

Special Minister of State, Transport, the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy

Hearing: 28 August 2025
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question 1 – Art Gallery Staffing Analysis

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I'm just asking about the modelling that Treasury has done that claims that the Art Gallery of New South Wales is overstaffed. I'm curious as to whether that includes staffing for the Sydney Modern.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. Feel free to quiz in more detail with the officials but, yes, my understanding is it's an analysis of both the galleries.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Which institutions were being compared with in that analysis?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The work was quite extensive, so it did look at a range of other galleries. We could certainly take it on notice and get you that information.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: That would be helpful, thank you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that'd be useful to do.

Answer

I am advised:

The Art Gallery does not separate staffing positions or associated expenditure between its two buildings, Naala Nura and Naala Badu.

Question 2 – Powerhouse Budget

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I will ask a different question. Could you tell me where the construction capex is housed in the budget? Where does that lie? Where is that expenditure? Is that under the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll get to the specific reference, but there have been some changes with the way the Powerhouse finances have been represented in the budget over time. I can understand why you might ask about that. The budget for the overall project has not changed. It's consistently been \$250 million as a government contribution and \$50 million from philanthropy.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Talking about the Parramatta rebuild, is that under MAAS, or is that under the department?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll get to those specifics and where they appear in the budget paper on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

The funding allocations for the establishment of Powerhouse Parramatta and expansion of the Museum of Discovery Centre in Castle Hill, and the Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation are detailed in Table 2.6 in Section 2 – 15 of the [NSW Budget 2025-26 Budget Paper No 3 – Infrastructure Statement](#).

The funding allocation for Sydney Observatory Essential Heritage Works and the museum's responsibilities for the revitalisation of Powerhouse Ultimo are detailed in Section 4 – 22 of the [NSW Budget 2025-26 Budget Paper No 3 – Infrastructure Statement](#).

Question 3 – Powerhouse Budget

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Do you think it's important that we have clarity on where those figures lie?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. I think that's a very reasonable request, but we also have to work within the framework that Treasury established for the budget papers. You'd

understand I'm not Minister and we're not the agencies that set the way those figures are reported in the budget.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Have you spoken to the Treasurer about how these projects are represented in the budget?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I won't go into all the details of my extensive discussions with my colleague.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I didn't ask for every detail.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was just making that point.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I am after this particular information.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's certainly been dialogue between Treasury and the agencies and between the offices about making sure that these are accurately represented in the budget papers, but I acknowledge that's changed over the course of the life of the Government.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: It seems to me that the capital expenditure and opex are now divided differently throughout the budget and this is making it very difficult to understand how the spending occurs. Given that is the case, are you committed to ensuring in future budgets that there is greater clarity around the distinction between the Ultimo Powerhouse and the Parramatta Powerhouse in the capex and opex?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that's not an unreasonable request, but we've got to work within the framework Treasury sets. I think we should take on notice your request about the current state and we can get you some details. Fundamentally, this is budget estimates and you have a right to ask about those issues. I can assure you the budget hasn't changed. I can assure you that fundraising under Lisa Havilah is going very strongly.

Answer

I am advised:

The funding allocations for the establishment of Powerhouse Parramatta and expansion of the Museum of Discovery Centre in Castle Hill, and the Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation are detailed in Section 2 – 15 of the [NSW Budget 2025-26 Budget Paper No 3 – Infrastructure Statement](#).

The funding distribution to the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences from the department is \$279.388m (as detailed in Section 4 – 23 of the [2025-26 Budget - Budget Paper No. 4 - Agency Financial Statements - 04 Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport](#)).

Question 4 – Powerhouse Staff Budget

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Could you please explain why there is a \$10 million increase in staffing for the MAAS this year, given that Powerhouse Parramatta is not even open, nor is Powerhouse Ultimo?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The elements of the staffing are related to the five major exhibitions which will unfold very soon at the Parramatta Powerhouse. In relation to some aspects of the build, all those involve the staffing stepping up. It's then expected to be lower, but I encourage you to speak to Lisa this afternoon to get some more specific details, if you would like them.

The CHAIR: I'll continue that line of questioning. The figures I have in front of me are that the MAAS annual report shows the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences was handed an additional \$67.6 million in funding for the financial year 2023-24, which was not shown in the State budget papers? Are you aware of that figure?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd have to take on notice those specifics. I'd want to check those before confirming them, but I'm happy to answer any questions.

Answer

I am advised:

The museum did not receive \$67.6m in additional funding in financial year 23-24. As outlined on page 125 and in disclosure note 3 (page 136) of the Powerhouse 2023-24 Annual Report, there is an additional \$52.95 million shown in the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Trust Financial Statements as a non-cash government grant, which relates to the transfer of Castle Hill Building J which occurred in March 2024 to the value of \$40.55 million. In addition, there was \$12.4 million transferred from Create NSW to Powerhouse relating to work-in-progress of Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation.

Question 5 – Powerhouse Funding

The CHAIR: Minister, did you approve a funding request at a certain point in time for the MAAS to have an emergency funding injection? What's the story?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't mind checking with the secretary on this, but my recollection is that this just went through the ordinary budget process on an annual basis. It is true that we've worked with a range of the cultural institutions, including the Art Gallery, for example, to make sure they have the funds they need over the course of the year. Sometimes that's meant changes during the course of the year. I don't believe that was true for the powerhouse, but I'd be happy to be corrected by the secretary.

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: I have only got some of the detail in front of me. I know some of the earlier questions did relate to the transfer of capex spend from Create to the powerhouse, but I could get you the full—

The CHAIR: How much was that?

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: It was quite significant. I could get you the detail and bring it back after morning tea or lunch, if you'd like.

The CHAIR: Yes, please.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That was an accounting change.

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: Yes. It also related to the fact that Create will no longer have a role in overseeing some of the infrastructure build, further to what the Minister said earlier. But I can get you the specific numbers as to what was transferred, and Ms Havilah will have more as well. We'll get you those details.

Answer

I am advised:

The funding allocation from the department is \$279,388 million and represents both capital and operational expenditure across all Powerhouse sites and projects. As detailed on page 4-23 ([2025-26 Budget - Budget Paper No. 4 - Agency Financial Statements - 04 Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport](#)).

Question 6 – Listen Out Sydney Meeting

The CHAIR: I just wanted to turn to your ministerial diaries. On 31 July last year you had a meeting with Listen Out Sydney. Who was at that meeting?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would have to take on notice the details of precisely who was there, but I can confirm—if that's my diary recollection, I'm certain that's correct.

The CHAIR: What was discussed at that meeting?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd be cautious about recalling the meeting exactly, but obviously I've met with a range of the festivals about the pressures that they've been experiencing. They've made no secret of the fact that they are under financial pressure. I've met with a range of the festivals, large and small, about the state of regulation and the state of their finances.

The CHAIR: At the 31 July meeting with Listen Out Sydney, I assume that would have had the head of Fuzzy Operations, who is also the chair of AFA—I assume Adelle Robinson was at that meeting?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. The head of Fuzzy Operations—I'm not sure if that's an accurate description or not. I do believe Adelle Robinson was at that meeting, but I'd want to take that on notice just to confirm it for you.

Answer

I am advised:

The meeting was attended by the Managing Director of Fuzzy Operations and representatives from my office, Sound NSW and Destination NSW.

Question 7 – Music Festival Viability Fund

The CHAIR: The music festivals package was announced and, at that time, as it was before the Parliament, the music festival viability fund was established. I just want to get clear, did you sign off on the fund or was that just a departmental sign-off?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was certainly consulted on the fund. We'd have to get you some information about who the decision-maker was but, yes, I was involved in being briefed on the fund by the agency.

Answer

I am advised:

The establishment of the Contemporary Music Festival Viability Fund was approved by the Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy.

Question 8

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Is the Toolijooa Passing Loop part of that investigation? And full duplication from Gerringong to Bomaderry as well, is that part of—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've certainly had some discussions about it. I might refer that specific question to the agency.

TRUDI MARES: Yes, it is included.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do we have any preliminary costings around those segments or not?

TRUDI MARES: No, but I will take those questions and see if I can bring you back some details this afternoon.

Answer

I am advised:

The Illawarra Rail Resilience Plan will consider changes and upgrades to the existing network including the Toolijooa passing loop.

Question 9

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Have you got any metrics that you can potentially table that would put that into some sort of context?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. I'll ask Matt Longland to table some for you shortly, but I think we'd be very happy to get you that information. I do indicate it's early days as we're building back after the rail dispute. But that maintenance backlog is coming down quite dramatically. It had really peaked, now down to 34 orders still outstanding from hundreds and hundreds. That is a benefit right across the network, but including on the South Coast line.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Longland, do you have any of those figures now or should I ask you this afternoon?

MATT LONGLAND: I'm happy to pick those up this afternoon if you want to go into the detail.

Answer

I am advised:

Sydney Trains' punctuality information is publicly available on the Transport for NSW website.

Question 10

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you all for coming today. Ms Mares, just a quick question for you following up on my colleague's question: Can you come back to the Committee today with that costing that you have on the electrification of the Bomaderry to Kiama—

TRUDI MARES: Yes, I'll confirm what work has been done to date. I don't think we would have costings yet, but I'll certainly give an update on work done to date.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you see if you do have a costing or a range available? Obviously, as part of that work there would be some estimate in there.

TRUDI MARES: Sure.

Answer

I am advised:

The Illawarra Rail Resilience Plan will consider changes and upgrades to the existing network. While the plan will estimate high-level costs, detailed scope and cost estimates will be determined during a business case process.

Question 11

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On how many occasions have you met with the lead negotiator, Christopher John Saxon?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can confirm—look, I'd have to take on notice the number of times that I've met extensively with the negotiator and the large number of agency teams who are dealing with this.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you get that answer to us today, how many times you've met with him?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll take it on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

I have met with Chris Saxon as a part of tolling reform meetings 12 times since November 2024.

Question 12 – Music Festival Viability Fund

The CHAIR: Two of their festivals received funding under that crucial package for New South Wales festivals. They're celebrating there after years of lobbying.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, correct.

The CHAIR: How much money did they receive?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll get you that detail, but it would have been in line with the funds.

Answer

I am advised:

Fuzzy received \$1 million through the Contemporary Music Festival Viability Fund in 2024-25, for two separate festivals - \$500,000 for Listen Out and \$500,000 for Field Day.

This information is available on the website: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/contemporary-music-festival-viability-fund/recipients>.

Question 13

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Minister, I might jump to ports. You had a 10 June press release about delivering an economic boost for the New South Wales freight industry to grow to \$130 billion, and there's a whole series of actions you plan to take. What's the estimated cost to taxpayers of implementing this reform road map in the short term, in the next four years?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, I want to recognise that this was work commissioned by Minister Haylen. It's really excellent work because often what happens with freight decisions is they're made piece by piece. We're talking about a particular port or rail line. We haven't done that whole-of-freight chain analysis. This work, led by Kerry Schott with some able assistance, has really done that. It's excellent work. You're correct: It sets out some phasing recommendations to the Government about what we should do in the short term. It provides a great way to work through this problem. On the specifics about the cost, I'd probably need to take that on notice. We're working through exactly how to implement that. That will impact on the cost assumptions, but we've been given great guidance by the report in the way they've structured it.

Answer

I am advised:

The estimated value of the freight sector by 2061 is Gross Value Add \$131.5 billion. This figure was calculated using the model from the 2024 Value of Freight Study, which has been endorsed by the NSW Government Common Planning Assumptions.

The Delivering Freight Policy Reform in NSW implementation plan includes 95 actions, categorised as short-term (commencing within 12 months), medium-term (within two years), and long-term (within five years). Work is currently underway to develop the Freight Reform implementation plan, and it will include the delivery schedule and phased cost estimates.

Question 14

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I might direct this to Mr Murray. What consultation actually took place with driver unions, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and anything to do with Fire and Rescue around this blanket parking ban at the port?

JOSH MURRAY: Mr Banasiak, I'll take that on notice and we'll come back to you on the consultation that was in place.

Answer

I am advised:

Parking conditions on the State road network within the port precinct have not changed. Parking on port and local roads are managed by the private port operator and local councils respectively.

Parking regulations specific to dangerous goods vehicles are covered under the Dangerous Goods (Road and Rail Transport) Act 2008 and the Dangerous Goods (Road and Rail Transport) Regulation 2022, administered by the Environmental Protection Agency and Part 13 of the Australian Dangerous Goods Code, administered by the National Transport Commission.

The parking requirements state that dangerous goods vehicles cannot park within 15 metres of a densely populated area or within eight metres of another dangerous goods vehicle.

Dangerous goods vehicles are not permitted to park in the Truck Marshalling Area at Port Botany, in accordance with the site's development approval. This was established over a decade ago by Sydney Ports.

Transport is working to amend the Development Application to allow dangerous goods vehicles to use that location.

Transport is not aware of security waking up resting drivers to move their vehicles. This should not occur, however, there may be instances, if the vehicles are parked illegally.

Under the road rules, a heavy vehicle can park on a street to manage fatigue. However, a dangerous goods vehicle must also comply with the dangerous goods vehicle regulations. Regardless of the load, heavy vehicles cannot park illegally in no stopping or no parking areas.

The original Development Application submitted by Sydney Ports in 2011, does not address why dangerous goods were not included.

Question 15

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You acknowledge, though, that port security waking up drivers during their regulated rest breaks and basically trying to turf them out is actually breaching the national heavy vehicle regulation? Do you accept that?

JOSH MURRAY: I would be concerned about that but, again, I just have to check the jurisdiction there in terms of how that has been implemented. We can certainly look at any concerns.

Answer

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question On Notice 14.

Question 16

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do we know who actually inserted the "no dangerous goods" clause in the original DA that has caused some of this mess?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, I will take that on notice and we'll get the detail back to you today.

Answer

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question On Notice 14.

Question 17

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On 28 May you announced a second Sydney Trains review. Have you received the first report of that second review?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I have not received the final report of the review panel. I have been briefed by the panel as they're going. I've got a lot of faith in the work they'll be doing, but I'm yet to receive the final report.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The first report—you haven't received that at all?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: They've briefed me on their work as they've gone along, but we're yet to receive the final report.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But they were required to provide a first report. Are you telling this Committee they have not complied with that requirement to produce that report?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. I'm telling you I've been briefed on their early work and I'm yet to receive the final report.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When will you make it public?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to receive it and talk to them about their advice on how we deal with it publicly. I have to indicate my view, though, Ms Ward: We have to be very up-front with the public about where the system is up to and about what it takes. I see this as a very public discussion.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sorry, I have limited time. In terms of being up-front with the public, does a document exist concerning the first report?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll take that on notice, just the terms on which the advice is being provided, and I expect to receive the final report shortly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can your office answer before the lunch break? Is there a document in existence? Does a document exist concerning the first report?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can confirm that I've taken it on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is your office able to provide the transparency you wanted to talk about—being up-front, as you also wanted to talk about and that you were also clear about earlier? Is your office able to provide that information today before the lunch break?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've confirmed I've taken it on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

The Independent Rail Review Report was released on 23 September 2025.

Question 18

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What's the current length of the station at Woollahra?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was out there to look at it on the weekend.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes. What's the length of the station?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I didn't measure it, in part because—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You were busy out with your pliers on the others, doing maintenance.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —for safety reasons we weren't on the platform or on the tracks. Trains were running quite frequently. It's going to be a very good service.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is it possible to get an answer to that today, Minister? You've said there's been 50 years of work. Does Sydney Trains know the distance?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You'll provide that today to the Committee?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer you to the agency. Yes, Sydney Trains does know the distance of the platform.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Good.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer you to the agency officials this afternoon. If they're unable to provide that information, I will take that on notice for you. But I expect they'll be able to tell you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You'll take on notice the length of the train station?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. I expect they'll be able to tell you this afternoon. I didn't personally get the chance to measure it, though I can tell you it will be an eight-minute trip to the CBD.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I didn't ask that. Is this train station by media release, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, absolutely not. There's been significant planning.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: There is 50 years of work, and you can't tell us how long the station is.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: One of the reasons that this is actually going to be a big—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I would like Mr Longland to come back this afternoon, if we can progress on that. We have only got 12 seconds.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll leave you with your 12 seconds.

Answer

I am advised:

I refer to the response provided in the hearing.

Question 19

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What's the length of an eight-carriage Tangara train?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can't confirm, off the top of my head, the length. But I can tell you, if you are standing on the tracks—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right, can we get an answer today? Sydney Trains should know the answer.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —they're much higher than they look when you're on the platform, as I was yesterday with the maintenance team.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is not a laughing matter. You have announced this train station and you don't know the length. Sydney Trains surely must know it. Can you provide that answer today?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'd be happy to get it to you on notice or this afternoon.

Answer

I am advised:

I refer to the response provided in the hearing.

Question 20

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: When was the first time the commissioner wrote to you about Operation Hector?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We're just going to grab those details for you. I believe the commissioner put some of this on the record the other day.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You're welcome to take it on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I might refer to the secretary to see what information she can give us regarding that.

KATE BOYD: I understand that the New South Wales Government has responded to all of the ICAC—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: That's not what I asked. I asked when did the commissioner first write to the Special Minister of State with respect to some of the shortcomings of the ICAC Act that became obvious in the recommendations and findings of Operation Hector?

KATE BOYD: We can get you the precise date on that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Okay. Minister, when did you say you responded to the commissioner?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The commissioner's written on a range of occasions—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Specifically about Operation Hector?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The issues have been broader, but there has been backwards and forwards correspondence. I've responded to most of those matters, something the commissioner recognised in giving evidence the other day. What I might do is take it on notice because we can give you each of those dates.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I'm happy for you to take it on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

On 21 October 2024 the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption (**ICAC Committee**) wrote to the Premier and Special Minister of State regarding the jurisdiction of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (**ICAC**) with respect to subcontracting arrangements, as considered in the ICAC report entitled *Inner West Council and Transport for NSW – allegations concerning conduct of employees and others* following an investigation known as 'Operation Hector'. The ICAC Committee requested that the Government consider an amendment to the *Independent Commission Against*

Corruption Act 1988 to appropriately define the term 'public funds', noting that a question had arisen whether public money provided to a managing contractor for non-reimbursable work ceases to be public funds once it is received. The ICAC Committee did not propose a definition of 'public funds'.

The Special Minister of State responded to the ICAC Committee on 25 March 2025 (dispatched on 26 March 2025). Following the ICAC Committee's 19 June 2025 letter asking to be kept updated on progress of the reforms, the Special Minister of State responded on 19 August 2025, indicating that the Government is carefully considering potential reform, and that the ICAC Committee would be updated in due course. The Government is consulting with the ICAC regarding this matter. On 25 August 2025 The Cabinet Office (TCO) wrote to the ICAC regarding potential reform options. The ICAC responded to TCO on 28 August 2025.

Question 21

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I want to know how many subcontracting arrangements you would have within Transport. You can take that on notice; I can imagine you don't know the number. But the Minister just said that you've been reviewing some of those arrangements. Is that right? Have you reviewed any of the arrangements as a result of the findings from Operation Hector?

JOSH MURRAY: I would stipulate that of the nine recommendations into Operation Hector for Transport, all nine have been completed. In regard to subcontracting, I'd be happy to look further into that, whether you mean in regard to subcontracting of internal staff or the subcontractors that we bring on to deliver projects.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: It's more about the subcontractors. More in line with what came out in Operation Hector is what I'm referring to....

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has implemented all nine recommendations from Operation Hector. These actions focused on strengthening governance and assurance over subcontracting frameworks, including the review and updating of internal processes, training, and information security.

Transport for NSW has updated its applicable contracts to include enhanced subcontracting requirements. In addition, Transport for NSW mandates high standards of behaviour in its contracts and promotes a strong reporting culture, supported by the recent implementation of the Unacceptable Behaviours Guide to further encourage early disclosure of unethical conduct.

Question 22

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I'll just go back to the Minister. I'll come back to you later in the day. Minister, did you say that you've met with the chief commissioner about this specifically or not?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't say about this specifically. I'm aware of the commission's views. I've met with the chief commissioner about a range of issues in which the commission's interested, but the commission certainly had an interest in this area.

Answer

I am advised:

I refer to the evidence provided at p 32 of the uncorrected transcript of the Budget Estimates inquiry by Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts on 28 August 2025.

Question 23

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Well, it depends. When did the commissioner first write to you? I suspect that the commissioner wrote to you last year, Minister, not this year.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As you indicated—I'm not disputing that this has been a long-running recommendation.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I just want to make it very clear that it's about the wording of section 8 (2) (a) of the Act, to ensure that the amendment can capture jurisdiction of subcontracting arrangements as public funds. It's not as complex as what you were referring to before about the "follow the dollar", and it's certainly not about public officials either, or extending that definition. That's not what is being recommended by the commissioner.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We've taken on notice those dates. There has been backwards and forwards about a range of these jurisdictional issues. This is not the only jurisdictional issue that the ICAC is raising.

Answer

I am advised:

On 21 October 2024 the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption (**ICAC Committee**) wrote to the Premier and Special Minister of State regarding the jurisdiction of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (**ICAC**) with respect to subcontracting arrangements, as considered in the ICAC report entitled *Inner West Council and Transport for NSW – allegations concerning conduct of employees and others* following an investigation known as 'Operation Hector'. The ICAC Committee requested that the Government consider an amendment to the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988* to appropriately define the term 'public funds', noting that a question had arisen whether public money provided to a managing contractor for non-reimbursable work ceases to be public funds once it is received. The ICAC Committee did not propose a definition of 'public funds'.

The Special Minister of State responded to the ICAC Committee on 25 March 2025 (dispatched on 26 March 2025). Following the ICAC Committee's 19 June 2025 letter asking to be kept updated on progress of the reforms, the Special Minister of State responded on 19 August 2025, indicating that the Government is carefully considering potential reform, and that the ICAC Committee would be updated in due course. The Government is consulting with the ICAC regarding this matter. On 25 August 2025 The Cabinet Office (**TCO**) wrote to the ICAC regarding potential reform options. The ICAC responded to TCO on 28 August 2025.

Question 24

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many track possessions are there between now and 2029?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer that specific detail to the agency. I have been briefed.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You just talked about it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've been briefed, but I think that's a level of detail that I'd prefer to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You referred to it. You said it would be part of it. You seemed quite confident about it. You said you'd been briefed on it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So how many are planned?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer you to the agency just so they can take you through at the—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You don't know. Can you get that answer today?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Would you like me to take it on notice?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'd prefer it today. I don't see that it needs weeks and weeks—three weeks—to return some information when we've got all the experts here.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think your options are to ask the agency—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just on the level of shutdowns.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —or I'm happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Does that include the shutdowns?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Does what include the shutdowns?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On the level of shutdowns that you referred to, how many?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

Answer

I am advised:

173.

Question 25

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Has Transport previously raised its concerns to that central agency?

JOSH MURRAY: I'd have to take that on notice, in terms of—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're the head of Transport, Mr Murray. You don't know if you've raised concerns about impact to rail and roads as a result of a potential closure of Glebe Island port?

JOSH MURRAY: As I said last week, we feed into a whole-of-government process. We are one of the inputs into that process, and we would be providing a wide range of inputs.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you have any concerns? Does Transport have any concerns about the impact on the road and rail network as a result of the Glebe Island port closure, potentially?

JOSH MURRAY: Through that process, Transport has been asked a range of questions, but we are not the lead agency on that work.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I didn't ask if you're the lead agency; I asked if you, as the transport agency, had raised concerns about the transport impacts to the central agency?

JOSH MURRAY: As I say, we don't raise concerns; we answer questions in regard to what are the logistics required, and that would have been fed into that process. I can't comment on the detail.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sorry, can I just clarify: You say you don't raise concerns?

JOSH MURRAY: We provide information in regard to a wider government process.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I think earlier you said, did you not—and I'll ask Hansard to repeat it back if we need—that your role is not to raise concerns, or you don't raise concerns?

JOSH MURRAY: I misspoke. We clearly raise concerns when we are involved in processes like this, but—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're involved in this process. Have you raised concerns?

JOSH MURRAY: I said I'd take that on notice. This is a collaborative, whole-of-government process of which we are just one party. As I said last week, we have fed in scenarios to that work.

Answer

I am advised:

The future use of Glebe Island is being considered as part of the ongoing planning for Bays West Precinct. This planning is led by the Cabinet Office with a whole of Government approach. Transport for NSW has provided input into the whole of government process.

Question 26

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can we get that number today? The media release was put out today, just in time for estimates. I'm sure somebody is very close to it and has looked at those numbers and could potentially get that for us today, could they not?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Exactly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you agree with that, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You'll have to put the question again.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you get those numbers for us today, given that you put out the press release this morning?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: To each of those suppliers? Absolutely. I think that's very appropriate.

Answer

I am advised:

Of the recently announced purchase of 151 Zero Emission Buses:

- 56 buses will be supplied by Custom Denning
- 95 buses will be supplied by Volgren.

Both companies meet the 50 percent Local Content target. Custom Denning manufactures the chassis and body in its Western Sydney factory in St Marys. Volgren manufactures the body in Victoria and builds on an imported chassis from BYD.

Question 27

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many Volgren are providing, how many Custom Denning are providing and, of those, how many are built in New South Wales.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll provide some information on notice on that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On notice, or today?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: On notice.

Answer

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 26.

Question 28 – Australian Design Centre

The CHAIR: This is also in relation to funding cuts. This is about the Australian Design Centre, who lost \$200,000 in Federal funding in January. Then on Easter Thursday this year they received an email from Create NSW with the devastating news that they had also missed out on four-year State operational funding. This is despite being recommended by peer assessors. That was in the same round where more than a dozen regional galleries also lost State funding. Minister, are you comfortable with that situation for the Australian Design Centre, which was founded 50 years ago?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can understand why they were concerned. I'm certainly sympathetic to them and the views of the galleries. They're doing fantastic work. The good news is the two-year funding round has funded many of those regional museums and galleries. It has also funded the Australian Design Centre. They've had their funding now confirmed for two years. They've got that certainty, and that's good news.

The CHAIR: Is that the same level as they were funded previously under the 4-Year Multi-year grant?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I might take that on notice, but we can confirm the number. I believe it's \$150,000, but we might confirm the details to you on notice so you've got those specifics.

Answer

I am advised:

The Australian Design Centre is funded at the Artform Board recommended amount of \$150,000 per annum through the 2-Year Multi-Year funding program. It was previously funded for \$300,000 per annum through the 4-Year Multi-Year funding program (for 2021 to 2024).

Question 29

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do you have any targets in mind in terms of increasing the number of wheelchair accessible taxis over the next 12 months, and whether there are specific targets for regional and rural areas versus metro?

JOSH MURRAY: I will take that on notice. We might be able to answer that today. Certainly, we accept that the low-interest loans have been tried before, and they have had some success, but it has only been a limited number of take-ups.

Answer

I am advised:

As a first step, the NSW Government is addressing the critical shortage of wheelchair accessible taxis by delivering an emergency funding package of \$15 million over 12-months.

This package has been designed to implement immediate actions to stabilise the decline in wheelchair accessible taxi service availability in metropolitan, regional and rural areas. While it does not set specific targets for increasing wheelchair accessible taxi numbers, its primary aim is to support and strengthen current services to ensure safe and reliable service delivery.

As these immediate measures are being rolled out, Transport for NSW is also developing longer-term reform actions, including options for funding a sustainable and viable accessible point-to-point transport system for the future.

Question 30

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, back to our buses. How many workers for Foton are currently inmates at the South Coast correctional facility?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Foton have been employing some inmates as a part of their build. I welcome that, as I think it's great that people get a second chance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is it cheap labour? It's cheap labour, isn't it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I particularly do that as the son of a probation and parole officer. I think it's fantastic that actually people get a chance to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Certainly. But what local jobs does that create?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is a good program. It's a very small number of employees. It was up as high as four at one point. We can get the current figures for you. But this will employ many, many locals as this program develops, if it goes well.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The inmates being employed—will employ locals?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I hope they employ additional people both through this scheme but many additional locals as well. I think that would be the right balance there. But I support—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Certainly. Are those inmates paid—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I just want to make it clear, Ms Ward. I support that program, but I also support this manufacturing down there—something you appear to oppose.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I have two minutes, Minister. You can do that by press release.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sure. I may take you up on that offer.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are those inmates paid the full labour rate?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I will take that on notice. The initial advice to me was that they are receiving payment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Payment or full payment? Are they cheap labour?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to take the details on notice for that.

Answer

I am advised:

Of the 16 people currently employed at the interim facility in Nowra, three are on a work release program. They are paid the full standard Award rate.

Question 31

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I would like to know is Transport aware of rust being on these Foton buses because they've come from China?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer you to the agency.

JOSH MURRAY: I will take that on notice. It's not something that has been advised to me.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You haven't received that advice?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm aware that the 31 buses currently produced through the Nowra facility are going through their registration at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But are you aware of the rust on these buses?

JOSH MURRAY: I am not aware of that, but I will take the question on notice and come back.

Answer

I am advised:

Minor rust stains were evident on a few of the lower body frame sections of the first batch of Foton buses. Foton is addressing this issue. Transport for NSW checks vehicles thoroughly during its testing and commissioning processes.

Question 32 – ACFP Funding

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: My first question is about an answer the Minister gave regarding the regional arts organisations that are being funded, as announced this morning, versus the total funding pool. The Minister seemed to indicate that the total funding pool was somewhere in the order of \$15 million for the grants this morning and that half of that, \$7.5 million or so, had gone to regional arts organisations. I want to clarify that is right because the Excel spreadsheet that's available on the website indicates that the total pool of funding is somewhere just over \$7 million.

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: If you like, I could get Ms Glasscock to talk through the individual grants, which might give you the total and the percentage.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: That would be helpful to clarify whether the Minister had found an additional \$7.5 million from somewhere.

KERRI GLASSCOCK: The two-year and multi-year funding announcement this morning invested just over \$3.7 million annually into 31 regional organisations. The \$7.4 million is in reference to the two-year commitment.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: When he referenced a \$15 million figure, do you know where that came from?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: That is the two-year commitment.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: The spreadsheet released today is the one-year total. Is that right?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: Yes. That's correct.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: The intention is that the spreadsheet from today, which represents one year, will just be replicated this time next year.

KERRI GLASSCOCK: Yes. We've committed to the two-year funding period.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: On that spreadsheet, column A is a date and it's the date of 22 August. What does that date refer to?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: I would have to take that on notice for 22 August. I don't have that spreadsheet in front of me. Sorry.

Answer

I am advised:

The date refers to the date the funding recommendations were approved by the Minister for the Arts (on 22 August 2025).

For the 2-year funding program a total of \$7,736,220 will be provided each year. Of this, \$3,766,220 was committed to organisations based in regional NSW.

Over the two years of the commitment, the total investment will be \$15,472,440. \$7,532,440 of this to organisations in regional NSW.

Question 33 – ACFP Funding

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: You received his grants on Monday or Tuesday?

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: His decision? We could get you the exact dates, but it's very recent.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: The recommendations were with his office for a couple of weeks?

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: No.

KERRI GLASSCOCK: No, they weren't.

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: We'd have to get you the exact date, but Wednesday is not "weeks".

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: It would be great if I could please have the dates of when the recommendations were sent to the Minister and when he sent them back to Create, or to whoever he needed to send them back to.

Answer

I am advised:

The recommendations were provided to the Minister for the Arts on 22 August 2025. The recommendations were approved by the Minister for the Arts and sent to Create NSW on 22 August 2025.

Question 34 – Powerhouse Funding

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I am keen to get deep into the budget. I'm not sure who is best to talk about this. It's referring to Budget Paper No. 03 and Budget Paper No. 04 and understanding exactly where money is recorded. In Budget Paper No. 03, relating to the Department of Creative Industries, the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences has the project of the Ultimo revitalisation. Presumably that project is housed in that entity's budget, but the new Powerhouse Museum is listed under the department's major works. Could you please explain why that is?

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: Yes. This is part of the reason the numbers are quite confusing about what sits in our department and specifically in the Create budget. There have been some changes. There are three powerhouse projects that have been or are underway: Castle Hill, Ultimo and Parramatta. The Castle Hill building has transferred into the Powerhouse in the last year. I think that's visible in their annual report, and that was a transfer of \$53 million.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: But in this budget, Castle Hill is included under the department.

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: It has now transferred to the Powerhouse, is my understanding.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: When did that happen?

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: I'm sorry, I can't remember who it was. This morning someone was quoting page 144 of the Powerhouse annual report, and that's where you can see what has transferred into the Powerhouse.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: But that annual report is from 2023-24.

ELIZABETH MILDWATER: For the last year, yes. I guess what I could do is talk you through the pieces as we understand them. If you would like, I could get back to you on notice about how they're accounted for in the financial statements. But what you're seeing is a move from Create into Powerhouse, as either things are completed or as we have changed the model now and just transferred the other works to the Powerhouse.

Answer

I am advised:

The museum did not receive \$67.6m in additional funding in financial year 23-24. As outlined on page 125 and in disclosure note 3 (page 136) of the Powerhouse 2023-24 Annual Report, there is an additional \$52.95 million shown in the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences Trust Financial Statements as a non-cash government grant, which relates to the transfer of Castle Hill Building J which occurred in March 2024 to the value of \$40.55 million. In addition, there was \$12.4 million transferred from Create NSW to Powerhouse relating to work-in-progress of Powerhouse Ultimo Revitalisation.

Question 35 – Powerhouse Funding

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: In Budget Paper No. 03, 4-20, it lists the estimated total cost of the new Powerhouse Museum in Parramatta, including Castle Hill, as "n.a." Do you know why that is?

LISA HAVILAH: No, I'd have to take that on notice. But I can tell you the total capital allocation. I can confirm that as \$840 million.

Answer

I am advised:

The NSW Government Contribution of \$840 million is included on page 2-15 of 2025-26 Budget Paper No. 03. The 'n.a.' means the data is not available or is not disclosed for commercial reasons. The ETC for the New Powerhouse Museum in Parramatta (including Castle Hill) project has been reported this way since inception (2018-19 budget).

Question 36 – Powerhouse Funding

LISA HAVILAH: That is a combination of both capex and opex. It includes the transfer of the Ultimo revitalisation capital budget, so we're holding the capital budget for the Ultimo project.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: But you're not holding the capital budget for Parramatta?

LISA HAVILAH: No. Because it is in a different phase—

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Are you holding the opex budget for Parramatta?

LISA HAVILAH: Yes.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: How much is that?

LISA HAVILAH: It's probably better represented by me explaining it through expenses. If you break down the \$190 million, \$58.1 million of that is what we'll contribute to the Parramatta capex base build through philanthropy, and \$127.5 million is both a combination of workforce and other operating expenses that we are utilising to prepare to operationalise Powerhouse Parramatta and develop and deliver the five major exhibitions in preparation for our opening next year. We take on the Powerhouse Parramatta building in 16 weeks, and we have a period of fit-out that we'll undertake in this financial year.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: The \$127.5 million, what was that last year—the equivalent?

LISA HAVILAH: The equivalent last year—it's hard to find an exact equivalent—is \$123 million. You can see in the—hang on. I might take that on notice so I can get that exactly right.

Answer

I am advised:

The equivalent budget for 2024-25 was \$105.3 million.

Question 37 – RSA Training

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Okay, I'll throw them at that corner over there. I understand that training— although welcome—on sexual harassment and sexual violence prevention is only for people who are completing their RSA for the first time. Is that correct?

TAREK BARAKAT: Yes, it's compulsory for new entrants into the industry. It was compulsory from, I think, 17 June, and we've had about 12,000 to 13,000 people go through already. We expect it will be about 100,000 over the next 12 months. That's about the amount of people who do RSA training each year. We've also made it available to licensees. We've written to all licensees and said, "While it's not compulsory for people already in the industry to do it, here it is. We encourage you to use it. We encourage you to talk to your staff about it. Here's the materials that are available." Looking at applying it retrospectively, it's quite a challenging task from a capacity perspective. There's about 600,000 people in the industry with RSAs. To put all them through that training retrospectively we thought would be quite difficult.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: What does that training look like in terms of how intensive it is?

TAREK BARAKAT: It's part of the RSA course, so it's a component of the RSA course. Exactly what it entails I'd have to take on notice. But it's now built into the course that each new entrant into the industry has to complete. I'm happy to take on notice the detail.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Is it face to face or online?

TAREK BARAKAT: It can be both is my understanding.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: How many hours are we talking?

TAREK BARAKAT: I'll take that on notice, but I can come back to you after the break on that if that's useful.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: You can imagine where I'm going with this. Is it that hard to really say to people that they need to, say within the next 12 months—

TAREK BARAKAT: It's less about the people in the industry. It's more about the approved accredited training providers, whether they have the capacity to take on that extra cohort. I'm not saying we wouldn't look at it; I'm happy to take it away and consider it further. But the decision at this point was that it would be focused on new entrants into the industry.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I appreciate that you need to take it on notice, but presumably if it's an online course you would imagine—maybe this is a question again to the corner, but also I feel like what we're looking at here is an entrenched culture that needs to change. If we're not addressing the 600,000 people who are already in the industry and part of that culture, how effective is this going to be? It's better than nothing, but do we think that that's sufficient—just a one-off training when you get your RSA?

TAREK BARAKAT: No, certainly not, and Mr Rodrigues can talk to some of the other things we're doing. The RSA component is one aspect of trying to—as you say—fix that culture, but there's ongoing consultation with organisations like Full Stop that Mr Rodrigues is undertaking as well that will feed into that.

Answer

I am advised:

The whole RSA course is a minimum duration of six hours, excluding breaks and admin processes. This covers liquor laws, the responsible service of alcohol and harm minimisation. The sexual harassment and drink spiking content forms part of this course and is addressed in a section that takes up to 20 minutes.

The licensee training contains the same content as the RSA on drink spiking and sexual violence.

Question 38

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'll go to you, Mr Murray. I just wanted to get an update on the extent of consulting spend from Transport in the last financial year.

JOSH MURRAY: Thank you for the question. I will take those details on notice. But I may be able to come back to you within this part of the hearing. We have continued our work to reduce the spend on external consultants as part of the overall savings programs.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Are you able to also tell me the contractor spend and labour hire spend that Transport has?

JOSH MURRAY: I can take those on notice and aim to furnish them as quickly as possible.

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW releases data relating to consultants and contractors as part of its Annual Report, and eligible individual engagements are proactively disclosed.

Question 39

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can I ask why Hampden Bridge in Kangaroo Valley doesn't rate a mention in this Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan, given its significance and its issues? I know it kind of sits in Minister Aitchison's portfolio, but I'm going to push the friendship a bit here.

TRUDI MARES: Are you talking about this Illawarra plan?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: No, in general—the Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan. There is no mention of the Hampden Bridge at all in terms of a project of significance.

TRUDI MARES: I will have to take that on notice and have a look at that particular plan. But I can tell you that we are doing a review of all of our bridges, looking at not just what the asset condition is and when we need to do that work but also accessibility, particularly with the impacts that we've seen around Hampden and the load restrictions.

Answer

I am advised:

The Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan was published in March 2018. This is prior to Hampden Bridge having its load limit reduced.

The forthcoming Illawarra Shoalhaven Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan will consider Hampden Bridge as a regional priority.

Question 40

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Is the Glenmurray Road being considered as an option for a low-level crossing across the Kangaroo River?

TRUDI MARES: I'm not sure. I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Are you able to take that on notice in terms of whether that is being considered or re-examined, and what are the potential engineering obstacles for that option?

TRUDI MARES: Yes, I'll take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

The NSW Government has invested \$500,000 to begin planning for a long-term replacement for the heritage-listed Hampden Bridge in Kangaroo Valley.

This funding will support the development of possible long-term solutions, which include carrying out environmental, geotechnical and heritage assessments. The investigation process will also involve early design concepts, cost estimates and initial economic modelling.

Transport for NSW is also continuing to explore temporary options to restore the bridge's 42.5-tonne load limit as soon as possible. These options are currently being assessed, with a preferred solution expected to be confirmed in the coming months. Options include a temporary bridge next to the existing bridge or a detour option with an alternate river crossing. There are various constraints that need to be considered for these options, which are currently being worked through.

The community will be updated as work progresses.

Question 41

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I know the details. Can you maybe jump to the point? I've only got two minutes. What are the metrics you're using to measure whether this has been successful or not?

ANTHONY WING: So far it's had about more than 300,000 passenger trips moved through that trial through Uber PIN. Reporting coming from Uber and Sydney airport is that there has been a decrease in passenger wait time and increasing customer satisfaction. From my own point of view, I've obviously also put strong additional safety obligations on it too, and I have my own people go through and check to make sure, for example, at the boom gate at the entrance, as well as requiring Uber to have people to control the kerbside at all times when it's running. I've had my own people go through and check that is actually in place. Of course they do checks in plain clothes, and surprise checks as well, to make sure that the safety obligations are being put in place.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: When was the last plain-clothes compliance check done?

ANTHONY WING: I don't have a day, but it would have been very recent, because we do a lot of stuff at the airport and that's just on the roster of things for people to walk through.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Are you able to take on notice as to when the last one was? You don't have to give me the exact date, but obviously just a rough—

ANTHONY WING: It is within the last week or two. Yes, sure.

Answer

I am advised:

The Point to Point Commission maintains an ongoing presence at Sydney Airport, including monitoring activities at T1 as part of the trial of Uber PIN booking technology.

Inspectors undertake both highly visible and covert, plain clothes operations at Sydney Airport. The most recent covert operation at T1 occurred on 28 August 2025.

Question 42

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On the Western Sydney airport extensions, what's the status of the business cases for those two Western Sydney airport metro extensions?

PETER REGAN: We are continuing to work on two business cases. There's a business case for extensions between Saint Marys, the Western Sydney airport metro, and Tallawong, the north-west metro. We're working to finalise that work by around the end of this year, early next year, for government. We're continuing to look at options there in the north, and that one is being looked at as a metro extension, given it's connecting two metro lines. We're also working very closely with Transport for NSW. There's a jointly funded business case being done between State and Federal Government in the south,

which looks at both metro and heavy rail options between Bradfield, Leppington and further south towards Campbelltown, Macarthur. It's working to a similar time frame—around the end of this year, early next year—for finalisation of those works.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Wow. To my happiness, both of those will be done by the end of this year or early next year.

PETER REGAN: That's correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's fantastic. When do you anticipate that community consultation will occur, as part of the business case process?

PETER REGAN: I don't think there is a direct time frame for community consultation at this point. There is some consultation with landowners and with industry potential partners that will be taking place, but I would be happy, Ms Ward, to take on notice the time frames going forward for consultation.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: With those stakeholders, but not with the community—or both? Could you take on notice both?

PETER REGAN: With both, yes, that's fine.

Answer

I am advised:

The business case will consider the full range of alignment and station location options, taking account of stakeholder priorities, with the proposed preferred alignment designed to deliver the best possible outcome for public transport users and local communities. The business case is expected to be completed by early 2026.

Acquisition of land is not required for future extensions until the preferred alignment is settled and land requirements are clear. Consultation with affected landowners will be entered into at that time.

Question 43

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On how many occasions have you met with Christopher John Saxon?

CAMILLA DROVER: Ever or in my role as CEO?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In your role in direct negotiations in respect of the toll reform.

CAMILLA DROVER: If I can just clarify, I was on the steerco until I took up the role as the CEO. I was not involved in the direct deal. I wasn't part of the direct deal team, but I did sit on the steerco as a representative on behalf of Transport for NSW. I have met Mr Chris Saxon on several occasions. I would have to take on notice exactly how many times that that was. I did meet him in the last week.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In relation to toll reform and the direct deal?

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes.

Answer

I am advised:

Camilla Drover has met or been present in meetings with Christopher Saxon on approximately 16 occasions over the duration of the toll reform program.

Question 44

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes. That has often been done for prior projects like NorthConnex, the M7 widening et cetera. It's a very standard practice to model what the benefits and opportunities would be from a concession extension.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you seen that modelling for concession extensions?

CAMILLA DROVER: There's such a broad range of modelling that has been done. I can't specifically recall it, but I'm sure it has been in the mix.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you take on notice whether you have seen it? I'm not asking you to table it, but I'm asking you whether you, in your capacity, have had the opportunity to see it.

CAMILLA DROVER: I'll take it on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Since assuming the role as acting CEO of NSW Motorways, Ms Drover has not received any modelling in relation to the use of concession extensions to fund toll reform.

A range of modelling has been undertaken to inform the toll reform process.

Question 45 – Music Festivals Appeal Panel

The CHAIR: Mr Barakat and Ms Collins, I'm going to ask some questions around the Music Festival Roundtable and Music Festivals Appeal Panel to begin with. Firstly, Ms Collins, you're on the Music Festivals Appeal Panel as the head of Sound NSW. Is that correct?

EMILY COLLINS: Correct.

The CHAIR: I got some answers to questions on notice that I put in a little while ago that came back this week. This says that the appeals panel has met three times. Is that correct?

EMILY COLLINS: Correct.

The CHAIR: How many appeals have they considered in that time?

EMILY COLLINS: One application has been submitted, and that is still under review.

The CHAIR: When was the first meeting?

TAREK BARAKAT: I've got that, Ms Faehrmann if that would help. There was a meeting on 16 April, 11 June and 11 July.

The CHAIR: At those meetings, if there weren't applications to consider, were the meetings to work out the process?

EMILY COLLINS: Correct. It was looking at the establishment of the panel, going through the ministerial order and making sure that our role as the panel was clear, and getting advice about some of the definitions of what we were considering as part of the process.

The CHAIR: Why do you think that only one music festival has appealed? This is appealing the government charges, isn't it?

EMILY COLLINS: Correct.

The CHAIR: The requirements need to be that it's going to impact the viability of a festival. Are there reasons, from your perspective, Ms Collins, that you've only received one application?

EMILY COLLINS: I would say it's largely due to the time of year and the fact that festivals, in the lead-up to the summer sessions, are still getting their costings from government agencies.

The CHAIR: When were festivals notified—and how—that they could appeal to this panel?

TAREK BARAKAT: That's probably a question for me. The original ministerial order was published, I think, at the end of last year, which set the criteria for festivals to adhere to. From that point on, festivals could apply, and the Music Festival Roundtable was advised that at the last meeting. I can take on notice when exactly that was. But, as Ms Collins said, the first thing the panel did was consider that original ministerial order. We actually received some feedback from both the panel and industry about the criteria in that order. The Minister only recently published an updated order to reflect that feedback from industry and the panel. That has gone live only at the end of last week or the beginning of this week. Our website has now been updated and people have been communicated that that final order has now been published. I would expect, now that that information is

available and everything is live on our website, that we might start to see more applications in the lead-up to the summer season.

The CHAIR: So the initial order was made at the end of last year?

TAREK BARAKAT: Yes.

The CHAIR: Can you remember the date, roughly?

TAREK BARAKAT: I think it was December, but I can take on notice the exact date.

Answer

I am advised:

The Music Festivals (Music Festivals Panel) Order 2024 was published in the NSW Government Gazette on 20 December 2024.

Question 46 – Music Festivals Appeals Panel

The CHAIR: There have been a fair few festivals in that time. You're saying that music festivals could have applied to have their government charges waived as soon as that order was made?

TAREK BARAKAT: Yes, that's right. But nothing was really communicated until such time as the panel had convened and gone through the things that Ms Collins described. Once that had happened, we took on the feedback from the panel and industry and updated that order, and the Minister republished it with that feedback taken on board. We've now made it more clear that things are ready to go. I think it was largely the fact that—yes, they could have applied once the order was published, but the panel was yet to develop terms of reference and understand the criteria and determine how it wants to assess applications. Now that that has all happened, we expect to see more applications come through.

The CHAIR: How are music festivals being notified that they can do that?

TAREK BARAKAT: Our website has a dedicated webpage which sets out all the information.

The CHAIR: When did that happen? When was that updated?

TAREK BARAKAT: The new ministerial order was only published on Tuesday, I think. Our website would have been updated just after that—either Tuesday or yesterday, possibly. I can take the exact date on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Contact details for the Panel Secretariat were published on the Planning A Music Festival page on the NSW Government website on 18 June 2025, <https://www.nsw.gov.au/working-and-business/music-festivals>.

More comprehensive information on the Music Festivals Appeal Panel was published on this website on 27 August 2025.

Question 47 – Music Festivals Appeal Panel

The CHAIR: Is there any evidence that government charges have reduced since the music festival reforms passed the Parliament last year?

TAREK BARAKAT: I'll take that on notice unless Ms Collins knows whether the costs have reduced. But I can say that there has been a significant reduction in the number of festivals who have been required to adhere to more stringent requirements. Since the Act came into effect on 27 September last year, we've had 59 festivals notify us of them going ahead. Only 11 of those have had to require an agreed health and medical plan and, of those 11, eight have had to require a law enforcement and safety schedule. That's a significant reduction to when we had the subject music festivals legislation in place. It has made a significant difference there.

Answer

I am advised:

The Statutory Review of the *Music Festivals Act 2019* found that the former “subject festival” designation significantly increased costs for festival organisers in NSW, particularly from higher administrative costs, and resulting from higher user-pays police, private medical providers and ambulance services.

In response, the *Music Festivals Act 2019* was amended to remove this designation and introduce further measures to support the sustainability of the music festivals sector. The Government has also established new internal review mechanisms for user charges, together with the Music Festivals Appeal Panel.

Since the reforms commenced on 27 September 2024-up to 30 August 2025, 19 out of 68 festivals were required to prepare an agreed health and medical plan (‘HMP’), and only eight of those required a law enforcement and safety schedule (‘schedule’), with a further four pending whether NSW Police propose a schedule.

In the equivalent preceding period (from 27 September 2023 to 30 August 2024), 22 of the 58 festivals held were determined to be subject festivals. Another three festivals that were determined to be subject festivals were cancelled.

This represents a significant reduction in the number of festivals subject to more onerous requirements under the old framework, and therefore a reduction in costs for organisers. The Government intends to review the operation of the Act in 2026, and it is expected that costs will form part of this review.

Question 48– Music Festivals Appeal Panel

The CHAIR: Just to check, I do have 12 festivals here on my question.

TAREK BARAKAT: My understanding—I’ll correct this if I’m wrong—is that there were 12 festivals that notified us, but only 11 went ahead. I don’t know why the—

The CHAIR: It does say 12 festivals were required to have an agreed health and medical plan.

TAREK BARAKAT: One of those didn’t go ahead, is my understanding.

The CHAIR: Which one was that?

TAREK BARAKAT: I don’t know, but I can take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Bondi Beach Party 2025 was required to have an agreed Health and Medical Plan. It was later cancelled.

Question 49 – Music Festivals Appeals Panel

The CHAIR: I’ve probably got it here somewhere. Can I ask about the conditions, then. This is in relation to the changes, so having to submit a schedule to the police and the police coming back with conditions. The secretary can agree to approve it or not with or without changes. The eight that came back, the data I have is that they were all approved with changes—for example, Midnight Mafia, Meltdown, Hyperdome Sydney 2025. Could you give me an example of some of the conditions the police were wanting that were then changed by the secretary?

TAREK BARAKAT: To be clear, the secretary delegated to me, so it’s me making the decision. I can take on notice the specifics, but it was things like the police asking for things to be attached to the schedule that were actually dealt with via, say, a liquor licence or another form of licence that the festival would already have in place. Our response was these documents—I think one of them was a pyrotechnics certificate that we’d dealt

with through SafeWork. There's no need for the festival to also supply that as part of a law enforcement and safety schedule because they're already providing it through the SafeWork mechanism.

Answer

I am advised:

Police requested that all eight festivals be required to include, amongst a range of other documents, an Insurance Certificate of Currency and a Pyrotechnics Certificate as part of the schedule. The Certificate of Currency is already required by the venue for the event to operate, while the Pyrotechnics Certificate is assessed and approved by SafeWork NSW under the *Explosives Act 2003* and Explosives Regulation 2024, so it was determined that these documents did not need to form part of the schedule. This is a good example of reducing red tape.

Question 50

TRUDI MARES: Mr Banasiak, I just want to check, in relation to this, where the parking issue is? But then, secondly, was this about dangerous goods not being able to stop in that truck parking bay inside the port? I just want to give you the right answer.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I guess there are several components. Three years ago there was some incompetence by the ports, which led to the ports being gridlocked with trucks, which then led to the kneejerk reaction to ban trucks from parking in there, which had the obviously unintended consequences of dangerous goods trucks having to try to find places on the side streets to park and rest. I know there is a solution of a transport marshalling area, or TMA, but I think the original DA of that TMA said no dangerous goods.

TRUDI MARES: That's right.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Obviously, there are a couple of problems there—or a couple of questions. Where are we at with the new DA? To my understanding, it has taken three years to progress that DA.

TRUDI MARES: That's what I do have an update on. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure that I was getting the right information for you. I can't comment on the council compliance work, but I know that we are progressing that DA work as a matter of priority. I've checked in with the freight team in the break. We'll be looking at submitting that as soon as it's finished, which will be very soon. I can give you an exact time frame, if you like.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You can, or you—

TRUDI MARES: I'll come back to you with an exact time frame. Yes, that is being progressed as a priority—that adjustment for the truck marshalling area.

...

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You'll come back to me with a timeline in terms of when that is to be submitted?

TRUDI MARES: Yes, I'll follow that up.

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW is continuing to investigate allowing dangerous goods vehicles to use the Truck Marshalling Area (TMA) at Port Botany and is engaging with stakeholders.

Transport for NSW supports the use of the TMA for dangerous goods vehicles, but the outcome is subject to relevant approvals.

Question 51

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I go to you, Mr Murray, about the Transport for NSW campaign on social media and at the stations about appropriate commuter behaviour

regarding respect and kindness. Is there a budget attached to this social media campaign and announcements over the train stations?

JOSH MURRAY: There is a budget attached to it. I'd have to take on notice the exact number around that. We do obviously run a number of internal campaigns around respect at Transport. We also run these commuter campaigns to harness the issues around antisocial behaviour, and this one emanated from a lot of work we were doing with our staff, with the unions, and also some additional research into how we start to cut through. Certainly the staff have been very keen to put forward that campaigns are not enough—that real action is required. But the research, I'm advised, is also that you have to start with the small elements as well, and reminding people of all of our commitments when we're travelling on the public transport network goes a long way to creating the whole in terms of passenger and staff behaviours. This is just one of those elements. We have been open with our workforce and the unions about our intent in this area. But, yes, there is a campaign running at the moment to highlight passenger behaviours.

Answer

I am advised:

Information on the advertising and marketing expenses is publicly available in the Transport for NSW annual report and the NSW TrainLink annual report.

Question 52

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How many transport officers do we have on our system at the moment?

JOSH MURRAY: I might ask Mr Longland to assist me on that.

MATT LONGLAND: Thank you, Mr Murray. While I check on that figure, just on the campaign on the rail network specifically, it has four key areas that we're focusing on: one is passengers blocking the door and the vestibule areas; the second one is feet and objects on seats that prevent that seat from being used by other passengers; one is loud music—as you mentioned, people that are either talking on their phones or playing music loudly; and the fourth one, which is probably the most important from our perspective, is the use of respectful language and behaviour when interacting with our frontline staff. So those themes are, as the secretary highlighted, really about the basic foundational, respectful behaviour areas that I think have been picked up in feedback surveys. In terms of the teams that we've got on the network, the number of transport officers I'll have to get you on notice. It's around 250 that we have. Their primary job is fare compliance, so checking Opal cards, issuing warnings and infringements. They also do a number of activities, to pick up your issue, around the behaviour of school students particularly. I've been out in the past few weeks with that team in Western Sydney at a number of stations, interacting with school students, particularly around payment of fares and behaviour standards that are expected whilst they're on the platform but also while they're on the train.

Answer

I am advised:

There are 206 Transport Officers as at 31 August 2025.

Question 53 – Live Music Venues Definition

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I just have a quick follow-up question for Mr Barakat, and possibly Ms Collins, about the definition of live music venues. Obviously, you've both provided me with different ways that we might categorise those businesses. Is there a formal definition that you're using for live music venues?

TAREK BARAKAT: I think there's one in the legislation. I'd just have to confirm that on notice for you. But, yes, there is, in order for us to determine whether or not they meet criteria to be able to access the incentives that I spoke about earlier.

Answer

I am advised:

Clause 61A of the Liquor Regulation 2018 provides the statutory definition for a 'live music venue', and this criteria is further detailed on the Liquor & Gaming NSW website:

<https://www.liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/operating-a-business/running-your-business/incentives-for-live-music-and-performance-venues>

Licensed premises can only access the incentives if they meet the eligibility criteria and are approved and registered by Liquor & Gaming NSW as a 'live music venue'.

These incentives – reduced licence fees and extra trading hours – aim to encourage more live music, performance and other arts and cultural events and employment opportunities for musicians and performers.

See the following website: <https://www.liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au/operating-a-business/running-your-business/incentives-for-live-music-and-performance-venues/eligible-live-entertainment-venues>

Question 54

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can I ask you on notice then to indicate what Deloitte did and what was the specific outcome of their funding?

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes, unless Ms Simpson can help me.

RACHEL SIMPSON: I can answer that now, Ms Ward, if that would be of assistance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure.

RACHEL SIMPSON: Deloitte were engaged as part of the budget process to provide additional capacity to Transport to prepare materials to support Transport's budget bids to support toll reform.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes. Expert advisory services for toll reform analysis, policy and implementation. But I'm wanting to have specifics on what they did and what was the specific outcome of the funding. Can you take that on notice, please?

RACHEL SIMPSON: Yes.

Answer

I am advised:

Deloitte was engaged to prepare materials to support Transport for NSW budget bids. This included documents that identified funding required to continue toll reform implementation and provided justification and strategic alignment of that funding to Transport for NSW and whole of government outcomes. This supporting documentation accompanied tolling reforms new measure proposal and supported in the allocation of \$15.4 million in FY26 budget for the stand up of NSW Motorways.

Question 55

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What were P.I. Research Pty. Ltd. paid \$165,000 to complete?

RACHEL SIMPSON: P.I. Research is David Cousins. David Cousins was one of the independent toll reviewers. In the same vein as Professor Fels, he's been engaged to provide ad hoc advice to government regarding the implementation of toll reforms.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Does he report to you or to Ms Drover?

RACHEL SIMPSON: He doesn't report to us.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can I invite you to take on notice what Mr Cousins or P.I. Research Pty. Ltd. did and what was the specific outcome of that \$165,000 of funds?

RACHEL SIMPSON: It's still ongoing. Happy to take on notice the service he's providing.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm interested in what they actually did. Just for Hansard, are you able to speak rather than nod?

RACHEL SIMPSON: I'll take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Dr David Cousins under P.I Research is engaged as an advisor to the Minister and government, offering valuable strategic guidance, insightful recommendations, and expert counsel to support the government's toll reform goals following the Independent Toll Review.

Question 56

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: These days it seems that there's just review after review of peer review of review and then a new review of a new consultant to do a review of the previous consultant's review. Can I ask you to take on notice in relation to Jacobs Group (Australia) what was the specific work they did, and what was the outcome of that funding?

RACHEL SIMPSON: Happy to take that on notice. Jacobs provided some advice to Transport with regards to the model that is used, and that advice has informed the further work to refine the model that's being used to do the traffic modelling to support the direct deal.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So they reviewed Clarity Consult's modelling?

RACHEL SIMPSON: No. If I can clarify, the modelling for tolling reform is being done in house by Transport for NSW. It is augmented with some additional capacity from VDO. But it's very important that we get peer review to make sure that the modelling—the inputs, the way the model is used and its outputs—is appropriate, particularly given if it's going to be the basis of a direct deal.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I invite you to put that in the answer on notice. You're the voice, so put through the ideas that is the thinking behind that. But the specifics would be helpful.

Answer

I am advised:

Jacobs Group (Australia) was engaged to undertake specific activities to review Transport for NSW's internal models to ensure their robustness and appropriateness to inform direct deal negotiations.

Question 57

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: ...The Government rebadged the More Trains, More Services program to become the Rail Service Improvement Program. In relation to that digitisation of signalling on those South Coast lines—T4, T8 and South Coast—when will South Coast commuters see a service every 15 minutes in the peak, and every 30 minutes in the off-peak between Wollongong and the Sydney CBD? Or has the Government abandoned this uplift?

MATT LONGLAND: Thank you, Ms Ward. I'm happy to respond to that question. Just before I do, I wanted to follow up on a question we took on notice this morning.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We can do that afterwards. Thank you. If I can just get to this question.

MATT LONGLAND: Digital Systems is currently in testing phase. I think you asked about where the project was at. We are testing the technology on track between Cronulla and Sutherland, system integration testing. We're also in the process of preparing for system integration testing on the section between Bondi Junction and Erskineville, so two ends of the T4 line. That project is progressing. It's being delivered by Transport, but very closely working with our team in Sydney Trains. In relation to the timetable on the T4 and the South Coast line, we are preparing for a timetable upgrade in terms of the integration of the new intercity fleet onto the South Coast. That will involve some changes to the way

that that line operates, particularly the longer trains that will no longer be able to service Bondi Junction. That is planned for calendar year 2026, so next year. That will include a number of improvements on the South Coast. We're working through the final details at the moment and engaging with local stakeholders around some of that. We'll have further details as we get closer to implementation.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you, and thank you for proactively offering a date. It's very helpful. It saves me having to ask. But I'm just interested in when that would translate to seeing a service every 15 minutes. Given the engagement with stakeholders, I'm pretty sure I can save you the money and time and say that they want more regular services, given they have very unreliable services at the moment compared to the other unreliability, if I can put that respectfully. When will they see that service every 15 minutes in the peak?

MATT LONGLAND: I would need to take that on notice and have a look at the detail around the timetable options. I wouldn't want to commit to a date in terms of specifics around individual lines. What I can say is that, in relation to reliability, clearly we are doing work across the whole network and we are making progress in improving reliability, specifically on the South Coast. That involves maintenance. It also involves capital investment in a number of priority locations on the South Coast, and then, ultimately, the implementation of the new fleet into service. Those works combined will provide a significant uplift in the reliability of that line.

Answer

I am advised:

The Rail Service Improvement Program will deliver more services on the South Coast Line.

Specific details regarding service frequencies and the timeline for these changes are still being determined.

Transport for NSW will engage with key stakeholders and passengers well in advance of any service changes.

Question 58

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Okay, we hope so, and we wish you well in that endeavour. When will T4 commuters see a 30 per cent increase in peak services?

MATT LONGLAND: Again, in relation to the T4, that will be integrated with the South Coast in the improvements to the timetable that we're currently working through. I'm happy to take that on notice, similar to the South Coast, and we can provide some further details on that work that's ongoing.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just for clarity, has the Government committed to that uplift or has the Government abandoned that uplift?

MATT LONGLAND: I'm not in a position to speak on behalf of the Government in terms of their commitments. What I can say is we're working on improvements on the T4 and the South Coast as an integrated package of timetable improvements. That work will be delivered in 2026.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Does the improvement include a target of a 30 per cent increase in peak services?

MATT LONGLAND: Again, if you're comfortable, I'll take that on notice in relation to the earlier question about the South Coast, and we'll see what detail we can provide.

Answer

I am advised:

Future timetables will increase service frequency on the T4 Eastern Suburbs & Illawarra Line and provide service improvements for South Coast passengers.

Specific details on new service frequencies and timings are still being determined.

Transport for NSW will engage key stakeholders and passengers well in advance of any changes.

Question 59

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You might take this on notice also. When will T8 commuters see an 80 per cent increase at airport stations? Or has the Government abandoned that uplift?

MATT LONGLAND: The T8 line was included in the timetable improvements that we delivered in October of 2024. They were quite successful in terms of the implementation of those services. There will be additional T8 changes in relation to the works we're doing on the T4. That'll be included in the one package.

Answer

I am advised:

In the 2024 timetable update, T8 Airport & South Line morning peak services increased from 14 to 16 trains per hour, improving access for Revesby and stations between Holsworthy and Macarthur. Erskineville and St Peters now receive direct CBD services via T8 following the T3 Bankstown Line closure. Upcoming changes will further increase T8 service frequency and ensure all trains run through the Airport tunnel, with timing details to be confirmed.

Question 60

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: If you might include that detail in your answer on notice also just because I have three minutes left. In 2023 it was reported that 10.3 million people passed through Bondi Junction and the infrastructure capacity was at high capacity. Has anything changed?

MATT LONGLAND: The patronage changes year on year depending on the growth that we see across the network. We have seen growth in overall patronage on the Sydney Trains network in the last full financial year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm just interested in this Bondi Junction part.

MATT LONGLAND: I'd need to take that on notice in terms of the station boardings at Bondi Junction. What I can say in relation to Woollahra is that the average loads on the T4 services, particularly in the peak periods, have sufficient capacity for an additional station at Woollahra, so there's plenty of spare capacity.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But that wasn't my question, with respect. It was reported at 10.3 million and the infrastructure capacity was at a high. My question was has anything changed. Perhaps you might take that part on notice.

MATT LONGLAND: The rail interchange, not the bus? Just rail boardings?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes.

MATT LONGLAND: Got it. Thank you.

Answer

I am advised:

Based on Opal data, in 2023, Bondi Junction Station recorded 12,451,876 entries and exits.

*Data excludes public holidays

Question 61

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you guarantee today that the train will continue to run to Bondi Junction while this station is being built?

MATT LONGLAND: What I can say about the Woollahra project is that it has been planned to be undertaken during weekend possessions, so that would allow train services to continue to service the Bondi Junction line. We do undertake a regular program of track work across weekends. We're doing a lot of work on the T4 line at the moment—as I mentioned earlier—on signalling upgrades, particularly on weekends.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just noting that more than 18,000 people tap on every day, I think the community is interested to know—as are we—does Transport intend to excavate any of the surrounding land to build the station?

JOSH MURRAY: At the moment that is the work that is ongoing. We have the indicative proposal around that. We are now underway with the design and development that will be required to go into the fast-track business case. But all of those elements about station access—as well as the actual platform and shelter that will be required—and disability accessibility will need to be factored into that proposal to meet modern standards. But we are confident, given the number of stations that have been upgraded or built across the 160 or so stations on the Sydney Trains network, that we have different models that can be used to expedite that construction.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Has Transport got any information around how the properties adjacent to the site would be affected? Will they be compulsorily acquired or can you rule that out today for residents?

JOSH MURRAY: This will all be part of the planning work that now goes on into the site and what's required.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: If you can't rule that out today, then when can they expect to know?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll take that on notice in terms of the timelines, but our first priority is to develop the abridged business case so that we can then put forward a construction plan.

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW can confirm there will be no permanent acquisition of residential properties. Further work is required to understand the staging and access requirements for the construction of the station, including any interfaces with residential properties.

Over the coming months, Transport for NSW will complete site investigations, including surveying, geotechnical assessments, soil sampling, and utility searches. These investigations will help develop a concept design for the activation of Woollahra station.

The concept design will outline the likely project footprint and interfaces with surrounding properties, as well as support the preparation of an abridged business case expected to be completed in 2026.

Question 62 – Music Festival Viability Fund

EMILY COLLINS: The process for assessment was that applications were received. They would then go to an independent financial assessment process where they would look at the financials of the festival and also the business structures and ownership structures. Then the panel would get an independent report and make recommendations on the funding.

The CHAIR: Who assessed that, when you say "an independent report"? Who produced that?

EMILY COLLINS: Ernst and Young.

The CHAIR: So Ernst and Young then provided it to a panel. Who was on the panel?

EMILY COLLINS: It was New South Wales government representatives.

The CHAIR: Who were they?

EMILY COLLINS: I don't have the names in front of me, but I believe there were representatives from Destination NSW, Sound NSW and potentially Create NSW, but I'd have to take that on notice and confirm for you.

Answer

I am advised:

The assessment panel was made up of NSW Government representatives from Sound NSW, Create NSW and Destination NSW.

This information is publicly available on the Department's website:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/contemporary-music-festival-viability-fund-0>.

Question 63 – Music Festival Viability Fund

The CHAIR: Earlier you said that the eligibility criteria, in terms of whether some of the festivals could have some kind of international ownership, was based around looking at what festivals were out there, essentially. Ms Collins, the Contemporary Music Festival Viability Fund eligibility criteria for existing festivals seemed to have been written to support those big festivals, in particular individual festivals.

EMILY COLLINS: It was written with a view that there were several festivals who, on paper, could have met the eligibility criteria, not the assessment criteria necessarily. There were festivals that didn't apply to the fund, because they weren't in the financial need. I think it's important to note that—

The CHAIR: Who were they?

EMILY COLLINS: Who are they?

The CHAIR: Who were the festivals that meet this criteria that didn't apply?

EMILY COLLINS: A Laneway Festival, for example.

The CHAIR: Over 15,000—that's one?

EMILY COLLINS: Yes.

The CHAIR: Any others?

EMILY COLLINS: I do believe there's one other, but I can't recall the name off the top of my head. I'm happy to take that on notice and come back to you.

Answer

I am advised:

The following are 15,000 plus capacity festivals that did not apply for funding and sold out:

- Knockout: Game Of Destiny
- Strawberry Fields
- EPIK
- HTID
- Dreamstate Australia
- St. Jerome's Laneway Festival
- Gearbox Australia
- Midnight Mafia
- HYPERDOME - Way Of The Dragon.

Question 64

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Collins, the press release at the end of July stated that there was 93 per cent passenger satisfaction figures collected. What was the sample size and methodology used to measure that?

HOWARD COLLINS: I'll take the details on notice, but in usual customer satisfaction it's making sure we have a sample size—normally over 200 gives you the standard deviation of five to 10 per cent. But I'll check to ensure that it was done. There was overwhelming feedback, both anecdotal and through the survey, of the major benefits of ZEB buses: the quietness, smoother ride, modern vehicle—they are a few. But I'll get the details to

give you—

Answer

I am advised:

The 93 per cent passenger satisfaction figure was recorded against 210 responses over three school terms. The passengers each term are predominantly the same, as the vehicles remain on one route for the duration of a term to provide a statistically sound data pool.

Question 65

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How was the survey administered? Was it administered at the time of the trip or was it sent to them afterwards?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think there was online. There may have been some feedback given directly, but I believe it was online. Let me check the details to give you the accurate facts.

Answer

I am advised:

Each bus features a unique QR code linking to a short, anonymous online survey, and hard copy versions are distributed each term for students to complete with parental supervision. The survey includes eight simple questions using a 1–5 emoji scale to help students of all ages express their feedback clearly.

Question 66

HOWARD COLLINS: There's 16 vehicles overall. We've had both hydrogen and zero-emission vehicles down in Wollongong. Obviously, we're looking across the States to ensure that these vehicles are capable of dealing with all conditions.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do you have any metrics around running costs on these trial buses compared to the more traditional buses—like fuel, maintenance et cetera?

HOWARD COLLINS: Again, not on the details of the trial—that may be possible. I think overall we're seeing a significant reduction in cost in two areas. One is the equivalent fuel costs, because one of the great things we can do is procure electricity in bulk, because we will be sharing those costs in the future and, certainly going forward, with Sydney Trains, Sydney Metro and light rail. The other thing is the actual cost—far less moving parts compared with an internal combustion engine. We're seeing reliability and general maintenance reduced on electric vehicles.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Are you able to, on notice, come back with any quantitative figures around that?

HOWARD COLLINS: We'll see what we've got as an industry. Obviously, in other countries they're about 10 years ahead of us. They've certainly got a lot of data which is publicly available on the comparison of costs, diesel versus zero-emission vehicles.

Answer

I am advised:

During the first six months of the electric bus trial, the initial four vehicles demonstrated fuel cost savings ranging from 41% to 93%, based on electricity rates of 38–40c/kWh compared to a diesel price of \$1.86 per litre. These savings vary depending on operator energy costs, and further data on maintenance and total cost of ownership will be assessed as the trial progresses.

Question 67

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Have there been any reported breakdowns of these vehicles?

HOWARD COLLINS: Like diesel vehicles, occasionally electric ones do break down. But, on average, if you're looking across the 220 vehicles that we have which are electric,

despite some of them showing a little bit of infant mortality, especially those locally built, we have seen improvement, and certainly the reliability—one of the advantages is there are far less moving parts.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Did you just say that we're experiencing a bit of infant mortality in the ones that are locally built?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes, because—I've said this publicly—when people build 77,000 vehicles you've got a pretty good reliability curve. The important thing about locally built vehicles—and they are proving to be pretty good—is that the first few do start to shake out some of those issues. We had that. I know there was a view about the reputation of one manufacturer, but now we're seeing good reliability of those vehicles. Whilst you may be able to say, "Well, Howard, this thing broke down yesterday or today", we are seeing lots of electric vehicles running and proving very reliable.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: In terms of the breakdowns, are there any metrics or quantitative data around the time it takes to get those vehicles back on the road versus the more traditional diesel buses?

HOWARD COLLINS: I haven't got that data. Quite often sometimes it's a bit like Matt's trains; it's resetting the system, bringing the vehicle to life again, rather than towing it back, because it's destroyed its engine.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: But there's no data available?

HOWARD COLLINS: There may be. We get a lot of data every day. I could take on notice to have a look to see whether there are any trends. Generally, and only qualitatively, we're seeing good reliability of electric vehicles.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: If you could take on notice any data on restart time and if it's a case of hitting the reset button.

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes, switch off and start again.

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has observed improving reliability and performance across the Zero Emission Bus (ZEB) fleet, despite some initial operational challenges. The new fleet offers advantages over older diesel and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) models, particularly in parts availability and product support. As the ZEB fleet expands, Transport will begin benchmarking performance, noting that return-to-service times vary depending on the nature of faults.

Question 68 – Uptown Program

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Rodrigues, can I just ask some questions of you regarding the \$1.9 million allocated to the Illawarra, Wollongong and Shoalhaven districts?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: Yes, the uptown program, I think you are referring to.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: What specific criteria was used to allocate that \$1.9 million across the 10 selected districts?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: That program has been opened up across Greater Sydney and those other areas. It's a competitive process. District teams are invited to apply. They are then assessed by a panel and recommendations are made.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Are there any weightings applied now that we've broadened it to include Wollongong and Shoalhaven? Are there any weightings to provide not necessarily an advantage but more opportunity for some of those less-resourced districts or precincts with the ability to be successful?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: The first part of the program is an accelerated program. It's an educational capacity-building exercise. It's followed by the grant program. The point of the capacity-building exercise is to give people the skills they need so that they're well placed to apply for the grants. If you're asking if there was a provision for preferred funding on a geographic basis, I might need to take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Under the third round of the Uptown Grant Program, the New Applicants stream expanded beyond Greater Sydney to include the Illawarra-Shoalhaven, Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle and Central Coast regions. This aligns to the Program's objective of increasing the geographical spread of going-out hubs across NSW.

Applications were assessed by an Independent Assessment Panel against the published Assessment Criteria. Each application was scored and ranked in accordance with the relevant Program Guidelines. Final recommendations of the Panel could consider the distribution of applicants, as well as prioritising applications and activities with outcomes that better met Program objectives or addressed and ensured equity and the best outcomes for NSW Government investment.

Of the 21 recipients funded under the New Applicants stream, 16 (76%) were from outside Greater Sydney – including the Illawarra-Shoalhaven, Lower Hunter and Greater Newcastle and Central Coast regions.

Question 69 – Special Entertainment Precincts

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Staying with you, Mr Rodrigues, on Special Entertainment Precincts. I asked you earlier in the year about how progress had been made. You said that the Enmore Road one was operational and then two were receiving grants in Burwood and Fairfield councils. There were six listed as having detailed applications ongoing. Could you please provide me an update about the Special Entertainment Precinct status for all of those councils?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: Yes. I'll provide you with the information that I have. There is the permanent Enmore Road precinct and six trial Special Entertainment Precincts in Balmain, Dulwich Hill, Leichhardt, Marrickville north, Marrickville Town Centre and Rozelle. There are 20 councils that have passed resolutions to investigate or establish entertainment precincts. The grant funding that's been announced is in, as you said correctly, Burwood Council. I can give you the numbers if you like or just rattle off the names or both.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Yes.

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: Burwood Council, \$195,000; Fairfield City Council for two Special Entertainment Precincts—one in Canley Vale and one in Canley Heights—for \$183,308; Hornsby shire for Hornsby Town Centre, \$200,000; Byron Shire Council for Byron Bay, \$162,000; Northern Beaches for Manly, \$173,760; and Sutherland shire for Cronulla, \$187,330.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: When are those intended to be rolled out? Have they been given the money?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: They've entered into funding agreements. I could confirm on notice, but I imagine the funds may have been transferred. Just to be clear: this is not for the trials to start. This is so that the councils can do the work so that they're in a position to commence the trials. It is important to note that that work—Special Entertainment Precincts do two things, primarily. One is to allow council to designate a specified area and designate the length of trading hours and the noise levels. Those things need to be done on the basis of the council having a plan for its night-time economy, number one. Number two, consultation with residents and businesses and then, in order to achieve it, working with the relevant experts around acoustics and the like. The funding is for that.

Answer

I am advised:

There are seven Special Entertainment Precincts (SEPs) in NSW. This includes a permanent SEP at Enmore Road and six trial SEPs at Balmain, Dulwich Hill, Leichhardt, Marrickville North, Marrickville Town Centre and Rozelle.

Ten councils have also received funding through the SEP Kickstart Grant Program. This is for the strategic planning, engagement and acoustic work required prior to establishing a SEP trial. They are available online at: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/special-entertainment-precinct-kickstart-grant-program/recipient>

Question 70 – Special Entertainment Precincts

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: Do they have a time frame in which to complete that work to receive the funds, or are the funds delivered and then they report back to you within a particular time frame?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: Yes.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: What is that?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: I may need to take the exact detail on notice, but the general way it works is they are funded. There is a funding agreement. There is a criteria they have to establish, and then those funds would be acquitted. It would be an expected outcome—although maybe not desired—that if it isn't going to work, it's not going to work. I think it's an important point to make, because an announcement in relation to the funding is not an announcement about a special entertainment precinct starting. I think there has been a bit of a communication challenge with that principle. I'm quite at pains to make sure that communities understand that this is the beginning of a process, not the end. It's very deliberately designed to be a tool for councils who know their communities and can work out the local conditions that are suitable to trade. The City of Sydney, for example, has taken a view around its traditional late-night areas that it may have longer trade, as Parramatta council have done, but that may not be the case in Fairfield or in Hornsby.

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I understand. Is there a timeline in which the councils have to get back to you, essentially, with a result?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: I'll take it on notice. Our team is working quite closely with the councils

through this process. They're quite engaged and are working proactively to it. As you can imagine, all communities are different. The manner in which community engagement is done and the response from that may be a factor— plus council meetings and things of that nature. For example, the City of Sydney—

The Hon. JACQUI MUNRO: I am so sorry to interrupt you. I'm just mindful of the time, but I appreciate that.

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: No worries.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You can take it on notice if you like, Mr Rodrigues. We'd be delighted to hear the detail in writing.

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: Yes.

Answer

I am advised:

Under the Special Entertainment Precinct (SEP) Kickstart Grant Program Guidelines, councils receiving funding through the SEP Kickstart Grant Program must submit a progress report within six months of executing a funding agreement. This includes providing copies of the documentation required to establish a SEP trial. After the conclusion of the 12-18 month SEP trial period and by no later than 30 June 2027, recipient councils are required to submit acquittals and six and 12-month post-acquittal reports.

Question 71

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Beds Are Burning, Mr Longland. Is the maintenance schedule being delivered on time, or are you saying that, realistically, it's—no judgement—it's slightly behind because of those things you mentioned.

MATT LONGLAND: Catching up on the weekend works, we have allowed for the remainder of this calendar year. By the end of calendar year 2025, we will have caught up that weekend work that was lost during the period of protected industrial action, particularly even the last two weekends. Last weekend on the line between Sydney and Newcastle, \$9.5 million worth of work was delivered. The weekend prior to that—we talked about the South Coast earlier—\$10 million worth of work was done on T4 and South Coast. We're doing a lot of concentrated work on weekends to catch up on that maintenance that was lost over that period of industrial action and get the network back in shape.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: For which I note back pay was paid. But, nonetheless, I'll move on. The Less I Know the Better. If not, how many maintenance interventions are overdue?

MATT LONGLAND: I'd need to take that question on notice in terms of the network statistic. It does change week to week depending on the work orders that come in and the work that's undertaken.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: As at today, perhaps—that would be very helpful. Does the asset management database accurately reflect this? You could perhaps take that on notice as well.

MATT LONGLAND: Yes. We have a detailed system that tracks all of our maintenance orders and the condition of the assets. Yes, it is accurate and, yes, as works are undertaken they're included in that database.

Answer

I am advised:

As at 1 September 2025:

- there were 30 maintenance inspections that were outstanding.

Question 72

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's a big question: How many corrective maintenance interventions have been undertaken outside of the schedule, evening or p.m. work cycle, in the past 12 months?

MATT LONGLAND: If you're happy, I'll include that in the question I took on notice about the current status of any works that are outstanding.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You might kindly, if you are minded to, take this on notice as well: How many of those corrective maintenance interventions have been the result of evening or p.m. works not being undertaken as per the work schedule, or not being undertaken correctly?

MATT LONGLAND: This is about night possession, not weekends?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, correct.

MATT LONGLAND: Yes, we can have a look at that.

Answer

I am advised:

Sydney Trains undertakes approximately 677,000 inspections (scheduled preventative maintenance and corrective maintenance tasks) each year. Around 670,000 inspections are planned to be performed outside the nighttime track access times.

During 2024-25, the backlog of corrective maintenance tasks increased from 79 to 528. The current level is 30 (as at 1 September 2025).

Question 73

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We may come back to that. Mr Collins, if I may turn to you, in relation to the 680 bus route in the Redbank Estate, mindful that you—I'm sure you probably do know every single bus route—

HOWARD COLLINS: I'm learning.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: —but I'll forgive you if you don't. But I wouldn't be surprised. Representations have been made to the Minister regarding the expansion of bus services in North Richmond, specifically to include a loop within the Redbank Estate for the 680 bus route from Richmond to Bowen Mountain via Grose Vale and Grose Wold. Can you confirm if these requests have been brought to your attention, investigated, progressed?

HOWARD COLLINS: Surprisingly, that's one I haven't got my mind around entirely, but I will take on board—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm glad I could bring it to your attention.

HOWARD COLLINS: Obviously we have had many requests for many additional bus routes. As you know, the Government is focusing on Western Sydney bus improvements.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but I'm just asking about this particular one, if I may.

HOWARD COLLINS: Let me take on notice the 680 Redbank—I think you said—to North Richmond.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, that's it. There was a request for a loop within the Redbank Estate.

HOWARD COLLINS: It's not in my notes, so I'll take it away and take it on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you take on notice and confirm whether those requests have been actioned, investigated or brought to your attention and what progress might have been made on those?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Also, if you could perhaps take on notice—I'd be appreciative—if it has been actioned, what stage it might be at.

HOWARD COLLINS: Okay.

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has received requests for a bus service to Redbank Estate and is in early discussions with the developer about future bus stop locations. While supportive of improved services for Redbank and North Richmond, any new routes would require additional funding and will be considered in future budget planning.

Question 74

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, to the freight strategy on freight at night and the importance of the 24/7 economy. When will that report be made available?

TRUDI MARES: I will have to take that on notice and come back to you. I'm unaware of the time frame.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: There is a time frame, presumably?

TRUDI MARES: I'm sure there is. I'm not across it, sorry.

Answer

I am advised:

Dr Kerry Schott AO has been reviewing the barriers and opportunities to move more freight off-peak, including at night, and including engagement with relevant stakeholders. This work is currently being finalised and will be submitted to Government for its consideration.

Once Government has had the opportunity to review the final recommendations and determine its response, it is expected that this will be made public and incorporated into the roadmap that was published as an outcome of the Freight Policy Reform Program.

Question 75

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: One of the New South Wales Labor Government's election commitments was to increase freight carried by rail and to subsidise rail usage. What progress has been made in delivering that commitment?

TRUDI MARES: Again, if that is part of the freight reform report, we're just working through the program at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But if it's not part of freight reform—if it's part of a separate—

TRUDI MARES: I haven't got any information on that at hand.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you'll also take that on notice?

TRUDI MARES: Sure.

Answer

I am advised:

The Delivering Freight Policy Reform in NSW report outlines a package of initiatives to increase rail modal shift by improving the competitiveness and efficiency of rail freight. This includes:

- Reviewing and revising rail access pricing to achieve parity with road freight costs.
- Optimising train path allocation and coordination between operators.
- Planning dedicated freight lines to reduce congestion on the Sydney Trains network.
- Extending train lengths and improving terminal interfaces at key hubs like Moorebank and Enfield.
- Exploring options to increase night-time rail freight operations by taking advantage of available off-peak capacity.

The report has been accepted in full by the NSW Government.

Question 76

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: One last question in the time I've got—to Mr Murray, if I may. How many independent reviews or reports has this Government commissioned and received since the election in relation to Transport for NSW?

JOSH MURRAY: I'd have to take that on notice. The Government has been clear about the reviews that were in place. The bus taskforce, the rail review—they were the significant ones to enable Transport for NSW to calibrate with service delivery challenges. But there have been some others that have been mentioned. They're all of different size in regard to what has been completed, but they've helped us form new strategies and policies. I can get you that list on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: To clarify, just for example, there was one train review with two reports. If you could list those as itemised items, that would be great.

Answer

I am advised:

This information is available on the Transport for NSW website at <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/industry/independent-reviews>.

Question 77

The CHAIR: Mr Murray, with the plan to cut 950 jobs, how many of those 950 jobs are envisaged to be senior service executives?

JOSH MURRAY: Of those 950, that does not include senior executives within Transport. The senior executive target within Transport is 300 roles within three years.

The CHAIR: Why is that? I understand that the executive has ballooned out—according to a number of people that are speaking to me about this—to 1,100. Is that correct?

JOSH MURRAY: That's right. When we say senior executives, obviously that's the top four senior bands of staff members in the organisation.

The CHAIR: So 1,100 staff out of a workforce of—

JOSH MURRAY: Thirty thousand.

The CHAIR: And they earn between—what's the pay scale?

JOSH MURRAY: I'd have to take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Senior Service pay scales are publicly available in the Remuneration Tribunal Annual SOORT determination for Public Service Senior Executives:

<https://www.remtribunals.nsw.gov.au/assets/remtribunals/2025-Annual-Determination-SOORT-Public-Service-Senior-Executive.pdf>

Question 78

The CHAIR: I want to go back to the questions that I was asking earlier about the signalling work with Sydney Trains. Was there a \$50 million contract that was awarded in 2021 to Prometheus to implement an electronic permitting system which apparently failed to deliver? Is that correct, Mr Longland?

MATT LONGLAND: I'm happy to respond to that question. I would need to have a look at the details and provide that on notice if that's okay. I am aware of the company and the project is related to a program of work around electrical isolations on the network, so switching and permitting and the ability to turn the power on and off quicker on the overhead power network.

The CHAIR: I've been told that Prometheus has been taken off that contract. It would be good to know how much of that \$50 million has come back to Sydney Trains and how much we didn't recover. Also, there's a contract now worth around \$450 million that was recently awarded to SYSTRA for similar work.

MATT LONGLAND: Sure, I'm happy to have a look at the details that I can provide around Prometheus and SYSTRA. Again, the program of work is ongoing; nothing has stopped. In terms of the supplier's role, the cost of their work and what's been delivered, I'm happy to take that on notice and will include both of those suppliers in the same response.

Answer

I am advised:

Sydney Trains has a contract with Prometheus for \$5.022 million including GST and Sydney Trains has a contract with SYSTRA for \$38.785 million including GST.

Question 79

The CHAIR: What's your response to senior members within Sydney Trains who have outlined in detail with management how there is internal capacity to deliver the electrical permitting system in house without relying on external contractors? Do you not think that's the case?

MATT LONGLAND: I am not across the specific details of your question in terms of which senior members or what they've shared. What I can say, on principle, is that my preference and our preference as an organisation is always to insource where we can and use the skills of our own people rather than bringing in additional. This program of work has been running for a number of years. It's complex, both from a safety perspective—clearly, dealing with high voltage power—but also from an industrial perspective around the roles of our teams and how that would interact with future technologies. So, it's a complex program of work, a very important part of modernising the rail network looking at making our switching more efficient, particularly when dealing with major incidents—being able to turn the power off quickly—not just related to infrastructure, but more importantly to incidents of community safety on the network. We often need to turn the power off if there's a risk to somebody's safety.

The CHAIR: Sure. But at this point it looks like we're talking half a billion dollars, potentially, to do this work that you're saying needs to be outsourced. The workers who are within Sydney Trains, who have the skills, are saying that they can do this work. That's a half-a-billion-dollar disconnect. Surely we should be spending that internally if we can?

MATT LONGLAND: In response to your question, respectfully, the half a billion dollar figure is your figure. I've committed I would come back on notice and provide the details of those two companies and what we've invested. It's a large multi-year program of work and, as with any of these programs of work, the investment is in the development of the system. This is a complex, clearly safety-critical system. The operation of that system would obviously be our own people doing that. This is about the planning and the development and the delivery of a system. The operation of that system would be through our own people.

The CHAIR: Mr Murray, will you commit to having a look at this? You heard the Minister before in terms of the philosophy principles, if you like, of the Government not wanting to privatise anything further within Transport for NSW. This does sound like it is potentially a big privatisation, at least from an operational perspective, of some of the workings of Sydney Trains.

JOSH MURRAY: What would you like us to do, Ms Faehrmann? I'm happy to state our principles back on notice.

The CHAIR: Just to be confident that you have oversight of what is potentially half a billion dollars.

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, I think, if I could, not wanting to take up the time, we'll answer on notice around the principles of these contracts.

Answer

I am advised:

The services required under the Prometheus contract for the delivery of the Electrical Isolation Management System, extend beyond the core competencies and technical capabilities of Sydney Trains.

For this reason, a market tender was determined the most efficient and effective approach to delivering the solution.

Question 80 – Uptown Program

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Rodrigues, I'll just stick with you and the questions I was asking you before. You spoke about an evaluation of the previous Uptown program round. Is that evaluation publicly available, or are you able to provide that on notice to the Committee?

MICHAEL RODRIGUES: I think it's publicly available, published online, but we can provide it to you if it makes it more convenient.

Answer

I am advised:

An evaluation report for Round 1 of the Uptown District Acceleration Program was published in May 2025 and is publicly available on the nsw.gov.au website:
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/noindex/2025-06/uptown-round-1-outcomes-evaluation-report.pdf>

Question 81 – Touring and Travel Grant

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Ms Glasscock, I just want to ask some questions around the regional theatre, dance and museum tours. There was \$700,000 invested to 10 touring productions. How was that \$700,000 figure determined?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: All of our funding rounds go through a competitive funding process. They're assessed by 10 Artform Boards that have members from the sector.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How did we come up with the figure of offering \$700,000? Did that happen before the assessment or after the assessment?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: At the start of the year, Create NSW allocates certain budget envelopes to the rounds that we have.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How was it determined that \$700,000 was the right figure in terms of this part of this grant program?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: That predates my commencement, so I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'm happy for you to do that.

Answer

I am advised:

The Regional Arts Touring funding allocation is based on a commitment of \$769,000 annually. The development of the Regional Arts Touring round was done in consultation with key touring leaders to ensure it met the needs of the sector. In addition, the change to enable small and large tours has increased its accessibility to both artists and organisations.

Question 82 – Touring and Travel Fund

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How are we going to track attendance across this grant program? I note 76,000 people are expected to attend. Are we going to track the different demographics? Particularly, are we reaching out to be more inclusive of culturally diverse communities, people with disabilities, low-income families? How are we going to track whether we're hitting those markets?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: As with any of our funding programs, successful applicants are required to submit acquittal documentation after their events. For anything that has ticketed attendance, it depends on their ticketing platforms and how detailed their post-event surveys are as to how detailed the demographics go into. But certainly, again, culturally and linguistically diverse audiences, deaf and disabled audiences, youth audiences and regional audiences are all key priorities for Create NSW.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: But Create NSW aren't mandating any reporting based on that. You're just relying on, I guess, the functional limitations or abilities of the different ticketing programs to decide what gets recorded?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: Our acquittal documentation asks for that information, yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Specifically?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: Yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: And if they can't provide that information because their ticketing system provider doesn't collate it, what's your response to that?

KERRI GLASSCOCK: I would have to take that on notice. I'm not across what the process is in relation to how we assess those acquittals.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: If you take that last question on notice, that will be all from me, Chair.

KERRI GLASSCOCK: Yes.

Answer

I am advised:

Due to the nature of ticketing systems and demographic data collection, Create NSW moved away from collecting this data due to low quality responses. Create NSW is continuing to develop its reporting mechanisms, including how demographic data can be collected with accuracy and in line with privacy principles.

Question 83

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Collins, can I invite you to take this on notice. Under the Zero Emission Buses program, could you inform the Committee: (a) how many buses

have been ordered up to the end of the last financial year; (b) how many are expected to be ordered this financial year; and (c) how many are expected to be ordered next financial year?

HOWARD COLLINS: I can certainly take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

- a) Transport for NSW ordered more than 360 Zero Emission Buses in the 2024-25 financial year.
- b) Transport for NSW is forecasting to order approximately 450 buses in the 2025-26 financial year, with 151 buses already ordered.
- c) Transport for NSW is forecasting to order approximately 500 buses in the 2026-27 financial year.

Question 84

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray, does Transport for NSW have a social media policy for its own pages? Could you provide that on notice to the Committee?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, I'll take that on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has an existing social media management policy which is in the process of being updated.

Question 85

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you also take on notice how many people are employed to run Transport for NSW's social media pages?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes.

Answer

I am advised:

Staff numbers undertaking social media activities are commensurate with need.

Question 86

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And how many people were employed by Transport for NSW in a communications or marketing function?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, we can respond on notice.

Answer

I am advised:

Staff numbers employed in the communications or marketing functions are commensurate with need.