?
- (a) If so, please provide details of how this assessment was undertaken and the outcomes of the assessment.
 - (b) Please provide a copy of any reports arising from such an assessment.
- (344) The EPA conducted surface water sampling in the Belubula River and a number of nearby sites in May, Aug, Oct and Dec 2024. On every occasion, the EPA detected PFOS levels that exceeded ecological water quality guidelines for multiple sites.
- (a) What has the EPA done to address this issue?
 - (b) Please provide details of any activities that have been undertaken by the EPA to clean up PFAS contamination in the Belubula River and surrounding areas between May 2024 and the present date, please include details of:
 - i. The time period the activity was undertaken
 - ii. The location of the clean-up work
 - iii. The methods used to clean-up the contamination
 - iv. The PFAS levels at the site before and after clean-up.
- (345) The December 2024 report on surface water testing on the Belubula River and nearby sites identifies a number of potential contamination sources. Have any of the potential sources of PFOS contamination had changes made to their licence conditions?
- (a) Or have any other changes been made, to limit potential contamination?
- (346) Reports for surface water testing in the Belubula River and nearby sites between May and December 2024 indicate that for each surface water sampling event the EPA have analysed

samples against livestock and irrigation water quality guidelines and ecological water quality guidelines, but never against Australian drinking water guidelines. Why is that?

(347) How far downstream on the Belubula River or surrounding or connected waterways has the EPA conducted testing of PFAS contamination?

- (a) What is the EPA's understanding of how far PFOS contamination might be travelling?
 - i. What evidence is the EPA using to inform this understanding?

(348) Please provide an explanation of why the Australian Livestock Drinking Water Guidelines do not include a reference level for PFOS.

- (a) Does the EPA have a position on what a safe level for PFOS would be for livestock drinking water?

(349) Please provide an explanation of why the Australian Irrigation Guidelines do not include a reference level for PFOS.

- (a) Does the EPA have a position on what a safe level for PFOS would be for irrigation water?

(350) Why hasn't the EPA tested the volume of flows to determine the absolute load of PFOS at sites - volume of flow X nanograms per litre of water

(351) PFOS is known to be widely used by the metallurgic mining industry to separate ores from flocculant and it is also known to be used in water for fracking operations. Does the EPA know whether Newmont's Cadia mine uses PFOS in its operations?

- (a) Has the EPA taken any steps to prevent Cadia mine from using PFOS in its mining operations (e.g. are there any conditions on their licence to prevent use)?

(352) In May 2024, an EPA media release stated the EPA is "considering revising air emissions limits on the Cadia mine licence." Has this occurred?

NSW Guide for Large Emitters

(353) How will the new guide for large emitters affect the planning process for mining approvals or modifications?

Gas Decarbonisation Roadmap

(354) Has the gas decarbonisation roadmap consultation started? If not, when will it start?

- (a) What will the consultation involve?

PFAS in Biosolids

- (355) The NSW Biosolids Guideline Review was first published in April 2023 and amended in January 2025. Why has it taken so long to go out to consultation on a Draft Biosolids Order and Draft Biosolids exemption?
- (a) What element(s) of the report was amended in January 2025?
- (356) How many companies (public or private) currently supply biosolids for reuse as a soil amendment in NSW?
- (a) Please list each company.
- (357) What, if any, oversight does the EPA have of the users of biosolids across NSW?
- (a) Are the users of biosolids more often large corporations or do they also include individuals?
- (b) How are biosolids most typically supplied to an end-user?
- (358) How feasible would it be for a user of biosolids to test the land to which biosolids are to be applied for contaminants such as PFAS, as would be required by the draft biosolids exemption?

2024 State of the Environment report

- (359) For each of the following key findings in the 2024 State of the Environment, please provide full details of the data relied upon to inform each of the following key findings:
- (a) Most estuaries and coastal swimming sites have water quality that is suitable for swimming, but this varies, especially after heavy rainfall.
- (b) Coastal vegetation and habitats (saltmarsh, mangroves and seagrass) continue to be threatened by coastal development and climate change. While in some locations they are declining, in others coverage has improved due to good management.
- (c) Kelp forest area declined in all sampled locations between 2019 and 2023, from 25% to 60%.
- (d) Despite limited data for assessing statewide trends of coastal fish species, current monitoring of fisheries suggests fish stocks are stable, although some species are under threat.

PORTFOLIO: ENERGY

Energy Savings Scheme

(360) Please provide the rates of uptake of the Energy Savings Scheme in relation to heat pumps, pre and post the introduction of the \$200 copayment on heat pump sales.

(a) Please provide a quarterly breakdown.

(361) In June 2025, the Government announced a new ‘compliance blitz’ on the Energy Savings Scheme:

(a) What is the aim of the compliance blitz?

PORTFOLIO: ALL

Human health and environmental risk assessments

(362) Have any agencies in the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and/or Heritage Portfolios ever engaged EnRisks to conduct human health and/or environmental risk assessments?

(a) If yes, how many risk assessments have EnRisks conducted for the Environment, Climate Change, Energy and/or Heritage Portfolios in the 10 years between 2015 and 2025?

i. Please provide details for each risk assessment, including what the assessment covered, when it was commissioned, when it was finalised and whether it has been publicly released (including a link to the final assessment where available).