



**The Hon. John Ajaka MLC**  
Minister for Ageing  
Minister for Disability Services  
Minister for the Illawarra

Mr David Blunt  
Clark of the Parliaments  
Parliament House  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Mr Blunt,

I write in relation to the Illawarra Budget Estimates Hearing held on Thursday 15 August 2013.

Please find attached answers to Questions taken on Notice during the Hearing, Supplementary Questions and corrections to the Proof Hansard.

Yours sincerely,



**John Ajaka MLC**



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014**

### **Supplementary Questions on Notice**

#### **General Purpose Standing Committee No. 1**

The Illawarra

Thursday 15 August 2013

Answers to be returned by: Tuesday 10 September 2013.

**Budget Estimates Secretariat**

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**GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 1**

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014**

**Supplementary questions: The Illawarra**

*Answers are to be returned to the Committee secretariat by: Tuesday 10 September 2013.*

1. Can the Minister provide details of how many Public Housing properties are in the Illawarra?

This question should be directed to the Minister for Family and Community Services. I am advised that information regarding Public Housing properties and waiting times is available at:

<http://www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/>.

2. Has the Minister visited any public housing estate in the Illawarra region since becoming Minister?

No.

3. Are these properties meeting current demand?

This question should be directed to the Minister for Family and Community Services. I am advised that information regarding Public Housing properties and waiting times is available at:

<http://www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/>.

4. Approximately how many people in the Illawarra are currently on the Housing NSW waiting list?

This question should be directed to the Minister for Family and Community Services. I am advised that information regarding Public Housing properties and waiting times is available at:

<http://www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/>.

5. Given your own admission that there are a significant number of Illawarra families on the waiting list for Housing NSW, why did the O'Farrell Government cut \$22 million from the budget that would see new homes built?

The premise of the question is invalid, according to the transcript there was no such comment.

6. I refer the Minister the Minister to the recent \$37 million cut in the Housing NSW budget for maintenance.
- What proportion of these funds would have been allocated to Illawarra?
  - How will these cuts affect Illawarra residents living in Housing properties?

This is a matter for the Minister for Family and Community Services.

7. Is the Minister aware of waiting times for maintenance issues in the Illawarra area?
- How could this waiting list have been improved if the \$37 million had not been cut from the maintenance budget?

This is a matter for the Minister for Family and Community Services.

8. How have communities such as Bowral, Moss Vale, Mittagong and Nowra had their economies negatively affected by the sale of Port Kembla?

There is no sale of Port Kembla.

9. Why have projects in these communities been shortlisted to receive funding from the proceeds of the Port Kembla sale?

There is no sale of Port Kembla.

10. Given the most adverse effects of the sale of Port Kembla will be felt by the People of Port Kembla, why have no projects been selected from the Port Kembla area?

There is no sale of Port Kembla.

11. Does the Minister believe Newcastle and the Illawarra have similar economic bases? If so, why was the Illawarra given only \$100 million?

The Illawarra is the third largest regional economy in NSW, worth in excess of \$16 billion in goods and services. It is home to a large manufacturing sector, supported by growing finance and business services, information and communication technology, health and community services, tertiary education, mining, defence and tourism industries.

The Illawarra received more than \$100 million from the lease of Port Kembla.

12. Will you publicly release the full applications of each of the groups who were unsuccessful?

This question should be directed to Infrastructure NSW as it is the lead agency for the Restart Illawarra Fund. I am advised that this information can be found at [www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au](http://www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au).

13. Will you publicly release the assessments of each of the shortlisted projects?

This question should be directed to Infrastructure NSW as it is the lead agency for the Restart Illawarra Fund. I am advised that this information can be found at [www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au](http://www.infrastructure.nsw.gov.au).

14. Can you specifically indicate what instrument the assessment panel will be using to evaluate the projects and in particular Benefit Cost Ratio and job creation?

This question should be directed to INSW.

15. Can you give details of the members of the selection panel and the process by which they chosen for this position?

The Assessment Panel consisted of Mr Colin Bloomfield, Professor Gerard Sutton and Mr Alex Darling and officers from Infrastructure NSW, NSW Treasury and the NSW Office of Finance.

16. What will be the process for auditing the various outcomes of the project such as job creation and economic impact as outlined by the proponents?

This question should be directed to INSW.

17. What if any processes will there be to support local firms, contractors and businesses in the construction of these projects where applicable?

This question should be directed to INSW.

18. How important are literacy and numeracy teachers in ensuring Illawarra students get the best possible start in life?

Very important. Taking action early and delivering critical support to where it is needed most is at the heart of the Government's *Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan*.

19. How many literacy and numeracy teachers did the O'Farrell Government promise for the Illawarra prior to the last election?

This question should be directed to the Minister for Education, I am advised resources equivalent to 60 full time teachers.

20. How many of these teachers have been delivered?

I refer you to LA QON 4197.

21. Does the Minister believe Campbelltown is part of the Illawarra?

No.

22. How many of these literacy and numeracy teachers which have been delivered have been posted in Campbelltown?

This does not fall within the responsibility of the Minister for the Illawarra.

23. If the Government values Education, why exactly have these teachers not been delivered within 2 and half years of the Government being sworn in?

This question should be directed to the Minister for Education, I am advised that the allocation of resources under the Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan is a five year commitment to improving the literacy and numeracy of our youngest students. Resources are being progressively allocated to schools that have been prioritised by the three education sectors as having the greatest need.

24. When does the Minister expect the remainder of these 60 teachers will be delivered?

See 23.

25. Are you aware of staff shortages affecting Case Workers in the Coniston office?

This is a matter for the Minister for Family and Community Services.

26. Is there, or has there previously been, a freeze on filling any caseworker positions?

This is a matter for the Minister for Family and Community Services.

27. Given the Illawarra has one of the highest rates of Cases per DOCS case worker, what is your government doing to address this?

This is a matter for the Minister for Family and Community Services.

28. Given the higher than average unemployment rate in Wollongong do you support the Regional Relocation Grant program which pays people \$7,000 to leave the Wollongong local government area?

This question should be directed to the Deputy Premier, I am advised that the NSW Government is committed to policies that assist and encourage whole-of-state growth. We understand that when a government governs for the whole State and provides economic stimulus for regional NSW, city areas benefit, and vice versa. The Decade of Decentralisation policy supports regional communities by encouraging economic growth and delivering greater opportunities for regional NSW.

In November 2012 the Government appointed the NSW Decentralisation Taskforce to undertake a review of the Decade of Decentralisation strategy, and to consult and report on the implementation of policies and programs initiated by the Government to advance the strategy. The Regional Relocation Grant was included in this review.

Following the Government's consideration of the Taskforce report and recommendation, the Government's response was released on 28 August 2013. The Government response can be found at <http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/doing-business-in-nsw/nsw-governments-decentralisation-efforts>.

Boosting regional economies and communities is a top priority for the NSW Government. Having a strong and diversified economy will better position NSW to adapt to challenges and capitalise on opportunities. The Regional Relocation grant supports regional communities by attracting more people, growth and investment into regional areas, driving economic growth and relieving congestion pressures within Sydney.

The NSW Government also recognises the importance of the Illawarra to the State, particularly as one of NSW's fastest growing regions. The NSW Government remains committed to supporting economic growth in the Illawarra through initiatives including the NSW Government's \$100 million Restart Illawarra Infrastructure Fund.

29. What economic benefits are there to the Wollongong Local Government area from a Government program that has spent over \$1million to encourage people to leave the area?

See 28.

30. Will you use your role as the Minister for the Illawarra to advocate to have the Regional Relocation Grant program scrapped?

See 28.