

## QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

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### Question from Hearing Transcript:

**Mr HICKEY:** Murray, Hornsby, Manly, Mosman, Rockdale, Armidale Dumaresq, Kempsey, Port Macquarie, Kiama, Broken Hill, Harden, Campbelltown, Urana, Shellharbour and Brewarrina. Do you want to know the ones that are undergoing the review?

**CHAIR:** Could I ask you to put them on notice?

**Mr HICKEY:** We can do that.

### Answer:

The Department is currently finalising Promoting Better Practice reviews on the following councils:

- . Byron Shire Council
- . Bogan Shire Council
- . Coonamble Shire Council
- . Narrabri Shire Council
- . Wollongong City Council
- . Eurobodalla Shire Council
- . Bega Valley Shire Council
- . Muswellbrook Shire Council
- . Cessnock City Council
- . Penrith City Council

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### Question from Hearing Transcript:

**CHAIR:** If I could just ask some questions about the Tweed Council inquiry, you would be aware that Professor Daley referred certain matters to the Independent Commission Against Corruption, which indicated that there was nothing to investigate following Professor Daley's referral and forwarded certain correspondence back to Professor Daley concerning those referrals. Can you provide to the Committee the correspondence that Professor Daley sent to the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the material that the ICAC referred back to Professor Daley?

**Mr HICKEY:** Madam Chair, this issue is pending a court hearing at the moment and I would be reluctant to provide any information that may jeopardise that court case.

**CHAIR:** I would understand that, but I would ask if you could get advice--

**Mr HICKEY:** I will take advice.

**CHAIR:** If you could get advice on whether that correspondence can be provided to the Committee without jeopardising any court case?

**Mr HICKEY:** I will take it on notice.

**Answer:**

I took on notice a request that I obtain written advice on whether correspondence between Tweed Inquiry Commissioner Daly and the Independent Commission Against Corruption can be provided to the Committee without jeopardising any current court case.

I obtained that advice from the State Crown Solicitor in writing.

The summary of that advice is that while disclosure of the documents would not prejudice the current court proceedings brought by Mr Brinsmead, there are other compelling reasons why I may not disclose some of the documents that fall within the ambit of the Committees request.

Certain of the documents should not be produced because of a Direction issued by ICAC under section 111 of the ICAC Act.

In relation to the other documents that fall within the ambit of the Committee's request, I have sought advice from the ICAC.

I have been advised that while section 111 does not appear to apply to these documents, the ICAC does not wish them to be made public and has requested that I not provide them to the Committee. This is because those documents contain details of complainants and complaints that should not be released into the public domain.

In relation to the remainder of the documents that fall within the scope of the request to which section 111 does not apply and to which the ICAC has made no specific request, I decline to produce them because those documents contain details of complainants and complaints that should not be released into the public domain.

Finally, I decline to provide my written legal advice to the Committee as to do so would waive legal professional privilege over that advice.

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**Question from Hearing Transcript:**

**CHAIR:** Could you provide to the Committee what was the salary of your former staff member Genevieve Slattery when she worked in your office?

**Mr HICKEY:** I could not tell you. That is something that the Premier's Department looks after. I could not tell you what her salary was.

**CHAIR:** Could you provide that to the Committee?

**Mr HICKEY:** I will take it on notice.

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**Answer:**

The salary of Ms Genevieve Slattery was paid from the Ministerial office budget administered by Ministerial and Parliamentary Service, which is part of the Premier's Office. I am advised her salary was \$126,980.

**Question from Hearing Transcript:**

**CHAIR:** That would be appreciated. If you could give us the total cost of the administration of Tweed Council to date, under administration, including all expenses associated with the administration, including the item that was discussed earlier, Ms Slattery's salary.

**Mr HICKEY:** Not a problem.

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**Answer:**

The costs of the Administrators apart from their statutory fees are matters for the councils concerned and are not available to the Department.

The fees paid to the Administrators are \$41,000 PA each for the panel of three.

Mr Payne, whilst acting as an Administrator, received no fee.

Ms Genevieve Slattery receives an annual salary of \$155,151.

**Question from Hearing Transcript:**

**CHAIR:** Minister, in relation to Tweed, did the former general manager Dr John Griffin prepare a response to the Daley inquiry's recommendations?

**Mr HICKEY:** I have no idea.

**CHAIR:** You don't know?

**Mr HICKEY:** No. I do not go into that detail. Neither does the Director-General.

**CHAIR:** Can you find out?

**Mr HICKEY:** I suppose I could ask, but you could pick the phone up and ring yourself too.

**CHAIR:** You are the Minister.

**Mr HICKEY:** You are the Chair of the Committee. I will find out for you.

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**Answer:**

The Department of Local Government has no record of a response to the Tweed Shire Council Public Inquiry recommendations by Dr John Griffin.

**Question from Hearing Transcript:**

**CHAIR:** What is the total cost of administrators across the State compared with the cost of elections?

**Mr HICKEY:** That is something I will have to get back to you on. I will take it on notice. If you are replacing councillors, to answer that question, the administrators are replacing the councillors who were running that council, so it would be virtually the same cost.

**CHAIR:** So you will provide that information?

**Mr HICKEY:** I will provide that information.

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**Answer:**

The costs of the Administrators apart from their statutory fees are matters for the councils concerned and are not available to the Department.

The fees paid to the Administrators are as follows:

Liverpool	\$185,000 PA
Tweed	\$41,000 PA each for the panel of three
Walgett	\$50,000 PA
Warringah	\$185,000 PA

The State Electoral Commission has advised that when the last council elections were held in March 2004 the electoral commission costs for the elections for the four councils currently under administration were as follows:

Liverpool Council	\$380,084
Tweed Shire Council	\$279,279
Walgett Shire Council	\$66,739
Warringah Council	\$364,383

**Question from Hearing Transcript:**

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Can you advise the Committee who conducted that investigation?

**Mr HICKEY:** Departmental representatives.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** The names?

**Mr HICKEY:** Carol Metcalfe and Susan Hartley.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Could you advise if either of those persons has applied for the position of general manager of Kyogle Council?

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Would you be able to take that on notice?

**Mr HICKEY:** I will take it on notice.

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**Answer:**

This is a personal matter and as such all staff, in the public service as elsewhere, have a right to privacy in such matters.

I would expect all councils to follow proper procedure when recruiting staff, which would include maintaining the confidentiality of all applicants and making appointments based on merit.

There is nothing to prevent Departmental employees from applying for jobs at any of the State's 152 local councils.

As Minister I do not have a role in Departmental staffing matters.

## **PART 2. QUESTIONS PLACED ON THE NOTICE PAPER.**

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### **1. Departmental Motor Vehicles**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many cars at 30 June 2006 were:
  - a. leased from a Government Finance Entity;
  - b. leased from State Fleet
  - c. leased from a Government Finance Entity and provided for the use of one individual; and
  - d. leased from State Fleet and provided for the use of one individual;

- ii) How many new cars were purchased in the following years:

- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04
- d. FY2002-03

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars acquired in each year.

- iii) How many new cars were leased in the following years:

- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04
- d. FY2002-03

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars leased in each year and

when the lease expires.

- iv) How many cars owned and/or leased were powered by liquid petroleum

gas (LPG) as at:

- a. 30 June 2006
- b. 30 June 2005
- c. 30 June 2004
- d. 30 June 2003

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars if available.

v) How many cars owned and/or leased were powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) as at:

- a. 30 June 2006
- b. 30 June 2005
- c. 30 June 2004
- d. 30 June 2003

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars if available.

vi) How many cars owned and/or leased have been modified for ethanol as at:

- a. 30 June 2006
- b. 30 June 2005
- c. 30 June 2004
- d. 30 June 2003

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars if available.

vii) How many cars owned and/or leased were powered by petrol as at:

- a. 30 June 2006
- b. 30 June 2005
- c. 30 June 2004
- d. 30 June 2003

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars if available.

viii) How many cars owned and/or leased were powered by diesel as at:

- a. 30 June 2006



- b. 30 June 2005
- c. 30 June 2004
- d. 30 June 2003

Please provide details of the make, size and horsepower of the cars if available.

ix) How many refuelling stations does the Department operate as at:

- a. 30 June 2006
- b. 30 June 2005
- c. 30 June 2004
- d. 30 June 2003

Please provide details of the location of the station and availability of different fuel types at each station

x) Does the Department have a policy or strategy to reduce the fuel consumption of its car fleet, if so, can details be provided?

xi) What is the departments position on the use of ethanol fuel?

xii) What is the fuel efficiency rating of all the cars provided to the Department and/or departmental staff under the arrangement described above?

xiii) How does the actual fuel consumption and mileage compare with that rating?

xiv) Statewide, what operating savings would have been achieved for FY2005-06 if all cars provided to the Department and/or departmental staff under the arrangement described above were run on:

- a. LPG
- b. CNG
- c. ethanol?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

At 30 June 2006, the number of passenger vehicles in the New South Wales Government motor vehicle fleet was 17,140.

There were also 8,732 other vehicles including commercial vehicles, Ambulances, buses and other specialised vehicles such as handicapped transporters in the fleet.

The composition of the passenger fleet has changed significantly over the past twelve months with small and medium now comprising the largest segment of the fleet at 38% whilst large passenger vehicle numbers have reduced by 14% to now represent only 36%.

In 2005 new guidelines were announced committing the Government to the use of biofuels and other alternative fuels as part of the Government's overall *Cleaner NSW Government Fleet Policy*.

From 1 July 2006, all government owned vehicles are required to use E10 blends (or other alternative fuels) where this is practicable, available and cost effective. This coincides with the commencement of a new whole-of-government fuel contract that includes biofuels.

Vehicles managed by the Department of Commerce's StateFleet are being issued with fuel cards specifically providing for the consumption of E10, where it is available.

Public sector officials who currently have Government owned vehicles as part of their remuneration package are also able to replace existing vehicles with hybrid vehicles when they are due for replacement.

Despite a change in the federal Department of Transport and Regional Services green vehicle guide rating system on 1 January 2006 the whole of government environmental performance score has increased from 9.55 at 1 July 2005 to 9.96

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

at 30 June 2006 against a target of 10. Without the change, the score would have been 10.

## **2. Diversity reporting**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Did the Department include in its annual report a report on outcomes achieved for clients from multicultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds for each of the following financial years:

- a. FY2000-01
- b. FY2001-02
- c. FY2002-03
- d. FY2003-04
- e. FY2004-05
- f. FY2005-06?

ii) If not, did the Department otherwise publish a report on outcomes achieved for clients from multicultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds for each of the following financial years:

- a. FY2000-01
- b. FY2001-02
- c. FY2002-03
- d. FY2003-04
- e. FY2004-05
- f. FY2005-06?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

NSW Government agencies are required to implement the principles of multiculturalism in conducting their affairs. Public sector agencies incorporate these principles and objectives part in their core business through the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) Standard Framework.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

EAPS provides a framework for agencies to address the needs of a culturally diverse society according to their charter and integrate these needs into the agency's core business and services.

Agencies are required to prepare EAPS plans and review them on an annual basis.

All agencies are required to report on the progress made in implementing EAPS in the past year and the key ethnic affairs strategies proposed for the following year/s.

The *Community Relations Report 2005* provides an account of the programs and initiatives pursued by NSW Government agencies in implementing the Principles of Multiculturalism.

The reports contains a selection of initiatives that have been submitted to the Commission as examples of how public sector agencies are providing services to our culturally diverse society. The report is publicly available from the Community Relations Commission website at [www.crc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.crc.nsw.gov.au).

### **3. Diversity costs**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What were the costs associated to the Department of providing culturally responsive and accessible services for each of the following financial years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ii) What was the budget at the start of the financial year for the estimated costs associated to the department of providing culturally responsive and accessible services for each of the following financial years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- iii) How much did the Department budget for this purpose for FY2006-07?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The NSW Government is committed to the Principles of Multiculturalism and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). The government recognises the benefits in employing staff from Non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB).

New South Wales is one of the most culturally diverse communities in Australia with people from around 140 birthplaces and around 26% of the population speak a language other than English at home.

Through the EAPS Framework, the government is committed to responding to needs of a culturally diverse community when delivering programs and services.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

The government recognises that a culturally diverse workplace can promote equity and enhances staff skills and agency success.

Community language skills and cultural competencies are valuable assets to an agency. Service delivery can improve when agency staff understand and can communicate skilfully with clients from a range of backgrounds.

The percentage of NESB employees is publicly reported in agency annual reports.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

#### **4. Public information**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Which publications are being published, as at today, for public information purposes?
  
- ii) Which publications produced for public information purposes have had their publication suspended since 1 July 2003? Please provide details of when the last issue was published.
  
- iii) For the list of publications published for general public information purposes?
  - a. Which publications were produced in languages other than English and what languages were the publications published in?
  - b. From the above list, how many copies were printed?
  - c. From the above list, what was the total cost of the publication (i.e. translation, printing and distribution) of each of these documents?
  
- iv) For the period 1 July 2006 to date what are the details of all publications produced by agencies for which the Minister has responsibility, indicating in each case the:
  - a. title;
  - b. date of issue/distribution;
  - c. cost of production;
  - d. number printed;
  - e. name of printer; and
  - f. details of distribution, including numbers and cost and the purpose of production.
  
- v) For the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 what are the details of all publications produced by agencies for which the Minister has responsibility, indicating in each case the:



- a. title;
- b. date of issue/distribution;
- c. cost of production;
- d. number printed;
- e. name of printer; and
- f. details of distribution, including numbers, cost and the purpose of production.

vi) For the period 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 what are the details of all publications produced by agencies for which the Minister has responsibility, indicating in each case the:

- a. title;
- b. date of issue/distribution;
- c. cost of production;
- d. number printed;
- e. name of printer; and
- f. details of distribution, including numbers, cost and the purpose of production.

vii) For the period 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2004 what are the details of all publications produced by agencies for which the Minister has responsibility, indicating in each case the:

- a. title;
- b. date of issue/distribution;
- c. cost of production;
- d. number printed;
- e. name of printer; and
- f. details of distribution, including numbers, cost and the purpose of production.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Under section 14 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989* agencies publish a list of publications and other promotional materials in a six monthly summary of affairs which appears in the Government Gazette and in an annual statement of affairs which are usually contained in publicly available annual reports.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**5. Staff with Non-English Speaking Backgrounds** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) What proportion of employees as at 30 June 2006 have a non-English speaking background?

ii) What efforts has the Department made to identify employees from non-English speaking backgrounds and the languages in which they are fluent?

iii) For each language other than English that the Department has identified employees with language skills, please indicate as at 30 June 2006 how many were identified as being:

a. Fluent in the respective language;

b. Proficient in the respective language?

iv) Of the personnel with skills in languages other than English as at 30 June 2006:

a. How many have been identified as possessing accredited language skills to either translator or interpreter standard?

b. For each language, how many were identified as having accreditation as a translator and what was their respective level of accreditation?

c. For each language, how many were identified as having accreditation as an interpreter and what was their respective level of accreditation?

iv) What was the cost of language training paid for by the Department in the following periods:

a. FY2002-03

b. FY2003-04

c. FY2004-05

d. FY2005-06?

Please provide details of number of employees who received language training and in what language.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The NSW Government is committed to the Principles of Multiculturalism and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). The government recognises the significant benefits in employing staff from Non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB).

New South Wales is one of the most culturally diverse communities in Australia with people from around 140 birthplaces and around 26% of the population speak a language other than English at home.

Through the EAPS Framework, the government is committed to responding to needs of a culturally diverse community when delivering programs and services.

The government recognises that a culturally diverse workplace promotes equity and can enhance staff skills and agency success.

Community language skills and cultural competencies are valuable assets to an agency. Service delivery can improve when agency staff understand and can communicate skilfully with clients from a range of backgrounds.

The percentage of NESB employees is publicly available in agency annual reports.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

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**6. Departmental staff – Community Language Allowance scheme**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental staff members receive an allowance under the Community Allowance Scheme in:
  - a. FY 2003-04
  - b. FY 2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06
- ii) Of the Department's personnel who were in receipt of an allowance under the Community Allowance Scheme how many received the base level of allowance in:
  - a. FY 2003-04
  - b. FY 2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06
- iii) Of the Department's personnel who were in receipt of an allowance under the Community Allowance Scheme how many received the highest level of allowance in:
  - a. FY 2003-04
  - b. FY 2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

As part of the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) Standard Framework, agencies are required to employ strategies to ensure services are equitable and accessible to all sections of the community.

An agency's service delivery can improve when staff understand and can communicate skilfully with clients from a range of backgrounds. The community may also identify with and relate to agencies that reflect its level of diversity.

Community language skills and cultural competencies are valuable assets to an agency.

The Personnel Handbook which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au) makes provision for the payment of a Community Language Allowance Scheme (CLA).

To be eligible for the CLA, employees must pass one or both of two examinations and be nominated by their department.

They must also be:

- public contact staff, counter staff or other clerical staff who, owing to their language skills, are required to deal with public enquiries;
- prepared to be identified as possessing a non-English language skill for the purpose of the work of their department;
- available to use the language skill as required by the department; and
- recognised by their department as occasional or regular users of their language skill as an adjunct to their normal duties.

Further details on the policy is contained in the Personnel Handbook.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**7. Use of translators and interpreters** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

iv) How much was spent by each entity the Minister was responsible for on engaging language translators in each of the following periods:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

- v) How much was spent by each entity the Minister was responsible for on engaging language interpreters in each of the following periods:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- vi) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for engaging:
  - a. language translators
  - b. language interpreters?
- vii) For each language in which a translator was engaged, how many engagements occurred in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- viii) For each language in which an interpreter was engaged, how many engagements occurred in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ix) What was the total cost (broken down according to language) of the engagement of translators in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06
- x) What was the total cost (broken down according to language) of the engagement of translators in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

As part of the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) Standard Framework, agencies are required to employ strategies to ensure services are equitable and accessible to all sections of the community.

These strategies may include the use of interpreters to communicate with agency clients. Service delivery can improve when agency staff understand and can communicate skilfully with clients from a range of backgrounds.

The Language Services Division of the Community Relations Commission provides an interpreter and translation service that is available to NSW public sector agencies. The Division works with government agencies to provide opportunities for the professional development of interpreters and translators and to improve availability of language services in Sydney metropolitan, regional and rural areas.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



**8. Print advertising** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How much was spent on advertising or advertorial in the ethnic print media during each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ii) Please provide details of the name of the publication used in each instance, the language in which it is printed, the average circulation achieved by the publication and the Department's total annual spend on advertising and advertorial in each publication in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- iii) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for expenditure on advertising or advertorial in ethnic print media?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across NSW Government and issued new advertising requirements that came into effect on 1 July 2005.

These requirements applied to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

Changes to the Government's advertising policy were announced in *Premier's Circular 2006-26 : Changes to Government Advertising Policy*.

To achieve savings, all advertisements will now be consolidated in a single government advertisement under the masthead NSW Government Noticeboard.

Those changes include:

1. Improving access to details of job vacancies by publishing the Government's composite recruitment advertisement in both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph each Saturday; and
2. consolidating all important public information and statutory notices into a single government advertisement that appears each Wednesday in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph.

In 2005/2006, advertising expenditure by budget dependent and self-funded was \$55.3 million and comprised of Community Awareness advertising of \$39.3 million and Public Notices/Information advertising of \$16 million

I'm further advised the Howard Government has allocated at least \$250m in the 2006/07 Budget for 13 advertising campaigns including:

- \$52.1m Private Health Insurance Campaign claiming to increase consumer awareness of the incentives and benefits associated with private health insurance;
- \$47.3m Smartcard Awareness Campaign claiming to ensure all Australians are aware of the processes for registering for the card;
- \$36.1m Child Support Reforms to increase awareness of the changes; and
- \$15m Independent Contractors (AWA) communications campaign.

The \$250m is in addition to the \$130m advertising placement spent for the current financial year making a combined total of \$380 million.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

The Howard Government has spent over \$1.1 billion on advertising since it came to office in 1996.

## **9. Radio advertising**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How much was spent on advertising or advertorial on ethnic radio in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

ii) Please provide details of which radio station was used in each instance, the language in which it was broadcast and the Department's total annual spend on advertising and advertorial in each language at each radio station in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

iii) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for expenditure on advertising or advertorial on ethnic radio?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across NSW Government and issued new advertising requirements that came into effect on 1 July 2005.

Those requirements applied to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

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Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

The \$250m is in addition to the \$130m advertising placement spent for the current financial year making a combined total of \$380 million.

The Howard Government has spent over \$1.1 billion on advertising since it came to office in 1996.

## **10. Intermediary Service Providers – Expenditure**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How much was spent on the services of an intermediary service provider, such as another level of government or a non-government organization, for delivery of Departmental programs or services in each of the following years:

a. FY2002-03

b. FY2003-04

a. FY2004-05

b. FY2005-06?

ii) Please provide details why the intermediary service provider was used in each instance and the nature of the services provided in each of the following years:

a. FY2002-03

b. FY2003-04

c. FY2004-05

d. FY2005-06?

iii) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for expenditure on the services of an intermediary service provider, such as another level of government or a non-government organization, for delivery of Departmental programs or services?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Each year the NSW Government acquires and builds significant assets, goods and services including computer and communication technology infrastructure and systems.

The Department of Commerce (Commerce) works with government agencies to develop significant strategies and plans to deliver value, minimise costs and manage risk in the construction and management of assets, procurement and management of information and communication technology and the procurement of goods and services.

Commerce also provides, as part of a broader government network, services to project manage emergency incidences and to deliver projects of state significance.

Key procurement services provided include establishing and administering aggregated goods and services, standing period contracts, design and delivery of efficient and effective procurement systems and best practice guidelines, online procurement tools and services and the review of projects across their procurement lifecycle.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



### **11. Intermediary Service Providers - Accountability**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many Departmental programs or services were delivered using an intermediary service provider, such as another level of government or a non-government organization, in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ii) Did contracts with intermediary service providers used for delivering the Departmental programs or services identified above specify access and equity accountabilities (eg. collection and reporting of information on client characteristics) as part of their funding conditions?
- iii) For each of these, is the condition a standard clause? If so, can the Department supply a copy of the standard clause used in the contracts?
- iv) If the Department does not use a standard clause in these contracts, can the Department provide a copy of the various conditions used in its service contracts with intermediary service providers used for delivering the Departmental programs or services?
- v) Does the Department audit its contracts with intermediary service providers used for delivering the Departmental programs or services to ensure compliance with any funding conditions specifying access and equity accountabilities (standard clauses or otherwise)? If so, please supply details of the results of these audits.

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Auditor General audits the expenditure of agencies as provided in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*. The audit process provides an independent

assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

Shared Corporate Services are leading practice for corporate services delivery, through the benefits of economies of scale, access to expert advice, better customer service, transparency of information and on-line access for users and clients.

The NSW Government has endorsed a Shared Corporate Services Strategy to enable public sector agencies to significantly improve corporate services delivery, realise the benefits of technologies and reduce costs.

The Shared Corporate Services concept capitalises on recent developments in corporate IT applications, which eliminate much of the routine manual transactions and make remote provision of services an efficient and effective option.

Prospective Providers need to demonstrate that they are able to provide an efficient, effective and appropriate service without compromising their core business. Providers need to demonstrate their commitment to providing services over a period of time and in accordance with criteria developed to assist the transparent assessment of potential providers by central agencies, potential clients and the providers themselves.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **12. Engagement of contractors by the Department – need identification**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Please provide the following information concerning those occasions during FY2005-06 when the need for a contractor was established within the Department, thereby necessitating the engagement of a contractor or contractors to undertake and/or execute any project or task:
  - a. the name or names of the contractor or contractors engaged in each instance;
  - b. the project or task the contractor or contractors were engaged to perform in each instance;
  - c. the actual amount paid to the contractor or contractors in each instance, indicating where relevant the extent to which this amount exceeded the projected cost for the contract.
- ii) Please provide the following information concerning those occasions during FY2005-06 to date when the need for a contractor has been established within the Department thereby necessitating the engagement of a contractor or contractors to undertake and/or execute any project or task:
  - a. the name or names of the contractor or contractors engaged in each instance;
  - b. the project or task the contractor or contractors were engaged to perform in each instance;
  - c. the actual amount paid to the contractor or contractors in each instance.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The use of contractors is limited to areas in which the agency does not have the necessary skills or specific expertise to effectively and efficiently undertake a required project or task. As well as establishing a need, it is standard practise to forecast contractor costs in order to conduct a cost-benefit analysis prior to making a decision of engagement. Contractors' work is monitored and evaluated to ensure that objectives and milestones specific to the project are met within the agreed budget and time-frame.

The Auditor General audits of agencies expenditure as required by the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 and this audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **13. Engagement of contractors by the Department – cost forecasting**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) During FY2005-06, was a cost-benefit analysis prepared within the Department prior to making a decision to engage a contractor or contractors in every instance?
- ii) In every instance during FY 2005-06 when a cost-benefit analysis was prepared within the Department prior to making a decision to engage a contractor or contractors, please provide the following information:
  - a. the estimated or forecast cost of engaging a contractor or contractors to undertake and/or execute the relevant project or task and a description of the project or task involved;
  - b. the name or names of the contractor or contractors engaged to undertake and/or execute the project or task and whether the work performed by the contractor or contractors met the objectives and milestones specific to the project within the agreed budget and time-frame
  - c. the extent to which the amount the contractor or contractors received exceeded the agreed budget and time-frame and/or any estimated or forecast cost in the cost benefit analysis prepared by the Department.
- iii) During FY2005-06, has a cost-benefit analysis been prepared within the Department prior to making a decision to engage a contractor or contractors in every instance?
- iv) In every instance during FY 2005-06 to date when a cost-benefit analysis has been prepared within the Department prior to making a decision to engage a contractor or contractors, please provide the following information:
  - a. the estimated or forecast cost of engaging a contractor or contractors to undertake and/or execute the relevant project or task and a description of the project or task involved;
  - b. the name or names of the contractor or contractors engaged to undertake and/or execute the project or task and whether the work performed by the contractor or contractors has met the objectives and

milestones specific to the project within the agreed budget and time-frame

- c. the extent to which the amount the contractor or contractors received exceeded the agreed budget and time-frame and/or any estimated or forecast cost in the cost benefit analysis prepared by the Department.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The use of contractors is limited to areas in which the agency does not have the necessary skills or specific expertise to effectively and efficiently undertake a required project or task. As well as establishing a need, it is standard practise to forecast contractor costs in order to conduct a cost-benefit analysis prior to making a decision of engagement. Contractors' work is monitored and evaluated to ensure that objectives and milestones specific to the project are met within the agreed budget and time-frame.

The Auditor General audits of agencies expenditure as required by the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 and this audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**14. Credit Card Use** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many employees/staff carry, use or have been issued with a Departmental/Agency credit cards as at
  - a. 30 June 2006
  - b. 30 June 2005
  - c. 30 June 2004
  - d. 30 June 2003
- ii) What was the total amount of expenditure by staff on credit cards used within the Department/Agency in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- i) Please provide a breakdown on the credit limits for credit cards issued by the department/agency as at:
  - a. 30 June 2006
  - b. 30 June 2005
  - c. 30 June 2004
  - d. 30 June 2003
- ii) Provide details of the total amount of interest and fees paid by the Department/Agency in respect of the credit cards used within the Department/Agency in each of the following years:
  - e. FY2002-03
  - f. FY2003-04
  - g. FY2004-05
  - h. FY2005-06?
- iii) Provide a breakdown of the amount spent by Departmental/Agency staff using credit cards:
  - a. Reimbursement of meals and food related expenses
  - b. Reimbursement of accommodation expenses
  - c. Reimbursement of taxi and hire car expenses

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Credit cards for Ministers and public sector employees are issued and used in accordance with Directions to all government agencies. Credit cards are used for business purposes only and may be used to meet the costs of official out-of-pocket expenses from time to time in accordance with the Premier's policy guidelines. Credit cards are generally used for the purchase of low value goods and services.

Authorities must establish a business case for the use of credit cards including a cost benefit analysis for their agency.

Payment of expenses and or purchase of approved stores and services by credit card requires the normal procedures of acquiring approval to incur expenditure. Credit card accounts require the normal examination, certification and authorisation.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



**15. Departmental staff**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

Please provide data on the number of staff in the Department in each salary band?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 provides for a Department Head to establish or abolish any branch or part of the Department. Internal branch/unit structures of Departments are designed to ensure the most efficient and effective service is provided to the Minister and the people of New South Wales.

Under the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Reports) Act 1984*, agencies are required to set out their structure and business units in their annual report.

Accordingly information relating to staff and salary groups is publicly available in annual reports.

**16. Ministerial staff**

With respect to both the Department and the agencies constituted under it:

i) How many departmental employees were seconded/assigned to work in Offices of Ministers and of Parliamentary Secretaries as at:

- a. 30 June 2002
- b. 30 June 2003
- c. 30 June 2004
  
- d. 30 June 2005
- e. 30 June 2006

ii) To what Minister or Parliamentary Secretary outlined in part i) were they assigned?

iii) What was the total cost of seconding/assigning department employees to work in Offices of Ministers and of Parliamentary Secretaries for the following periods:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

iv) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for seconding/assigning department employees to work in Offices of Ministers and of Parliamentary Secretaries?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Ministers' office staff are employed by the Director-General of the Premier's Department under the Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

Departmental staff may be assigned to Ministers' Offices from agencies within the Minister's portfolio to assist the Minister's Office deal more efficiently with agency matters.

Conditions of employment and entitlements are regulated by the provisions of the Public Sector Act. Salary costs are included in the employee-related expenses of the home agencies.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **17. Departmental support for the Minister**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) As at 30 June 2006, does the Department have a staff members and/or a Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit whose duties involve any of the following:

- a. Coordinating and processing correspondence,
- b. Briefings,
- c. Freedom of Information requests,
- d. Reports to Parliament,
- e. Answers to Questions of Notice,
- f. Estimates briefings?

ii) What is the official name of the unit or the section to which employees who are assigned who are involved in any of the following:

- a. Coordinating and processing correspondence,
- b. Briefings,
- c. Freedom of Information requests,
- d. Reports to Parliament,
- e. Answers to Questions of Notice,
- f. Estimates briefings?

iii) How many employees are currently in the Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit (whose duties are outlined in part i) as at:

- a. 30 June 2003
- b. 30 June 2004
- c. 30 June 2005
- d. 30 June 2006

Please provide details of salaries & job titles/descriptions of the employees counted above.

iv) As at 30 June 2006, who in the Ministerial/Parliamentary Offices is able to authorise requests or commission work from the Department and/or Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit?

v) As at 30 June 2006, to whom does the Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit report to within the department?

vi) As at 30 June 2006 and to whom in the Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit?

vii) What was the total cost of the Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit (whose duties are outlined in part i) for the following periods:

a. FY 2002/03

b. FY 2003/04

c. FY 2004/05

d. FY 2005/06

viii) How much has been budgeted by the Department for the Ministerial/Parliamentary Liaison Unit for FY2006-07?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 provides for a Department Head to establish or abolish any branch or part of the Department. Internal branch/unit structures of Departments are designed to ensure the most efficient and effective service is provided to the Minister and the people of New South Wales.

Under the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Reports) Act 1984*, agencies are required to set out their structure and business units in their annual report.

This includes units that assist the Department and Minister in performing their roles. Accordingly this information is publicly available.

### **18. Professional development**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What was the total expenditure on professional development for senior staff in the following periods:
  - a. FY 2002/03
  - b. FY 2003/04
  - c. FY 2004/05
  - d. FY 2005/06
- ii) Please provide a breakdown of the aggregate spent on professional development of senior staff over the last three years according to their classification as SES (Senior Executive Service) or Senior Officers other than SES.
- iii) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 to be spent on professional development of senior staff?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government's policy document *The NSW Public Sector Workforce Planning Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2004 – 2006* which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au), outlines key workforce issues across the NSW public sector.

A major focus of the plan is to align skill gaps with resources for training and development. The Government's Action plan outlines initiatives for building workforce capability including entry level and graduate recruitment and retention, leadership development and core public sector skill development.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

The Government has established initiatives for developing leadership across the sector including the Executive Development Program, the Public Sector Management Program and study assistance scheme.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **19. Staff training & development**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What was the total expenditure on in-house job-related training for the following periods:
  - a) FY 2003-04
  - b) FY 2004-05
  - c) FY 2005-06?
- ii) How many hours did staff spend on in-house job-related training for the following periods:
  - a) FY 2003-04
  - b) FY 2004-05
  - c) FY 2005-06?
- iii) What was the total budgeted expenditure on in-house job-related training for the FY2006-07?
- iv) What was the total expenditure on external job-related training for the following periods:
  - a) FY 2003-04
  - b) FY 2004-05
  - c) FY 2005-06?
- v) How many hours did staff spend on external job-related training for the following periods:
  - a) FY 2003-04
  - b) FY 2004-05
  - c) FY 2005-06?
- vi) What was the total budgeted expenditure on external job-related training for the FY2006-07?
- vii) What are the specific areas of focus for staff training due to be undertaken in this financial year and how does this differ from training programs undertaken in the previous two financial years?



viii) Please provide a breakdown of the aggregate spend on in-house and external job-related training for staff over the last three years according to their classification and/or level.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government's policy document The NSW Public Sector Workforce Planning Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2004 – 2006, which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au) outlines key workforce issues across the NSW public sector.

A key focus is to align any skill gaps with resources for training and development. The plan outlines initiatives for building workforce capability including entry level and graduate recruitment and retention, leadership development and core public sector skill development.

The Government has established initiatives for the delivery of training across the sector including the Aboriginal Employment Framework, which provides agencies with direction and guidance on planning, development and implementation of Aboriginal employment initiatives.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **20. Work practices**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Has the Department implemented any new policies or practices to assist employees to balance work and family responsibilities during FY2005- 06 and the financial year to date? If so, what are those policies and or practices?
- ii) Does the Department have any benchmarks against which it assesses the efficacy of new policies or practices introduced by it to assist employees to balance work and family responsibilities? If so what are those precise benchmarks?
- iii) If the Department has implemented any new policies or practices to assist employees to balance work and family responsibilities during the last four financial years:
  - a. has it sought employee feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of these initiatives?
  - b. has there been any cost/benefit analysis performed to assess the effectiveness of such initiatives and, if so, what did that analysis indicate?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The NSW Government is committed to providing family friendly working conditions for staff. Employees under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006* are covered by NSW public service wide initiatives such as:

1. The Public Employment Office (PEO) Premier's Department, Flexible Work Practices - Policy and Guidelines, provides a framework for

- implementing initiatives that assist employees to balance work and family responsibilities. This includes policies relating to part-time work and part-time leave without pay, job sharing and short-term absences for family and community service responsibilities. Other options include career break schemes, part year employment and varying hours.
2. Policy and Guidelines on employee sponsored childcare are an important part of the Government's commitment to a family friendly workplace.
  3. The Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006 also provides a range of entitlements to assist employees to meet their work and family responsibilities. In 2005/06 the PEO and the Public Service Association (PSA) agreed to include express provisions within the Award to provide greater certainty about entitlements for part time employees. Other entitlements include:
    - Flexible working hours
    - Paid maternity, adoption and parental leave
    - Part-time maternity, adoption and parental leave
    - Family and community services leave
    - Access to personal sick leave to care for an ill family member
    - Where leave entitlements are exhausted flexible access to leave without pay to meet caring responsibilities

**21. Employment of people with a disability** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many people with a disability are employed by the Department in each NSW electoral divisions?
- ii) Please provide a breakdown of the Department's disabled workforce listing their employment status (permanent, casual, temporary), average remuneration rate by gender, age, gender and occupational group.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government has completed a program of strategic partnerships with the Motor Accidents Authority, the Public Trustee and the Department of Education and Training to offer public sector traineeships for job seekers with a disability.

This Traineeship Program provided on-the-job training in NSW Government agencies together with tertiary study opportunities for people with a disability. These opportunities lead to nationally accredited qualifications. On completion successful trainees have a nationally accredited qualification.

The three year traineeships program 2002-04 outcomes include 71 participants having completed the program. Twenty nine public sector agencies participated in the program and fifty successful trainees found permanent positions with these agencies.

Many agencies include high level information relating to the employment of people with a disability in annual reports, which are publicly available.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **22. Employment of mature age staff**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) what is the total number of male staff aged over 65 years and the total number of female staff aged over 60 years as at:
  - a) FY 2003-04
  - b) FY 2004-05
  - c) FY 2005-06?
  
- ii) As at 30 June 2006, how many men over 65 years and women over 60 years are employed by the Department in each NSW electoral division?
  
- iii) As at 30 June 2006, please provide a breakdown of roles and salaries of all men over 65 years and women over 60 years are employed by the Department?
  
- iv) What policies are in place within the Department to encourage employment of staff older than retirement age?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government's policy document *The NSW Public Sector Workforce Planning Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2004 – 2006* outlines key workforce issues across the NSW public sector.

The Government is committed to ensuring that it attracts and retains skilled and valuable employees to meet changing policy and service delivery needs. The Government is keenly aware of the impact that an aging population will have on the labour market in terms of skills shortages and the recruitment and retention of

staff. The Government's Action Plan outlines a range of initiatives to improve the retention of older public sector employees.

The recently released *Retirement Intentions Survey: Report and Findings* will help the Government plan and manage the ageing Public Sector workforce to ensure that experience and expertise is retained by agencies.

All employment decisions within the NSW public sector must satisfy the principles of merit selection including fair practices that are free from discrimination and value and deliver diversity in the workplace.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**23. State Government funded programs** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Does the Department administer any State funded programs for which community organisations or businesses can apply for funding? If so, what are these programs?
- ii) Does the Department advertise these funding opportunities?
- iii) For each of the programs listed in part i) above, please provide a breakdown of the following by electoral division and year (that is, for each of FY2003-04, FY2004-05 and FY2005-06 to date):
  - a. the name and postal address of each organisation that sought funding from the State;
  - b. the purpose of the funding sought in each case; and
  - c. for successful applications, the level of funding provided.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Lists of grants are provided in agency annual reports which are publicly available.

I'm further advised NSW Government grants programs are listed on the Government's Community Builders website at [www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au). The website contains all the NSW Government grants programs together with some Commonwealth Government and corporate philanthropic programs. All NSW Government grants are currently being added to this site.

**24. Departmental public relations and media staff** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many media and/or communications advisers were employed by the Department in accordance with the provisions of the Public Sector Employment & Management Act 2002 during FY2005-06?
- ii) What was the total cost to the Department in FY2005-06 of media and/or communications advisers employed by the Department in accordance with the provisions of the Public Sector Employment & Management Act 2002?
- iii) How many media and/or communications advisers are currently employed by the Department?
- iv) What is the estimated total cost to the Department in FY2006-07 of media and/or communications advisers employed by the Department?
- v) How many media and/or communications advisers were employed as contractors by the Director General of the Department during FY2005-06?
- vi) What was the total cost to the Department in FY2005-06 of media and/or communications advisers employed as contractors by the Department?
- vii) How many media and/or communications advisers are currently employed as contractors by the Department?
- viii) What is the estimated total cost to the Department in FY2006-07 of media and/or communications advisers employed as contractors by the Director General of the Department?



**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Governments are required to communicate a wide variety of information to the public including public health, community welfare and safety, public education and training, environmental and rural support, arts, tourism and business development.

Governments use a variety of channels and media to communicate this information including print, radio and television media, advertising, marketing and promotional activities, publications, website and community liaison.

Agencies may employ staff to carry out media and/or communication functions to communicate important information including the department's activities to members of the public. Section 9 (2) of the Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 (PSEM Act 2002) provides for department heads to create, abolish or otherwise deal with any positions in their department other than the position of department head.

Under the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Reports) Act 1984*, agencies are required to set out their structure and business units in their annual report. This includes units that provide communications services to the public.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **25. Departmental advertising**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did the Department submit any campaign advertising plans to the Advertising Peer Review during FY2005-06?
- ii) Please provide a detail of all campaign advertising plans submitted by the Department to the Advertising Peer Review during FY2005-06.
- iii) How many and which campaign advertising plans submitted to the Advertising Peer Review during FY2005-06 were:
  - a. Rejected;
  - b. Sent back for further work;
  - c. Forwarded onto Cabinet Sub-Committee;
  - d. Approved by the Cabinet Sub-Committee;
- iv) What was the total actual advertising expenditure by the Department in FY2005-06?
- v) How has the total advertising expenditure by the Department varied over the last three financial years?
- vi) Please provide a monthly breakdown of total actual advertising expenditure by the Department in FY2005-06.
- vii) Please provide a breakdown of total actual advertising expenditure by the Department in FY2005-06 on the following categories of advertising
  - +a. community awareness
  - b. public notice
  - c. public information
  - d. employment related advertising
  - e. non-employment related advertising.
- viii) In relation to actual advertising by the Department in FY2005-06, please provide a list of each campaign cost, which firms were involved and the actual amount spent by the Department on “media buy” and advertising agency fees.
- ix) What has been the actual total advertising expenditure by the Department during FY2006-07 to date.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across government and issued new advertising guidelines on 1 July 2005.

These requirements apply to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

Further amendments to the Government's advertising policy were made in *Premier's Circular 2006-26: Changes to Government Advertising Policy* which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

To achieve savings, all advertisements will now be consolidated in a single government advertisement under the masthead NSW Government Noticeboard.

Changes include:

- Improving access to details of job vacancies by publishing the Government's composite recruitment advertisement in both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph each Saturday and,
- Consolidating all important public information and statutory notices into a single government advertisement that appears each Wednesday in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph.

In 2005/2006, advertising expenditure by budget dependent and self-funded was \$55.3 million and comprised of Community Awareness advertising of \$39.3 million and Public Notices/Information advertising of \$16 million

I'm further advised the Howard Government has allocated at least \$250m in the 2006/07 Budget for 13 advertising campaigns including:

- \$52.1m Private Health Insurance Campaign claiming to increase consumer awareness of the incentives and benefits associated with private health insurance;
- \$47.3m Smartcard Awareness Campaign claiming to ensure all Australians are aware of the processes for registering for the card;
- \$36.1m Child Support Reforms to increase awareness of the changes; and
- \$15m Independent Contractors (AWA) communications campaign.

The \$250m is in addition to the \$130m advertising placement spent for the current financial year making a combined total of \$380 million.

The Howard Government has spent over \$1.1 billion on advertising since it came to office in 1996.

## **26. Departmental advertising & public information**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Please list all advertising or public information projects currently being undertaken or expected to be undertaken in FY2006-07 where the cost of the project is estimated or contracted to be \$10,000 or more and indicate:
  - a. The purpose and nature of the project;
  - b. The intended recipients of the information to be communicated by the project;
  - c. Who authorised or is to authorise the project;
  - d. The manner in which the project is to be carried out;
  - e. Who is to carry out the project;
  - f. Whether the project is to be carried out under a contract or contracts;
  - g. Whether such contract or contract was or is to be let by tender;
  - h. The estimated or contracted cost of the project.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across government and issued new advertising guidelines on 1 July 2005.

These requirements apply to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

Further amendments to the Government's advertising policy were made in *Premier's Circular 2006-26: Changes to Government Advertising Policy* which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

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The \$250m is in addition to the \$130m advertising placement spent for the current financial year making a combined total of \$380 million.

The Howard Government has spent over \$1.1 billion on advertising since it came to office in 1996.

**27. Departmental advertising & public information – effectiveness tracking mechanisms** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How does the Department evaluate the effectiveness of the advertising and/or public information projects being undertaken during FY2006-07 where the cost of the project is estimated or contracted to be \$10,000?
- ii) What are the precise benchmarks against which the projects are being assessed?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across government and issued new advertising guidelines on 1 July 2005.

These requirements apply to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

Further amendments to the Government's advertising policy were made in *Premier's Circular 2006-26: Changes to Government Advertising Policy* which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

To achieve savings, all advertisements will now be consolidated in a single government advertisement under the masthead NSW Government Noticeboard.

Changes include:

- Improving access to details of job vacancies by publishing the Government's composite recruitment advertisement in both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph each Saturday and,

- consolidating all important public information and statutory notices into a single government advertisement that appears each Wednesday in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph.

All departmental expenditure is subject to annual audits by the Auditor-General who tables those reports in Parliament.



**28. Departmental research projects**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Please provide a list of all research projects currently being undertaken or expected to be undertaken by the Department or agency in the course of FY2006-07?
- ii) How many of these research projects are expected to be completed by the end of this financial year?
- iii) What are the specific areas of focus for projects due to be completed in this financial year and how does this differ from projects undertaken in the previous three financial years (ie. FY2003-04, FY2004-05, FY2005-05)?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Agency research and development initiatives are provided in annual reports, which are publicly available, as part of the general reporting on programs and initiatives.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **29. Departmental break-ins**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many break-ins did the Department report to the NSW Police in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ii) How many break-ins did the Department not report to the NSW Police in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- iii) For each incident:
  - a. What was the location and cost of the damage associated with each break-in?
  - b. What was the cost of damage incurred because of the break-in?
  - c. What was the subject of theft in each break-in?
  - d. What was the cost of any theft associated with each break-in?
  - e. Was anyone apprehended and charged in relation to the break-in (please indicate if the relevant individual/s was employed by the Department)?
  - f. Was anyone convicted in relation to the break-in (please indicate if the relevant individual/s was employed by the Department)?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

These matters are reported to NSW Police and are dealt with accordingly.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**30. Departmental property theft** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How many thefts of Departmental property occurred in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06

ii) For each incident:

- a. What was stolen in each instance?
- b. What was the value of the stolen item/s?
- c. From where were the relevant items stolen?
- d. Was anyone apprehended and charged in relation to the theft (please indicate if the relevant individual/s was employed by the Department)?
- e. Was anyone convicted in relation to the break-in (please indicate if the relevant individual/s was employed by the Department)?
- f. Were any of the items recovered?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

These matters are reported to NSW Police and are dealt with accordingly.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**31. Departmental fraud** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many incidents of fraud were detected against the Department in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06
- ii) For each incident:
  - a. What was the subject of the fraud in each instance?
  - b. What was the value of the fraud?
  - c. Which administrative unit was the subject of the fraud?
  - d. Was anyone charged in relation to the fraud (please indicate if the relevant individual/s was employed by the Department)?
  - e. Was anyone convicted in relation to the fraud (please indicate if the relevant individual/s was employed by the Department)?
  - f. Were any of the defrauded items recovered or was any of the defrauded money recovered?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

These matters are reported to NSW Police and are dealt with accordingly.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**32. Departmental property loss** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How many incidents of loss (excluding theft, accident, breakage and vandalism) of Departmental property were reported to the Department in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

ii) For each incident:

- a. What was the loss in each instance?
- b. What was the value of the loss?
- c. Which administrative unit lost the property?
- d. Were any of the lost item/s recovered?
- e. Was anyone disciplined over the loss?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Details of insurance claims are provided in agency annual reports which are publicly available.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **33. Computer equipment & security**

- i) Have there been any desktop computers, laptop computers or any other item of computer hardware, lost or stolen from the possession of any staff member during the FY2005-06 and the current financial year to date; if so:
  - a. what and how many have been lost;
  - b. what and how many have been stolen;
  - c. what is the total value of these items;
  - d. what was the replacement value per item; and
  - e. were these items been recovered or replaced.
- ii) Were the police been requested to investigate any of these incidents? If so: how many were the subject of police investigation;
  - a. how many police investigations have been concluded;
  - b. in how many cases has legal action commenced; and
  - c. in how many cases has this action been concluded and with what result?
- iii) How many of these lost or stolen items had departmental documents, content or information other than operating software on their hard disc drives, floppy disc, CD Rom or any other storage device?
- iv) How many of the documents or files in (iii) were:
  - a. confidential, classified for security or for limited distribution for any other purpose;
  - b. if any, what was the security classification involved and how many have been recovered?
- v) What Departmental disciplinary or other actions have been taken in regard to the items in (i) or in relation to the documents or files in (iii) or (iv)?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Most government agencies have appropriate insurance arrangements through the Self Insurance Corporation (SIC) or other appropriate insurance arrangements.

Thefts are referred to NSW Police according to particular fund manager requirements and agency policy.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



### **34. Motor vehicle accidents**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many Department motor vehicle accidents were involved in accidents in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ii) For each incident:
  - a. What was the value of the damage?
  - b. To which administrative unit was the vehicle attached?
  - c. Was anyone charged over the incident (please specify the charges involved)?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Most government agencies have appropriate insurance arrangements through the Self Insurance Corporation (SIC) or other appropriate insurance arrangements.

The number of insurance claims for motor vehicles for government agencies is published in agency annual reports which are publicly available.

The details and cost of damage and theft of motor vehicles for the public sector was released to *The Daily Telegraph* under the Freedom of Information Act 1989 and published on 4 September 2006, which noted the total number of claims for 2005-2006 was 8,708 at a cost of \$24.43 million.

**35. Departmental transport costs**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What was the total expenditure by the Department on taxi, limousine and hire car services (including Cabcharge) for the following periods:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06?
- ii) What is the budget for expenditure by the Department on taxi, limousine and hire car services (including Cabcharge) for the FY 2006-07?
- iii) Please provide a breakdown of the aggregate spend by staff on taxi, limousine and hire car services (including Cabcharge) according to their classification as SES (Senior Executive Service), Senior Officers other than SES and the remaining staff classifications.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The policy established by the Greiner Government is contained in Information Sheet No. 91-13 which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

The policy prescribes the circumstances under which taxi fares may be reimbursed and cabcharge vouchers may be issued.

Expenditure on taxi fares is either for official travel to ensure staff can attend meetings or to return home after late or shift work.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**36. Departmental function costs**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What was the total expenditure by the Department on functions (such as staff training, “in-services” and entertainment related functions) held at external venues (including hotels and public venues) for the following periods
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06?
  
- ii) In relation to each of the functions held by the Department at an external venue during FY2005-06, please provide the following information:
  - a. The purpose and nature of the function;
  - b. The intended audience for the function and the number of people actually in attendance at the function;
  - c. Who authorised the function;
  - d. Whether food or refreshments were supplied at the function and the amount of the final total cost of the function indicating the cost of venue or room hire and the costs of catering food and beverage for the function.
  - e. Whether alcoholic beverages were served at the function;
  - f. Whether the provision of services (venue, catering etc) was carried out under a contract or contracts;
  - g. Whether such contract or contract was let by tender.
  
- iii) What is the amount budgeted for this purpose (that is, spend by the Department on functions such as staff training, “in-services” and entertainment related functions) in FY2006-07?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Employees may attend training courses and professional development courses in line with the policy contained in the Personnel Handbook. These courses and activities must be of benefit to the agency and may also benefit employee career development within the Public Service.

With regard to entertainment expenses, Premier's Memorandum M2005-12 outlines sector-wide requirements, prohibiting the expenditure of State funds on any event that could provide predominantly personal benefit to NSW public sector employees.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**37. Conference or training attendance by Departmental staff**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many fee-paying conferences did staff members attend in
  - a. FY 2003-04
  - b. FY 2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06?
- ii) Please provide the following information concerning each occasion during FY2005-06 when attendance by a staff member or staff members at a conference was approved:
  - a. the name of the conference and where it was held;
  - b. the number, title and name of the employees who attended the conference;
  - c. the amount of the conference fees;
  - d. the total cost to the Department of the attendance at the conference of the staff member or members.
- iii) How many fee-paying conferences have staff members attended in FY2006-07 to date?
- iv) Please provide the following information concerning each occasion during FY2006-07 to date when attendance by a staff member or staff members at a conference has been approved:
  - a. the name of the conference and where it was/will be held;
  - b. the number, title and name of the employees who attended/will attend the conference;
  - c. the amount of the conference fees;
  - d. the total cost/total estimated cost to the Department of the attendance at the conference of the staff member or members.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

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Attendance at conferences is recognised as a training and development activity with benefits for employees and agency's effectiveness in delivering services. Conference attendance is determined on a case by case basis depending on the relevance to the agency.

The policy is contained in the Personnel Handbook which is available on the Premier's Department Website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**38. Business Consultations** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many business consultations and/or information sessions directed to the business community did the Department conduct in:
  - a. FY 2003-04
  - b. FY 2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06?
- ii) Please give an indication of the broad industries that the Department consults.
- iii) Please give an indication of the specific business sectors and/or industries from which, as a matter of course, the Department seeks input on policy and legislative initiatives.
- iv) Were any consultations made outside the Sydney Metropolitan area in:
  - a. FY 2003-04
  - b. FY 2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government cooperates closely with all stakeholders, including for example business and farming communities to develop appropriate policies and programs for the people of NSW.

In rural and regional NSW, the Government has established a range of mechanisms to encourage participation and develop a collaborative approach to policy making and service delivery.

In 1996, the Government established the Regional Communities Consultative Council to ensure the Government is informed on the issues facing people in rural and regional NSW. In 1997, the Government appointed a Minister for

Regional Development and a Minister for Rural Affairs to give rural and regional communities a stronger voice in Government decision making.

Another key component of these efforts is the Regional Coordination Program. The Program has placed 10 Regional Coordinators across metropolitan and regional New South Wales, providing Government and communities with a strong network for the strategic management of projects and issues.

The Government has relocated several government agencies and numerous staff into rural and regional NSW to improve services in these areas and increase employment opportunities.

Extensive consultation has also been undertaken by the Government in the development of the State Plan launched on 8 August 2006.

Up to 2,500 members of the public were invited to attend Community Forums across NSW attended by the Premier, Ministers and senior public servants.

The Community Forums provide valuable feedback on important challenges and priorities across NSW. Full analysis of the detailed outcomes from the Community and other regional stakeholder forums will inform the development of the final State Plan.

The people of NSW also have an opportunity to provide comment and submissions on the Draft State Plan through the website at [www.nsw.gov.au/stateplan](http://www.nsw.gov.au/stateplan).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



**39. Regional NSW - print advertising**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How much was spent on advertising or advertorial in the print media in regional NSW in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- ii) Please provide details of the name of the publication used in each instance, the subject matter of the advertising or advertorial concerned and the total annual spend on advertising and advertorial in each publication in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
- iii) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for expenditure on advertising or advertorial in the print media in regional NSW?

**ANSWER:**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across government and issued new advertising guidelines on 1 July 2005.

These requirements apply to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

Further amendments to the Government's advertising policy were made in *Premier's Circular 2006-26: Changes to Government Advertising Policy* which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

To achieve savings, all advertisements will now be consolidated in a single government advertisement under the masthead NSW Government Noticeboard.

Changes include:

- Improving access to details of job vacancies by publishing the Government's composite recruitment advertisement in both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph each Saturday and,
- Consolidating all important public information and statutory notices into a single government advertisement that appears each Wednesday in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph.

In 2005/2006, advertising expenditure by budget dependent and self-funded was \$55.3 million and comprised of Community Awareness advertising of \$39.3 million and Public Notices/Information advertising of \$16 million

I'm further advised the Howard Government has allocated at least \$250m in the 2006/07 Budget for 13 advertising campaigns including:

- \$52.1m Private Health Insurance Campaign claiming to increase consumer awareness of the incentives and benefits associated with private health insurance;
- \$47.3m Smartcard Awareness Campaign claiming to ensure all Australians are aware of the processes for registering for the card;
- \$36.1m Child Support Reforms to increase awareness of the changes; and
- \$15m Independent Contractors (AWA) communications campaign.

Budget Estimates 2005- 2006

The \$250m is in addition to the \$130m advertising placement spent for the current financial year making a combined total of \$380 million.

The Howard Government has spent over \$1.1 billion on advertising since it came to office in 1996.

**40. Regional NSW - radio advertising**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How much was spent on advertising or advertorial on radio in regional NSW in each of the following years:
  - a. FY2002-03
  - b. FY2003-04
  - c. FY2004-05
  - d. FY2005-06?
  
- ii) Please provide details of which radio station was used in each instance, the subject matter of the advertising or advertorial concerned and the total annual spend on advertising and advertorial at each radio station in each of the following years:
  - e. FY2002-03
  - f. FY2003-04
  - g. FY2004-05
  - h. FY2005-06?
  
- iii) What is the amount budgeted in FY2006-07 for expenditure on advertising or advertorial on radio in regional NSW?

**ANSWER:**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across government and issued new advertising guidelines on 1 July 2005.

These requirements apply to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

Further amendments to the Government's advertising policy were made in *Premier's Circular 2006-26: Changes to Government Advertising Policy* which is publicly available at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

To achieve savings, all advertisements will now be consolidated in a single government advertisement under the masthead NSW Government Noticeboard.

Changes include:

- Improving access to details of job vacancies by publishing the Government's composite recruitment advertisement in both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph each Saturday and,
- Consolidating all important public information and statutory notices into a single government advertisement that appears each Wednesday in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph.

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The \$250m is in addition to the \$130m advertising placement spent for the current financial year making a combined total of \$380 million.

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The Howard Government has spent over \$1.1 billion on advertising since it came to office in 1996.

**41. Freedom of Information – Departmental Procedures**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) When did the Department last update its policies and/or procedures for dealing with Freedom of Information applications received by the Department?

ii) Who has responsibility within the Department for dealing with Freedom of Information applications received by the Department?

iii) Please provide details of the policies and/or procedures followed within the Department for dealing with Freedom of Information applications received from the public?

iv) Please outline the step-by-step process (giving details of the consultation between members of Departmental staff and external agencies, where applicable) which, in practice, is followed by the Department upon receipt of a Freedom of Information applications received from the members and staff of the NSW Opposition?

v) Has the Department sought to ascertain whether the staff member or staff members tasked with handling with FOI applications received by the Department is or has previously been a member of any political party/organization?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The policy and procedures on the processing of Freedom of Information applications are detailed in the publication *FOI Procedure Manual* which is available on the Premier's Department website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

The web site contains other useful information for agencies and the public including:

- application forms;
- Guidelines for Using FOI in NSW;
- Summary of Affairs;
- Statement of Affairs;
- The Freedom of Information Act 1989;
- Information on Review and Appeals.

In collaboration with the Office of the Ombudsman and The Cabinet Office, Premier's Department is in the process of finalising a new FOI Manual.

Section 14 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1989* prescribes the information that must be published by an agency in its Statement of Affairs and its Summary of Affairs. This specifically includes the procedures and contact officers for FOI requests in the agency for members of the public. The Statement of Affairs is usually published in an agencies annual report.

The Premier's Department Personnel Handbook, which is publicly available provides that public servants may be members of political parties as long as this position does not conflict with their primary duty. The Handbook also ensures appointments to positions within the public sector adhere to a competitive merit selection process.



**42. Sick leave**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental staff member make sick leave applications relating to a workers compensation claim citing stress as an element or reason for their leave application in the following periods
  - a. FY2003-04,
  - b. FY2004-05 and
  - c. FY2005-06,
- ii) How many sick leave applications relating to a workers compensation claim citing stress as an element or reason for their leave application were made by staff of the Department in the following periods
  - a. FY2003-04,
  - b. FY2004-05 and
  - c. FY2005-06,
- iii) In each of FY2003-04, FY2004-05 and FY2005-06, how many Departmental staff members took sick leave relating to a workers compensation claim citing stress as an element or reason for their leave application where the period of sick leave was:
  - a. less than one month;
  - b. greater than one month but less than three months;
  - c. greater than three months but less than six months;
  - d. greater than six month but less than 12 months;
  - e. greater than 12 months?
- iv) Please provide the following information concerning each occasion during FY2003-04, FY2004-05 and FY2005-06, when a staff member has been granted sick leave relating to a workers compensation where stress was an element or reason for the sick leave application:
  - a. the total cost, in terms of wages etc, of the leave taken by the employee;
  - b. the total amount of leave taken by the employee in terms of full-time equivalent days.

- v) In FY2006-07 to date, have any Departmental staff members made sick leave applications relating to a workers compensation claim citing stress as an element or reason for their leave application?
- vi) In FY2006-07 to date, how many sick leave applications relating to a workers compensation claim citing stress as an element or reason for their leave application were made by staff of the Department?
- vii) In FY2006-07 to date, how many Departmental staff members have taken sick leave relating to a workers compensation claim citing stress as an element or reason for their leave application where the period of sick leave was:
- less than one month;
  - greater than one month but less than three months;
  - greater than three months but less than six months;
  - greater than six month but less than 12 months;
  - greater than 12 months?
- viii) Please provide the following information concerning each occasion during FY2006-07 to date when a staff member has been granted sick leave relating to a workers compensation where stress was an element or reason for the sick leave application:
- the total cost or cost to date, in terms of wages etc, of the leave taken by the employee;
  - the total amount of sick leave or the amount of sick leave taken to date by the employee in terms of full-time equivalent days.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The *NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of people at work, by providing general requirements to be met at every place of work in NSW. The Act covers employees as well as employers and self-employed people.

NSW government agencies are required to identify the causes of work related injury and illness affecting their employees, conduct a risk assessment of the workplace hazards, work practices or other identified causes of workplace injury and illness and develop and implement the appropriate prevention and control policies dealing with work-related injury and illness.

The Government has released its *Working Together – The Public Sector OHS and Injury Management Strategy for 2005-2008*, which is a three year strategy to secure improvements in the public sector's health and safety performance with a specific focus on injury management. It builds on the progress made since the release of the Government's OHS and injury management policy and guidelines *Taking Safety Seriously*.

The Personnel Handbook, which is publicly available, outlines the policy for managing absences due to sickness to ensure that absences are for genuine illness and employees are allowed the necessary time to properly recover before returning to work. The Policy requires managers to regularly monitor and review absences due to illness within the agency.

To check each leave application form would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**43. Departmental staff – compensation for private property** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Did any Departmental personnel receive compensation for damage to or loss of personal property in the course of employment under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002*, clause 50, Compensation for Damage to or Loss of Employee's Private Property during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

ii) How many claims for damage to or loss of personal property in the course of employment under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002*, clause 50, Compensation for Damage to or Loss of Employee's Private Property were made by Departmental personnel during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iii) What was the total value of claims for damage to or loss of personal property in the course of employment under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002*, clause 50, Compensation for Damage to or Loss of Employee's Private Property were made Departmental personnel during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iv) Please provide the following information concerning each claim for damage to or loss of personal property in the course of employment made by Departmental personnel in FY2003-04, FY2004-05, FY2005-06 and FY2006-07 to date:

- a. the item of personal property in respect of which the claim was made;
- b. the nature of the loss or damage to the item of personal property which the staff member claimed;
- c. the amount of the compensation claimed for loss or damage to the item of personal property by the staff member;
- d. whether a claim was lodged under the Injury Management & Worker's Compensation Act 1998 and/or under any insurance policy of the Department covering the damage to or loss of personal property of the employee and whether the relevant claim was accepted or rejected by the insurer; and
- e. if the claim was rejected by the insurer, whether the compensation paid to the employee was the amount necessary to repair the item or an amount for replacement of the item.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The policy on compensation for loss or damage to private property is contained in the Personnel Handbook which is available on the Premier's Department Website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

If damage to or loss of the employee's private property occurs in the course of employment, a claim may be lodged under the Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998, or under any insurance policy of the department covering the damage to or loss of the personal property of the employee, or both of the above.

If the claim is rejected by the insurer, the department head may compensate an employee for the damage to or loss of private property, if such damage or loss:

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- is due to the negligence of the department, another employee, or both, in the performance of their duties; or
- is caused by a defect in the employee's material or equipment; or
- results from an employee's protection of or attempt to protect departmental property from loss or damage.

Compensation is limited to the amount necessary to repair the damaged item. If the item cannot be repaired or is lost, the department head may pay the cost of a replacement item, provided the item is identical to or only marginally different from the damaged or lost item and the claim is supported by satisfactory evidence as to the price of the replacement item.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**44. Departmental staff – private vehicles damaged on official business or other approved travel**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive reimbursement of an insurance policy excess in respect of a private vehicle damaged while being used for work during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06
  - d. FY2006-07 to date?
- ii) How many claims for reimbursement of an insurance policy excess in respect of a private vehicle damaged while being used for work were made by Departmental personnel during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06
  - d. FY2006-07 to date?
- iii) What was the total value of claims for reimbursement of an insurance policy excess in respect of a private vehicle damaged while being used for work were made by Departmental personnel during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06
  - d. FY2006-07 to date?
- iv) How has the number and total value of claims for reimbursement of an insurance policy excess in respect of a private vehicle damaged while being used for work were made by Departmental personnel varied over the last four financial years?
- v) Please provide the following information concerning reimbursements made by the Department for the cost of repairs to a broken windscreen on private vehicles used for official business or other approved travel:
  - a. how many times was such a reimbursement made in each of FY2003-04,

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FY2004-05, FY2005-06 and FY2006-07 to date;

b. what was the total value of such reimbursements in each of FY2003-04, FY2004-05, FY2005-06 and FY2006-07 to date?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Personnel Handbook, which is publicly available on the Premier's Department Website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au), provides that if a private vehicle is damaged while being used for work any normal excess insurance charges prescribed by the insurer must be reimbursed by the department, provided that:

- the damage is not due to the negligence by the employee; and
- the charges claimed by the employee are not charges prescribed by the insurer as punitive excess charges.

Motor Vehicle insurance claims are also reported in agency annual reports.



**45. Departmental staff – cost of travel to and from work** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Did any Departmental personnel receive assistance for the cost of travel to and from work under *the Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6* during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

ii) How many applications for assistance to Departmental personnel for the cost of travel to and from work under *the Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6* were made by Departmental personnel during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iii) What was the total value of assistance provided to Departmental personnel for the cost of travel to and from work under *the Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6* during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iv) How has the number of staff in receipt of assistance and the total value of assistance provided to Departmental personnel for the cost of travel to and from work varied over the last three financial years?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The *Public Sector Employment and Management (General) Regulation 1996*, Part 5, Division 6 provides that an employee must bear the cost of travel to and from work, unless the department head otherwise determines or the following provisions apply:

- If the employee is directed to report for duty at a locality other than the locality at which the employee reported for duty at the beginning of the day; or
- if the employee is directed to report for duty on any day or days at a locality other than the locality at which the employee is normally required to report for duty; and
- if the employee has already incurred expenditure in relation to travel on that day or those days to the locality at which the employee is normally required to report for duty, then
- the cost of travel on that day or those days - up to five days - to the locality at which the employee is directed to report for duty is to be borne by the department.

If the department head is satisfied that special circumstances exist, the department head may approve a period of assistance longer than the 5 days specified.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**46. Departmental staff – first aid allowance**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive a first aid allowance under the *Crown Employees Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06

d. FY2006-07 to date?

ii) How many Departmental personnel received a first aid allowance under the *Crown Employees Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6* during:

a. FY2003-04

b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06

d. FY2006-07 to date?

iii) What was the total value of the first aid allowance provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6* during:

a. FY2003-04

b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06

d. FY2006-07 to date?

iv) How has the number of staff in receipt of and total value of first aid allowances provided to Departmental personnel varied over the last four financial years?

v) Of the Department's personnel receiving first aid allowances provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees Public Sector Employment & Management (General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 6*, how many has the Department funded in whole or in part in order to receive training for appointment as a First Aid Officer?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001 requires that adequate first aid equipment be available in reach workplace. If no medical or paramedical

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employees are employed, a first aid service must be provided by a person qualified to undertake that task.

Clause 54 of the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award currently regulates the payment of an allowance to a First Aid Officer.

First Aid Officers should hold a St John's Ambulance Certificate or equivalent qualifications (such as the Civil Defence or the Red Cross Society's First Aid Certificates) issued within the previous three years. First Aid Officers in charge of a first aid room in larger workplaces should hold an Occupational First-Aid Certificate issued within the previous three years.

The costs of training employees who do not already possess qualifications and who need to be trained to meet departmental needs, and the cost of retraining First Aid Officers, are to be met by Departments. (NSW Government Personnel Handbook chapter 7-7)

Allowances are published in the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**47. Departmental staff – flying allowance**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive an allowance when required to work in flight under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 47 Flying Allowance* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06 to date?
- ii) How many members of Departmental personnel receive an allowance when required to work in flight under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 47 Flying Allowance* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- v) What was the total value of allowances provided to Departmental personnel required to work in flight under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 47 Flying Allowance* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Employees, other than those employed to fly aircraft, receive an allowance when required to work in flight. Allowances are published in the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002*.



**48. Mobile Phone Use** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How many employees/staff carry or use Departmental/Agency mobile telephones as at:

- a. 30 June 2003
- b. 30 June 2004
- c. 30 June 2005
- d. 30 June 2006

ii) What was the total amount of expenditure by staff on calls and charges involving Departmental/Agency mobile telephones in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

iii) Provide an analysis by classification and seniority level of staff issued with mobile telephones by the Department/Agency and the amount spent by the Department on mobile telephone handsets, call charges and other usage fees according to the staff members' classification and seniority level in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06 to date.

**ANSWER:**

I'm advised:

Mobile telephones are issued to staff on the basis of need. The guidelines for mobile telephone use are set out in Premier's Department Circular 99-09. Mobile

telephones are made available for business use. A business case has to be made for an officer to be provided with a telephone. This can involve the need to be able to contact the officer at irregular times or to seek specific advice on particular issues.

Officers are required to pay for private calls made on mobile telephones.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



**49. Departmental Website** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Did the Department budget for costs associated with developing and maintaining a Departmental website in each of the following financial years:

e. FY2002-03

f. FY2003-04

g. FY2004-05

h. FY2005-06?

ii) How much did the Department budget for costs associated with developing and maintaining a Departmental website in each of the following financial years:

a. FY2002-03

b. FY2003-04

c. FY2004-05

d. FY2005-06?

iii) How much has the Department actually spent developing and maintaining the Departmental website in FY2005-06 to date?

iv) How many times was the Departmental website updated in each of the following financial years:

a. FY2003-04

b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06 to date?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The *People First – NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* sets the strategic framework for a coordinated government – wide approach to ICT planning and expenditure.

The Plan implements commitments in the Premier's February 2006 *Economic and Financial Statement*.

The Plan aims to ensure the cost to deliver e-government is met from within the current levels of ICT expenditure. An *ICT Investment Framework* will align expenditure with government service delivery priorities including community expectations for electronic service delivery. ICT Procurement Policy and ICT Governance arrangements will ensure the *NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* steers government ICT expenditure.

The Plan's key priorities include front-line service delivery and customer service (e-government), followed by a line of business (core agency systems) that support e-government.

The plan will address the need for major upgrades and replacement of front-line and line of business (core) systems

The NSW Government Chief Information Office provides strategic direction to the NSW public sector for ICT development and coordinates with the Office of Procurement the purchasing of ICT infrastructure, systems, goods and services.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**50. Departmental Website – Feedback management** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Who has responsibility within the Department for dealing with comments or feedback from the public regarding the website and/or Departmental services which are received by the Department via the Departmental web portal?
- ii) Does the Department have a designated unit or “Feedback desk” responsible for dealing with comments or feedback from the public regarding the website and/or Departmental services received by the Department via the Departmental web portal? If so, what is the name of this unit within the Department and how many staff members are employed to fulfil this function?
- iii) Please provide details of any policies and/or procedures the Department has for dealing with comments or feedback from the public regarding the website and/or Departmental services received by the Department via the Departmental web portal?
- iv) How much did the Department budget for costs associated with dealing with comments or feedback from the public regarding the website and/or Departmental services received by the Department via the Departmental web portal in each of the following financial years:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06?
- v) How much has the Department actually spent dealing with comments or feedback from the public regarding the website and/or Departmental services received by the Department via the Departmental web portal in FY2005-06 to date?

**ANSWER**

I’m advised:

The *People First – NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* sets the strategic framework for a coordinated government – wide approach to ICT planning and expenditure.

The Plan implements commitments in the Premier's February 2006 *Economic and Financial Statement*.

The Plan aims to ensure the cost to deliver e-government is met from within the current levels of ICT expenditure. An *ICT Investment Framework* will align expenditure with government service delivery priorities including community expectations for electronic service delivery. ICT Procurement Policy and ICT Governance arrangements will ensure the *NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* steers government ICT expenditure.

The Plan's key priorities include front-line service delivery and customer service (e-government), followed by a line of business (core agency systems) that support e-government.

The plan will address the need for major upgrades and replacement of front-line and line of business (core) systems

The guidelines on quality assurance are contained in "Web Usability and Accessibility Guide", a publication by the NSW Government Chief Information Office and is available at the Office website ([www.oict.nsw.gov.au](http://www.oict.nsw.gov.au)).

NSW Treasury publishes a range of guides to assist agencies in evaluating their performance and effectiveness, available on its website.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **51. Departmental website – Effectiveness tracking**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How does the Department evaluate the effectiveness of information delivery to the public via the Departmental website?
- ii) What are the precise benchmarks against which the modifications to the Departmental website are assessed and how often is such assessment conducted in each financial year?

### **ANSWER.**

I'm advised:

The *People First – NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* sets the strategic framework for a coordinated government – wide approach to ICT planning and expenditure.

The Plan implements commitments in the Premier's February 2006 *Economic and Financial Statement*.

The Plan aims to ensure the cost to deliver e-government is met from within the current levels of ICT expenditure. An *ICT Investment Framework* will align expenditure with government service delivery priorities including community expectations for electronic service delivery. ICT Procurement Policy and ICT Governance arrangements will ensure the *NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* steers government ICT expenditure.

The Plan's key priorities include front-line service delivery and customer service (e-government), followed by a line of business (core agency systems) that support e-government.

The plan will address the need for major upgrades and replacement of front-line and line of business (core) systems

The NSW Government Chief Information Office provides strategic direction to the NSW public sector for ICT development and coordinates with the Office of Procurement the purchasing of ICT infrastructure, systems, goods and services.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **52. Departmental website - Feedback**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Does the Department's website contain a section where it invites comments or feedback from the public regarding the website and/or Departmental services?
- ii) How many emails were received by Department from the public via the Department's website during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- iii) Of emails received by Department from the public via the Department's website during each of FY2003-04, FY2004-05 and FY2005-06 to date,

- please provide a breakdown by year and month of the number of emails which could be classified as:
- a. complaints about the Departmental website
  - b. complaints about delivery of Departmental services
  - c. requests for further information about the Department and its services
  - d. miscellaneous communications.
- iv) Of emails received by Department from the public via the Department's website which could be characterised as complaints about the Departmental website or complaints about delivery of Departmental services, please indicate how many of the email complainants made in each of FY2003-04, FY2004-05 and FY2005-06 to date received:
- a. a computer generated response to the email indicating that it had been received by the Department;
  - b. a personalised email from a Departmental staff member to seek further information or identify a possible remedy for the complaint;
  - c. a telephone call from a Departmental staff member to seek further information or identify a possible remedy for the complaint.

**ANSWER.**

I'm advised:

The *People First – NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* sets the strategic framework for a coordinated government – wide approach to ICT planning and expenditure.

The Plan implements commitments in the Premier's February 2006 *Economic and Financial Statement*.

The Plan aims to ensure the cost to deliver e-government is met from within the current levels of ICT expenditure. An *ICT Investment Framework* will align

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expenditure with government service delivery priorities including community expectations for electronic service delivery. ICT Procurement Policy and ICT Governance arrangements will ensure the *NSW Government ICT Strategic Plan* steers government ICT expenditure.

The Plan's key priorities include front-line service delivery and customer service (e-government), followed by a line of business (core agency systems) that support e-government.

The plan will address the need for major upgrades and replacement of front-line and line of business (core) systems

The guidelines on quality assurance are contained in "Web Usability and Accessibility Guide", a publication by the NSW Government Chief Information Office and is available at the Office website ([www.oict.nsw.gov.au](http://www.oict.nsw.gov.au)).

NSW Treasury publishes a range of guides to assist agencies in evaluating their performance and effectiveness, available on its website.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



**53. Departmental staff – Garage and carport allowance** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive a garage and carport allowance under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 51 Garage and Carport Allowance* during:
  - d. FY2003-04
  - e. FY2004-05
  - f. FY2005-06 to date?
- ii) How many Departmental personnel received a garage and carport allowance under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 51 Garage and Carport Allowance* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- iii) What was the total value of the garage and carport allowances provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 51 Garage and Carport Allowance* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- vi) Of the Department's personnel receiving garage and carport allowances provided under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 51 Garage and Carport Allowance* what was the total amount paid to employees for the garaging of departmental vehicles while the employee/s were absent from their usual place of work during:
  - d. FY2003-04
  - e. FY2004-05
  - f. FY2005-06 to date?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Employees received garage and carport vehicle allowances in accordance with the provisions of the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002.

Further details are available in the Personnel Handbook which is available on the Premier's Department website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**54. Departmental staff – Use of private motor vehicle in conjunction with air travel** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive an allowance for use of a private motor vehicle in conjunction with air travel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 37* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- ii) How many Departmental personnel received an allowance for use of a private motor vehicle in conjunction with air travel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 37* and what was the aggregate amount of allowance paid to staff in each of the following:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Personnel Handbook provides that the Department head may approve the payment of an allowance at the casual rate if an employee uses their private motor vehicle to travel to and from an airport for approved travel.

Travelling and related allowances are reviewed on a regular basis and variations to the rate published in the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**55. Departmental staff – Overseas travelling allowance** With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Did any Departmental personnel receive an overseas travelling allowance under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 42 Overseas Travel* and/or relevant *Premier's Department Circulars* during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY 2005-06 to date?

ii) How many members of Departmental personnel received an overseas travelling allowance under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 42 Overseas Travel* and/or relevant *Premier's Department Circulars* during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06 to date?

i) What was the total value of overseas travelling allowances (please include spend on daily meal and incidental allowances) provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 42 Overseas Travel* and/or relevant *Premier's Department Circulars* during:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06 to date?

ii) What was the duration of the overseas travel (please indicate duration in terms of months and days overseas in each instance) taken by each staff member who received an overseas travel allowance under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 42 Overseas Travel* and/or relevant *Premier's Department Circulars* in each of:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06 to date?

iii) In addition to overseas travel allowances provided to Departmental personnel, what was the total value of payments met separately by the Department in respect of overseas travel by Departmental personnel (see *NSW Premiers Department Personnel Handbook – March 2003, Chapter 7-13.5 in version of handbook updated Dec 2004*) during:

a. FY2003-04

b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06 to date?

iv) Please provide a breakdown according to the recipient staff members' classification (that is, as Senior Executive Service – SES, Senior Officers other than SES and the remaining staff classifications) of the Department's aggregate spend in each of the last four financial years on overseas travel allowances.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Overseas travel by public sector employees is governed by various Premier's Memoranda and Circulars. Travel by public sector employees is determined on the basis of value to the tax-payer and public sector development. Travel undertaken is always on government business and essential for the performance of official business on behalf of the Government of New South Wales.

All overseas travel is subject to Minister's approval. Ministers are to exercise strict economy in approving overseas travel and significant benefits to the agency and/or the State must be demonstrated. Ministers may approve official travel overseas after deciding that the travel is essential and that it can be funded within the budget allocation for the organisation concerned.

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Employees who are required to travel overseas in the course of their duty may be eligible for overseas travelling allowances.

Overseas travel by agency staff is reported in the agency annual reports which are publicly available.

## **56. Departmental Staff – Travelling Compensation**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive travelling compensation under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clauses 25 to 34* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY 2005-06 to date?
- ii) How many members of Departmental personnel received travelling compensation under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clauses 25 to 34* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- iii) What was the total value of travelling compensation (please include spend on accommodation & related allowances, meal & incidental allowances and any adjustments to these which may have been approved) provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clauses 25 to 34* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- iv) What was the average duration of travel undertaken by staff members to whom the Department paid travelling compensation under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clauses 25 to 34* in each of:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?

- v) Please provide a breakdown according to the recipient staff members' classification (that is, as Senior Executive Service – SES, Senior Officers other than SES and the remaining staff classifications) of the Department's aggregate spend in each of the last four financial years on travelling compensation.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The policy on eligibility and calculation of travelling compensation is contained in the Personnel Handbook which is available on the Premier's Department website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

Overseas travel undertaken by Departmental staff for each financial year is published in the agency annual reports which are publicly available.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **57. Departmental staff – Remote areas allowances**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive an allowance for living in a remote area pursuant to the *Public Sector Employment and Management*



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*(General) Regulation 1996, Part 5, Division 4 and/or Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 40* during:

- a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- ii) How many Departmental personnel received an allowance for living in a remote area and what was the aggregate amount of such allowance paid to staff in each of the following:
- d. FY2003-04
  - e. FY2004-05
  - f. FY2005-06 to date?
- iii) What was the aggregate amount of allowance paid to Departmental personnel living in a remote area in respect of travel on recreation leave (see *NSW Premiers Department Personnel Handbook – March 2003, Chapter 7-14.5 in version of handbook updated Dec 2004*) in each of the following:
- a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
- iv) What was the aggregate amount of dependant allowance paid to Departmental personnel living in a remote area (see *NSW Premiers Department Personnel Handbook – March 2003, Chapter 7-14.2 & 14.3 in version of handbook updated Dec 2004*) in each of the following:
- a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Employees may be entitled to a Remote Area Allowance in accordance with provisions in the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment)

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Award 2002. This allowance is part of the Government's commitment to ensure services are provided to the people of NSW in remote areas.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**58. Departmental staff – Home office allowance**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any Departmental personnel receive an allowance for the use of a room at home as an office under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 44 Room at Home Used as an Office* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
  
- ii) How many Departmental personnel received an allowance for the use of a room at home as an office under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 44 Room at Home Used as an Office* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
  
- iii) What was the total value of the home office allowances provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 44 Room at Home Used as an Office* during:
  - a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?
  
- vi) Please provide a breakdown according to the recipient staff members' classification (that is, as Senior Executive Service – SES, Senior Officers other than SES and the remaining staff classifications) of the Department's aggregate spend in each of the last four financial years on home office allowances.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Employees may be entitled to a Home Office Allowance in accordance with provisions in the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006.

The NSW Government is committed to providing family friendly working conditions to its employees through sector wide initiatives such as the Flexible Work Practices - Policy and Guidelines, October 1995, which provides the sector with a framework for implementing initiatives that assist employees to balance work and family responsibilities. This includes policies relating to part-time work and part-time leave without pay, job sharing, working from home and short-term absences for family and community service responsibilities. Other options open to employees include career break schemes, part year employment, variable year employment and varying hours.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**59. Departmental staff – Semi-official telephone subsidy**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Did any Departmental personnel receive a subsidy in respect of their private telephone service at their principal place of residence under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 45 Semi-official Telephones* during:

d. FY2003-04

e. FY2004-05

f. FY2005-06 to date?

ii) How many Departmental personnel received a subsidy in respect of their private telephone service at their principal place of residence under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 45 Semi-official Telephones* during:

a. FY2003-04

b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06 to date?

iii) What was the total value of semi-official telephone subsidies (including subsidies for telephone installation, line connection and rental, call costs) provided to Departmental personnel under the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002, clause 45 Semi-official Telephones* during:

a. FY2003-04

b. FY2004-05

c. FY2005-06 to date?

vii) Please provide a breakdown according to the recipient staff members' classification (that is, as Senior Executive Service - SES, Senior Officers other than SES and the remaining staff classifications) of the Department's aggregate spend in each of the last four financial years on semi-official telephone subsidies.

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Personnel Handbook provides that employees who, as part of their duties, are required

- to give decisions, supply information or provide emergency services; or
- to be able to be contacted by the public outside normal office hours for reasons of safety or security

are entitled to be reimbursed for some of the costs of their private telephone service. The service must be located in the employee's principal place of residence, and the telephone number communicated to everyone entitled to have out of hours contact with the employee. The claim for reimbursement must be certified by the employee and state the reasons for each official call.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**60. Departmental staff management**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How many staff resigned in:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06?

ii) How many staff retired in:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06?

iii) How many staff were medically discharged in:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06?

iv) How many staff were terminated in:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06?

v) How many staff were recruited in:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Aggregated data on resignations and recruitment for the NSW Public Sector is available in the Workforce Profile Overview Report. Individual agency level data is not published.

The Workforce Profile collects data from agencies in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Code of Practice for the NSW Public Sector Workforce Profile. The Code intends to satisfy the requirements of under Part 3 Division 1 of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (PPIP Act) to the extent that the collection, storage and use of personal data for the purposes of the Workforce Profile involve departures from the Information Protection Principles in Part 2 of the PPIP Act.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



## **61. Departmental asset management & identification**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Does the Department have any asset management strategy, policies and/or procedures in place to facilitate the effective management of Departmental assets? If so, what is the name or official designation of this Departmental strategy, policy and/or procedure?
- ii) When did the Department last update its strategy, policies and/or procedures for facilitating the effective management of Departmental assets?
- iii) Does the Department's asset management strategy, policies and/or procedures identified in response to i) above deal with asset acquisition, asset maintenance and asset disposal?
- iv) Who has responsibility within the Department for managing the Department's strategy, policies and/or procedures for effective management of Departmental assets (Please provide details of such as the designation of the relevant officer, Departmental unit or staff grouping)?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Responsibility for the whole-of-government Total Asset Management (TAM) Policy, together with the role and functions of the Government Asset Management Committee (GAMC) Secretariat, were transferred to NSW Treasury from the Department of Commerce in June 2003.

Treasury Circular 04/09 – *Total Asset Management (TAM) Policy – Reconfirmation* confirms the Government's commitment to the implementation of TAM policy.

An agency's Asset Strategy Plan is an overarching strategy that links to the agency's corporate plan, service delivery strategy, resource levels and asset base.

An agency's size, function, existing and future requirements will determine the number of staff and resources it allocates to asset management and planning.

Agencies are required to prepare an updated Asset Strategy and submit to NSW Treasury each year. The Asset Strategy encompasses planning for capital investment, asset maintenance, asset disposal and office accommodation.

## **62. Departmental asset maintenance**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Does the Department have any document such as a Schedule of Assets which identifies all the assets or groupings of assets of the Department? If so, what is the name or official designation of this document?
- ii) Does the Department have any document such as Schedule of Assets and/or an Asset Maintenance Plan which sets out a maintenance program for each asset or grouping of assets? If so, what is the name or official designation of this document?
- iii) Does the document identified in response to ii) above deal with timing issues and/or provide a timeline or schedule in relation to the maintenance requirements of Departmental assets or asset groupings?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Treasury Circular 04/09 – *Total Asset Management (TAM) Policy – Reconfirmation* confirms the Government's commitment to the implementation of TAM policy.

Agencies are required to prepare an updated Asset Strategy Plan and submit to NSW Treasury each year. The Asset Strategy includes planning for capital investment, asset maintenance, asset disposal and office accommodation for the forthcoming year and over the longer term. As with any plan, circumstances and priorities may change in the course of its implementation.

A template has been prepared for agencies to provide a disciplined structure upon which to develop their TAM strategies. The template cover the agency's corporate and service goals, likely resource levels, alternative service delivery

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strategies, risks to service delivery, performance measures and the asset strategies to achieve its service delivery goals.

The TAM Manual for agencies is publicly available on the NSW Treasury website at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au).

**63. Departmental asset maintenance costs and scheduling**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) Does the Department budget include provision for funding Departmental asset maintenance? If so, how does the Department determine what level of funding is needed each year in relation to its asset maintenance requirements?

ii) Does the Department have any document such as Funding Plan for asset maintenance in which it sets out the level of funding needed each year to achieve the Department's asset maintenance requirements? If so, what is the name or official designation of this document?

iii) How much did the Department budget for costs associated with maintenance of Department assets in each of the following financial years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

iv) How much was actually spent on maintenance of Department/Agency/Entity assets in each of the following years:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

v) How much has the Department/Agency/Entity actually spent on maintenance of Department/Agency/Entity assets in FY2006-07 to date?

vi) What was the value of the backlog maintenance program and/or deferred asset maintenance requirements deferred in each of the following periods:

- a. FY2002-03
- b. FY2003-04
- c. FY2004-05
- d. FY2005-06?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Treasury Circular 04/09 – *Total Asset Management (TAM) Policy – Reconfirmation* confirms the Government's commitment to the implementation of TAM policy.

Budget Paper No. 4 Infrastructure Statement provides the value of each agency's physical assets and their capital expenditure program. The value of each agency's physical assets is subdivided into land and buildings, plant and equipment and infrastructure systems.

The asset management policy for each agency is integrated with the budget process.

Budget sector agencies are advised to prepare TAM Strategies based on the agency continuing to provide agreed services within current resource limits. Agencies may also submit specific proposals for enhanced levels of service.

TAM strategies outline the long term maintenance strategies for each asset type or risk category, a costed program of proposed investment and maintenance works and a program of disposals.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

#### **64. Unfilled Public Service Positions**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Provide details of the number of full time equivalent staff positions in non-urban areas of the NSW which the Department/Agency/Entity currently has unfilled?
- ii) Please provide a breakdown of positions by staff classification and location?

#### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Agency relocations to rural and regional parts of New South Wales have been an important part of the Government's clear policy of encouraging employment opportunities and economic activity outside Sydney.

Over 1500 positions have been relocated since January 2000, bringing over \$50 million annually in salaries alone into their communities. In the four agency relocations reviewed by the Auditor-General (Local Government, WorkCover, Mineral Resources, State Debt Recovery Office), almost 75% of positions were filled via local recruitment. Transfers of other staff from Sydney contributed to local population growth.

The overall economic impact on regions over and above the staff employed can be very significant. It has been estimated that, for the 200 positions relocated to Maitland with the Division of Mineral Resources, Department of Primary Industries, there is an annual economic impact of approximately \$15 million, including supporting a further 130 jobs in the local community.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **65. Unfilled Public Service Positions**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) How many permanent, temporary and casual vacancies within the Department/Agency/Entity were filled by using the services of employment and placement agencies or companies?

ii) Please provide details of the employment and placement agencies used by the Department/Agency/Entity in the following periods:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iii) What was the total cost to the Department/Agency/Entity of the services of employment and placement agencies used in each of the following periods:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iv) Which employment and placement agencies received payments from the Department/Agency/Entity for the placement of staff in each of the following periods:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06
- d. FY2006-07 to date?

iii) Which employment and placement agencies received payments from the Department/Agency/Entity for temporary or contract staff in each of the following financial years:

- a. FY2003-04
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2005-06 to date?



- iv) What was the total amount paid to employment and placement agencies by the Department/Agency/Entity for temporary or contract staff in each of the following financial years:
- a. FY2003-04
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2005-06 to date?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Decisions on engaging and managing recruitment service providers are the responsibility of department heads, having regard to Government policies on efficient corporate services.

In filling vacancies, department heads are legally responsible for choosing the person with the greatest merit from among applicants. That responsibility applies when using recruitment service providers. Department heads also remain responsible for compliance with Government policies on equity, equal employment opportunity for target groups, and cultural diversity.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **66. Procurement Policy**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) When did the Department last update its procurement policy documentation?

ii) What mechanisms does the Department have in place to ensure its procurement guidelines reflect current policy in relation to government contracting?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Premier's *Memorandum 2006-11 on NSW Procurement Reforms* outlines initiatives to further improve procurement outcomes, get better value for taxpayers and reduce the operating costs of government.

The Memorandum supports the announcements on improving procurement outcomes made in the February 2006 *Economic and Financial Statement*.

Other key policy documents are the Treasury Circular *TC 04/07 Procurement Policy Reform* and Premier's *Memorandum 2001-16 NSW Government Electronic Procurement Reform Implementation Strategy*.

The Department of Commerce is responsible for co-ordinating the implementation of the procurement reform initiatives.

The reforms announced in Premier's Memorandum 2006-11 include:

- All agencies required to utilise the State Contracts Control Board (SCCB) for whole-of-government contracts, effective immediately
- Development and introduction of an agency accreditation scheme for goods and services by July 2007
- All major agencies to implement electronic procurement of their goods and services by June 2007, with smartbuy® being the Government's default electronic procurement system
- All agencies to make their Requests for Tender documentation and tenders available to be lodged through [www.tenders.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tenders.nsw.gov.au).

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The requirements outlined in the memorandum apply to all Government agencies, including Statutory Authorities, Trusts and other government entities, except for State Owned Corporations.

## **67. Recruitment Agencies**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What sum was spent on recruitment agencies for the following financial years:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- ii) Will the Minister provide a list of recruitment agencies which were used for the following financial years:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Decisions on engaging and managing recruitment service providers are the responsibility of department heads, having regard to Government policies on efficient corporate services and avoiding unnecessary spending on consultancies.

In filling vacancies, department heads are legally responsible for choosing the person with the greatest merit from among applicants. That responsibility applies when using recruitment service providers. Department heads also remain responsible for compliance with Government policies on equity, equal employment opportunity for target groups, and cultural diversity.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **68. Chartering Aircraft**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- iii) For each Department and agency that the Minister was responsible for what sum was spent on chartering aircraft for the following financial years:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iv) Will the Minister provide a list of aircraft chartering firms which were used for the following financial years:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- v) Will the Minister provide a reason for each charter undertaken, the date of the charter, where the aircraft flew to and who was on board the aircraft during each charter for the following financial years:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Air travel undertaken is for official government business only. Travel by Ministers and public sector employees are determined on the basis of value to the taxpayer and public sector development. Minister's travel is governed by the

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guidelines contained in the Ministers' Office Administration Handbook and travel by public sector employees is governed by various Premier's Memoranda and Circulars which are publicly available.

Overseas travel by agency staff is reported in the Annual Report of each agency.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

**69. Domestic & Overseas Travel**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What sum was spent by the Minister's department on domestic and international air travel for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- ii) What proportion of domestic air travel by employees of the Minister's department was provided by (a) Qantas, (b) Regional Express, and (c) Virgin Blue for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- iii) What sum was spent by the Minister's department on domestic air travel provided by (i) Qantas, (ii) Regional Express, and (iii) Virgin Blue for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- iv) What sum was spent by the Minister's department on (a) economy and (b) business class travel on (i) domestic routes and (ii) international routes for the following periods
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- v) How many employees of the Minister's department had membership of the (a) Qantas Chairman's Lounge, (b) Qantas Club, (c) Regional Express Membership Lounge, and (d) Virgin Blue's Blue Room paid for by the department for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04

vi) Which company provides travel management services to the Minister's department for the following periods:

- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Overseas travel by public sector employees is governed by various Premier's Memoranda and Circulars. Travel by public sector employees is determined on the basis of value to the tax-payer and public sector development. Travel undertaken is always on government business and essential for the performance of official business on behalf of the Government of New South Wales.

All overseas travel is subject to Minister's approval. Ministers are to exercise strict economy in approving overseas travel and significant benefits to the agency and/or the State must be demonstrated. Ministers may approve official travel overseas after deciding that the travel is essential and that it can be funded within the budget allocation for the organisation concerned.

Overseas travel by agency staff is reported in agency annual reports which are publicly available.



## 70. Messages

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

vi) For each Department and agency that the Minister was responsible for what sum was spent on massages for staff for the following financial years:

- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04
- d. FY2002-03?

vii) For each Department and agency that the Minister was responsible for what how many staff made use of massage services provided:

- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04
- d. FY2002-03?

## ANSWER

I'm advised:

The *New South Wales Government Expenses* policy outlines sector-wide requirements, prohibiting the expenditure of State funds on any event that could provide predominantly personal benefit to New South Wales public sector employees.

The Auditor General audits the expenditure of agencies as provided in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*. The audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers

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TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

## 71. Overtime

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- viii) For each Department and agency that the Minister was responsible for what sum was spent on overtime for the following financial years:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- ix) For each Department and agency that the Minister was responsible for what was the total number of TOIL (Taken of in Lie) hours taken by staff for the following financial years and the total cost of these hours:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?

## ANSWER

I'm advised:

Employees covered by the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006* may receive the payment of overtime or time-in-lieu.

A staff member may be directed by the Department Head to work overtime, provided it is reasonable for the staff member to be required to do so. A staff member may refuse to work overtime in circumstances where the working of such overtime would result in the staff member working unreasonable hours. Separate provisions apply for overtime worked by shift workers and overtime worked by day workers.

Payment for overtime shall be made only where the staff member works directed overtime.

The Department Head shall grant compensation for directed overtime worked either by payment at the appropriate rate or, if the staff member so elects, by the grant of leave in lieu in accordance with the provisions provided under the *Section 97 – Payment for Overtime or Leave in Lieu of the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006*.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **72. Media Training**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did any agency, entity or department in the Minister's portfolio employ the services of a media training company in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- ii) How many individuals in each agency and department the Minister was responsible for received media training in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iii) What was the cost for each agency and department the Minister was responsible for media training in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iv) Which entities were hired by each agency and department the Minister was responsible to provide media training for staff in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Governments are required to communicate a wide variety of information to the public ranging from matters such as public health, community welfare and safety, public education and training, environmental and rural support, arts, tourism and business development.

The role and responsibilities of an employee's position may require for them to communicate important information including the department's activities to the public.

The Government is committed to building workforce capability of the public sector including leadership development and core public sector skill development.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **73. Barristers**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What sum did the Minister's department spend on external barristers for the following periods
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- ii) What sum did the Minister's department spend on solicitors for the following periods
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iii) What sum did the Minister's department spend on internal legal services for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iv) What is the Minister's department's projected expenditure on legal services for 2006-07?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

NSW public sector agencies may engage the Crown Solicitors Office or private legal professionals to engage in non core (general) legal work for government agencies.

The Crown Solicitor acts for

- The State of NSW;
- Persons suing or being sued on behalf of the State;
- Ministers of the Crown;
- A body established by a law of the State
- An officer or an employee of the Public Service or any other service of the State or of a body established by a law of the State;
- A person holding office under a law of the State or because of appointment to that office by the Governor or any Minister of the Crown; and
- Any other person or body approved by the Attorney General.

Agencies must engage the Crown Solicitor to perform core legal services in respect of matters which:

- Have implications for Government beyond an individual Minister's portfolio;
- Involve the constitutional powers and privileges of the State and/or the Commonwealth;
- Raise issues which are fundamental to the responsibilities of Government; and
- Arise from, or relate to, matters falling within the Attorney General's area of responsibility.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



**74. Coaching**

- i) Has the Minister received any training, coaching or assistance in public speaking or voice projection at public expense since the Minister took office; if so, what was the cost of this training?
- ii) What is the name and postal address of the individual or organisation(s) which provided the training?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The *New South Wales Government Expenses* policy outlines sector-wide requirements, prohibiting the expenditure of State funds on any event that could provide predominantly personal benefit to New South Wales public sector employees.

I can advise state funds have not been spent for this purpose.

## **75. Lettable Area**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What properties, or lettable floor areas at partially occupied properties, owned by the NSW Government and in the possession of the department and each agency in the Minister's portfolio, are currently not utilised by the department or agency in question, and are not let out?
- ii) For how long has each property, or part of a property, identified in part (1) been vacant and why has it been left vacant?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The NSW Government occupies 1.2 million square metres of office accommodation in over 1,000 buildings across the State.

As at 31 August 2006, the total amount of vacant space was approximately 5,380 square metres, which is only 0.44% of the total space occupied by Government, that is, less than half of one per cent.

This is a marked improvement on the vacancy rate of 2.23% that existed at 31 January 1995 under the Coalition: five times the Government's current vacancy rate.

The Government's current vacancy rate also compares more than favourably to the office market vacancy rate of 9.4% in the Sydney CBD at July 2006. (Figure supplied by the Property Council of Australia).

## **76. Translation Services**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- v) What was the total cost of translating documents for the following periods
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- vi) Will the Minister provide details of the cost of translation into Arabic, Indonesian, Cantonese, French, Greek, Italian, Mandarin, Spanish, Tamil, Thai Urdu, and Vietnamese for the following periods
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- vii) Will the Minister provide details of who received payment and the value of payments for the translation of the languages outlined above

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

As part of the Ethnic Affairs Priorities Statement (EAPS) Standard Framework, agencies are required to employ strategies to ensure services are equitable and accessible to all sections of the community.

These strategies may include the use of interpreters to communicate with agency clients. Service delivery can improve when agency staff understand and can communicate skilfully with clients from a range of backgrounds.

The Language Services Division of the Community Relations Commission provides an interpreter and translation service that is available to NSW public sector agencies. The Division works with government agencies to provide opportunities for the professional development of interpreters and translators and to improve availability of language services in Sydney metropolitan, regional and rural areas.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **77. Pianos**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many pianos does his department
  - a. own and
  - b. lease?
- ii) How many grand pianos does his department
  - a. own and
  - b. lease?
- iii) In respect of each piano, where is it and what is its value?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Auditor General audits the expenditure of agencies as provided in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*. The audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **78. Coffee Machines**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- iv) How many coffee machines does his department
  - a. own and
  - b. lease?
- v) In respect of each coffee machine, where is it and what is its value?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Auditor General audits the expenditure of agencies as provided in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*. The audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

## **79. Non-Australians**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

vi) How many non-Australian citizens worked in each department and agency you were responsible as at the end of the:

- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04
- d. FY2002-03?

vii) How many non-Australian citizens working in each department and agency you were responsible for were sponsored by the department as at the end of the:

- e. FY2005-06
- f. FY2004-05
- g. FY2003-04
- h. FY2002-03?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The New South Wales Government's policy is contained in the Personnel Handbook which clearly states:

A person is eligible to be appointed to a permanent position only if they are:

- an Australian citizen; or
- a permanent Australian resident.

People who are not Australian citizens or permanent residents are only eligible for appointment to temporary vacancies. People who claim to possess Australian

citizenship should produce their birth certificate, current Australian passport, certificate of naturalisation or other relevant documentation.

Recruiting officers should require documentary proof of either Australian citizenship or permission to reside permanently in Australia *before an offer of employment is made*. Temporary residents of Australia may only be employed in certain circumstances and are ineligible for appointment as officers.

Only people who are *permanent residents* satisfy the citizenship requirements for appointment.

People with temporary entry permits *not* marked 'EMPLOYMENT PROHIBITED' may be employed in certain circumstances. People with authorisation to work from the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs fit into this category. In all other cases, the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (Sponsored Entry Section) should be contacted to find out if employment is permitted.



## **80. Reservists**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many employees in each Department and agency the Minister is responsible are currently members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reserves as at:
  - a. 30 June 2000
  - b. 30 June 2001
  - c. 30 June 2002
  - d. 30 June 2003
  - e. 30 June 2004
  - f. 30 June 2005
  - g. 30 June 2006
- ii) How many employees in each Department and agency the Minister is responsible are currently members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reserves and are on active duty as at:
  - a. 30 June 2000
  - b. 30 June 2001
  - c. 30 June 2002
  - d. 30 June 2003
  - e. 30 June 2004
  - f. 30 June 2005
  - g. 30 June 2006
- iii) What was the total value of compensation from the Commonwealth Government under the employee support payment scheme for employees who have been called up for active duty for the following periods:
  - a. FY2000/01
  - b. FY2001/02
  - c. FY2002/03
  - d. FY2003/04

e. FY2004/05

f. FY2005/06

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Circular 2006-25 sets out the Government's policy on leave requirements for members of Australia's Defence Force Personnel which is captured in the *Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001*. Top up pay is also available for personnel on leave for military purposes.

Circular 2004-38 provides that, for leave in excess of the current military leave entitlement of up to 24 days for army and naval reservists and 28 days for air force reservists, public service employees will receive top up pay. This being the difference between their Reservist pay paid by the Commonwealth Department of Defence, and what they would ordinarily have received if they were at work. During periods of *Top up pay* the Government will maintain Reservist's superannuation, and Reservists will continue to accrue sick leave and extended leave entitlements.

The cost of the *top up pay* scheme will be offset, in part, by the operation of the Commonwealth's Employer Support Payment (ESP) Scheme, which is designed to compensate employers for releasing their employees for Defence Force service. The ESP Scheme only applies once an employee has been on military leave for at least 3 weeks per financial year.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



## **81. Behaviour Complaints**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many unacceptable behaviour complaints were reported for sexual offences in each of the Departments and agencies you were responsible for in:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- ii) How many unacceptable behaviour complaints were reported for general harrasment in each of the Departments and agencies you were responsible for in:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iii) How many unacceptable behaviour complaints were reported for discrimination in each of the Departments and agencies you were responsible for in:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- iv) How many unacceptable behaviour complaints were reported for abuse of power in each of the Departments and agencies you were responsible for in:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04

- d. FY2002-03?
- v) How many unacceptable behaviour complaints were reported for bullying in each of the Departments and agencies you were responsible for in:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?
- vi) How many unacceptable behaviour complaints were reported for inappropriate workplace relations in each of the Departments and agencies you were responsible for in:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
  - d. FY2002-03?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

*The Model Code of Conduct for NSW Public Agencies* sets out the guidelines for the conduct of public servants and establishes principles for a code for all public agencies. Specifically:

Employees are to treat members of the public and their colleagues fairly and consistently, in a non-discriminatory manner with proper regard for their rights and obligations. In this regard, they should perform their duties in a professional and responsible manner.

They should also ensure that their decisions and actions are reasonable, fair and appropriate to the circumstances, based on a consideration of all the relevant facts, and supported by adequate documentation.

Employees are to promote confidence in the integrity of public administration and always act in the public interest and not in their private interest. Employees should protect the reputation of public employers. They should not engage in activities, at work or outside work, that would bring the public service into disrepute.

Employees are to provide a relevant and responsive service to their clients and customers, providing all necessary and appropriate assistance and fulfil the department's service performance standards.

Further details of the Code are publicly available on the Premier's Department website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

The Personnel Handbook also sets out the procedures and arrangements for dealing with the conduct of employees in a fair and equitable manner based on the provisions of the Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption may also inquire into any allegations of corrupt conduct that occur in the public service.

## **82. Opinion Polls**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) Did the department or any agency under the Minister's portfolio conduct or commission an opinion poll, focus group or market research and; if so, what was the (a) purpose and (b) cost of each opinion poll, focus group or market research survey conducted for the following periods:

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- a. FY2005-06
- b. FY2004-05
- c. FY2003-04
- d. FY2002-03?

- ii) What was the name and postal address of each company engaged to conduct the poll, focus group or research for the above periods?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

All surveys of Government clients and NSW citizens are carried out in accordance with standard probity requirements in NSW Government policy guidelines.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **83. Opinion Polls**

With respect to each Department and Agency the Minister is responsible for can the following information be provided for each financial year from 2003/4 to date:

- i) how many consultants were engaged by the department and/or its agencies to conduct surveys of community attitudes to departmental programs?
- ii) What was the total costs of consultants that were engaged by the department and/or its agencies to conduct surveys of community attitudes to departmental programs?
  - a. For each consultancy engaged by the department and/or its agencies to conduct surveys of community attitudes to departmental programs
    - i. what was the cost,
    - ii. who was the consultant,
    - iii. was this consultant selected by tender; if so, was the tender select or open; if not, why not?
- iii) Were any of the surveys produced by consultants released publicly; if so, in each case, when was the material released; if not, in each case, what was the basis for not releasing the material publicly?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

All surveys of Government clients and NSW citizens are carried out in accordance to NSW Government policy guidelines.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.





#### **84. Photographs**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) For each department and agency the Minister was responsible for what was the total cost of photography undertaken for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04

#### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Auditor General audits the expenditure of agencies as provided in the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*. The audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at [www.treasury.nsw.gov.au](http://www.treasury.nsw.gov.au), in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.

### **85. Office Space**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What was the total value and location of new office space purchased in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- ii) What was the total value and location of new office space leased in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- iii) What was the total value and location of office space refurbished in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The NSW Government occupies 1.2 million square metres of office accommodation in over 1,000 buildings across the State.

As at 31 August 2006, the total amount of vacant space was approximately 5,380 square metres, which is only 0.44% of the total space occupied by Government, that is, less than half of one per cent.

This is a marked improvement on the vacancy rate of 2.23% that existed at 31 January 1995 under the Coalition: five times the Government's current vacancy rate.

The Government's current vacancy rate also compares more than favourably to the office market vacancy rate of 9.4% in the Sydney CBD at July 2006. (Figure supplied by the Property Council of Australia).

## **86. Drug Testing**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many random drug tests have been administered to each departmental and agency employees personnel in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- ii) How many employees had positive results to drug testing for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- iii) How many employees have had their employment terminated for testing positive for drugs in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- iv) How many employees have been disciplined for testing positive for drugs in the following periods
  - a. FY2005-06
  - b. FY2004-05
  - c. FY2003-04
- v) At what locations and dates were random drug tests undertaken at from 1 July 2003 to date?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The New South Wales Government is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive work environment for all employees. To support this commitment, public sector organisations are encouraged to develop programs aimed at the prevention, reduction and/or elimination of problems associated with the misuse or abuse of alcohol and other drugs which affect employees' work performance, conduct or safety.

The Personnel Handbook outlines procedures for managing conduct and performance in the workplace. Other legislation and policies including the Premier's Department documents "*Alcohol and Other Drugs: Policy and Guidelines*" and "*Assistance Services for Employees: Policy and Guidelines*" are available for guidance in relation to managing some of these issues.

## **87. Traffic Infringements**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many penalty notices did each department/agency receive for traffic infringements for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04?
- ii) Will Minister inform us of the breakdown of number of each type of infringement incurred for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04?
- iii) What was the total value of fines for traffic infringements incurred in department/agency vehicles for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04?
- iv) What was the total value of fines for traffic infringements incurred in department/agency vehicles paid for by the department/agency for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04?
- v) What was the total value of fines for traffic infringements incurred in department/agency vehicles paid for by the employee responsible for the infringement for the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Memorandum 90-50 issued by former NSW Premier Nick Greiner set out the policy on the payment of traffic infringements incurred by public sector vehicles. It states in part:

Payment of Parking Infringement Notices by Government bodies must be met from normal operating funds.

The Government does not pay parking infringements for public sector vehicles unless they are incurred in the course of and because of their duties as provided for in Memorandum 90-53 and it does not pay for traffic infringements.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



## **88. New Positions**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many new positions were authorized to be created in each department and each agency the Minister was responsible for in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04
  - d. FY2002/03?
- ii) How many new positions were authorized to be created in each department and each agency the Minister was responsible for which had a salary greater than \$120,000 in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04
  - d. FY2002/03?
- iii) How many positions were abolished in each department and each agency the Minister was responsible for in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04
  - d. FY2002/03?
- iv) How many positions were abolished in each department and each agency the Minister was responsible for which had a salary greater than \$120,000 in the following periods:
  - a. FY2005/06
  - b. FY2004/05
  - c. FY2003/04
  - d. FY2002/03?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The *Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002* provides that a Department/Division Head may create, abolish or otherwise deal with any positions in their department other than the position of department head. Internal branch/unit structures of Departments are designed to ensure the most efficient and effective service is provided to the Minister and the people of New South Wales.

**89. Mobile Phone Telephone Services**

- i) What has been the cost of providing mobile telephone services to the Minister's staff since 1 July 2003 on a yearly and year to date basis?

**ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Mobile telephones are issued to staff on the basis of need. The guidelines for mobile telephone use are set out in Premier's Department Circular 99-09. As is the case in the public sector generally, in Ministers' offices mobile telephones are made available for business use. A business case has to be made for an officer to be provided with a telephone. This can involve the need to be able to contact the officer at irregular times or to seek specific advice on particular issues.

Officers are required to pay for private calls made on mobile telephones.

The cost of mobile telephones for the Premier and 20 Ministers' offices supported by Premier's Department and funded from the Department's allocation in 2005-06 was \$478,283 (net of money reimbursed by employees for private calls). This is an average of about \$22,800 per office.

By way of comparison, the mobile telephone costs for the Leaders of the Opposition were \$24,552.

## **90. Fees, Levies & Charges**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) What are all the fees, fines, levies, charges and taxes that fall under your portfolio responsibility?
- ii) What was the level/rate of each of these at:
  - a. 1 September 2006
  - b. 31 March 2006
  - c. 31 March 2005
  - d. 31 March 2004
  - e. 31 March 2003
  - f. 31 March 1999
  - g. 31 March 1995?

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

Fees and fines are determined either by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal which consults widely with stakeholders and the public before making a determination or by statutory regulation which is reviewed and may be disallowed by Parliament.

These are both transparent processes that allow the public and the Parliament to be consulted prior to implementation. Levels of fees, fines and charges are contained in the relevant act, regulation or statutory rule.

## **91. Bullying**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many cases of bullying in the workplace have been reported to each department or agency under the aegis of the Minister for each year and year to date since 1 January 2003?
- ii) How many of these claims resulted in WorkCover cases being established for each year and year to date since 1 January 2003?
- iii) What was the total cost of these claims for each year and year to date since 1 January 2003?
- iv) What has been the dollar increase in premiums for each individual department or agency due to claims for bullying in the workplace for each year and year to date since 1 January 2003?

## **ANSWER**

I'm

advised:

*The Model Code of Conduct for NSW Public Agencies* sets out the guidelines for the conduct of public servants and establishes principles for a code for all public agencies.

Employees are to treat members of the public and their colleagues fairly and consistently, in a non-discriminatory manner with proper regard for their rights and obligations. In this regard, they should perform their duties in a professional and responsible manner.

They should also ensure that their decisions and actions are reasonable, fair and appropriate to the circumstances, based on a consideration of all the relevant facts, and supported by adequate documentation.

Employees are to promote confidence in the integrity of public administration and always act in the public interest and not in their private interest. Employees should protect the reputation of public employers. They should not engage in activities, at work or outside work, that would bring the Public Service into disrepute.

Employees are to provide a relevant and responsive service to their clients and customers, providing all necessary and appropriate assistance and fulfil the department's service performance standards.

Further details of the Code are available on the Premier's Department website at [www.premiers.nsw.gov.au](http://www.premiers.nsw.gov.au).

In addition the Independent Commission Against Corruption may inquire into any allegations of corrupt conduct that occur in the public service.

## **92. Stress Leave**

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) In relation to staff members for each department and agency the Minister is responsible for the period 1 July 2002 to date on a yearly basis what was the on stress
  - a. Number of days of stress leave taken;
  - b. The estimated cost of stress leave taken;
  - c. Total number of staff who took stress leave; and
  - d. Average number of stress days leave taken per employee.

## **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The *NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of people at work by providing general requirements to be met at every place of work in NSW. The Act covers employees as well as employers and self-employed people.

Employees covered by the *Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2006* are entitled to various forms of leave including: sick leave, recreation leave, annual leave, family and community services leave, personal carers' leave, maternity, adoption and parental leave, and special leave.

The Personnel Handbook outlines the policy for managing absences due to sickness to ensure that absences are for genuine illness and employees are allowed the necessary time to properly recover before returning to work. The

Policy requires managers to regularly monitor and review absences due to illness within the agency.

To check each leave application form would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources.



### **93. Advertising**

With respect to each Department and Agency the Minister is responsible for can the following information with regards to advertising be provided for each financial year from 2003/4 to date:

- i) What advertising campaigns were commenced? And for what programs?
- ii) In relation to each campaign:
  - a. what was its total cost, including a breakdown of advertising costs for:
    - i. television placements,
    - ii. radio placements,
    - iii. newspaper placements,
    - iv. mail outs with brochures, and
    - v. research on advertising;
  - b. what was the commencement and cessation date for each aspect of the campaign placement.
- iii) For each campaign:
  - a. on which television stations did the advertising campaign screen;
  - b. on which radio stations did the advertising campaign feature; and
  - c. in which newspapers did the advertising campaign feature.
- iv) Which:
  - a. creative agency or agencies; and
  - b. research agency or agencies, were engaged for the campaign.
- v) In the event of a mail out, what database was used to select addresses – the Australian Taxation Office database, the electoral database or other?

### **ANSWER**

I'm advised:

The Government completed a review of advertising practices across government and issued new advertising requirements on 1 July 2005.

Those requirements applied to the advertising of recruitment, tenders, statutory and regulatory notices, important public information and campaign advertising.

The policies for campaign advertising were also revised with agencies to align planning with the budget process, and the introduction of an independent advertising peer review process for all campaigns with a budget of \$50,000 or more.

The process of advertising tenders is coordinated by the Government Advertising Agency (GAA) which closely monitors advertisements and rejects those that do not meet the stipulated requirements.

Further changes to the Government's advertising policy were introduced in *Premier's Circular 2006-26: Changes to Government Advertising Policy*.

To achieve savings, all advertisements will now be consolidated in a single government advertisement under the masthead NSW Government Noticeboard.

Changes include:

- Improving access to details of job vacancies by publishing the Government's composite recruitment advertisement in both The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph each Saturday and,
- consolidating all important public information and statutory notices into a single government advertisement that appears each Wednesday in The Sydney Morning Herald and The Daily Telegraph.

94. In the budget papers at 13-1, a further desired result is to enable *“the Department to the develop sustainable local government that meets changing community needs is:*

- i) *Efficient and effective local councils with a culture of continuous improvement and best practice, financial sustainability and capacity to comply with legislation”*

In view of the Allen Report showing that any number of councils are in dire financial straights, what has your Department done to work towards *“efficient and effective local councils”* and what assistance will you give those councils that are in difficulty through no fault of their own because of such matters as forced amalgamations and cost shifting by the State Government that have been identified in the Allen Report?

**ANSWER:**

The Department administers the Local Government Act which provides a legislative framework within which councils operate. Councils are autonomous and are responsible for the decisions they make. While the Department promotes efficiency and effectiveness by providing advice to councils, monitoring financial activities, conducting Promoting Better Practice Reviews, reviewing legislation, conducting inquiries, responding to complaints, ultimately councils must take responsibility for their financial decision making.

There have not been any forced amalgamations and I reject the view that so called "cost shifting" has been a significant factor in the financial woes of certain councils.

95. Under "*Recent Developments*", at 13-2, it is stated that the "*Minister has announced that compulsory training for all councillors will commence following the 2008 council elections.*"
- a. Who will pay for the costs of such training including all costs such as accommodation, course material and any other associated costs?
  - b. If it is to be the councils, is this not yet another example of cost shifting by your government to local government and why should the councils be required to pay what is clearly State Government initiative?

**ANSWER:**

As I indicated in my response to a similar question at the hearing, this issue is still being considered, with the Department of Local Government and the Local Government and Shires Association of NSW working closely on the matter.

96. In 13-5 interest is shown under receipts as \$207,000 and revised to \$520,000.

*Please advise whether that \$207,000 shown as interest is the same \$207,000 shown as investment income under the retained revenue heading at 13-4 and if so why does it differ under investment income from \$207,000 to \$357,000 and under interest at 13-5 from \$207,000 to \$520,000?*

**ANSWER:**

Page 13.4 is based on accrual accounting, and Page 13.5 is based on cash received. In both instances, the interest receivable should be the same. The amount of \$520,000 on page 13.5 reflects a software coding error.

97. At 13-8, under, '*Retained Revenue – Investment Income*' there is a further amount shown as being investment income. How does that relate to earlier questions regarding investment income and is any of the monies mentioned under this particular heading similar to or involved with other parts of the accounts that I referred to earlier.

**ANSWER:**

The amounts referred to in 13.4 and 13.5 reflect the overall Department of Local Government. Page 13.8 excludes the Companion Animal Fund.

98. '*Under Retained Revenue*', at 13-10, there is further investment income of \$140,000 for 2005/2006. Just what is the total amount of investment income, from all sources, and under all categories, that was paid to the Department of Local Government last year?

**ANSWER:**

The amount of \$140,000 on page 13.10 represents the Companion Animal Portion of Interest. The overall total investment income is as per page 13.4.

99. Under the same heading "*Retained Revenue*" at 13.4, there is retained taxes, fees and fines shown as \$4.5 million. Please outline the categories of such retained taxes, fees and fines.

**ANSWER:**

The \$4.5 million on page 13.4 reflects the income for the Companion Animal registrations.

100. Under the same heading "*Retained Revenue*" at 13.4, there is "*other revenue*" of \$50,000. What is that attributed to?

**ANSWER:**

The \$50,000 reflects the recoupment of costs such as workers compensation payments, and the sale of computer equipment.

101. At 13-5, under "*Closing Cash and Cash Equivalents*" there is a difference between the budget figure of 2005/2006 of \$5.5 million and the revised figure of \$9.665 million, which is some \$4.165 million. Can you throw more light on the \$4.165 million variation? And why do you have such a large amount of cash assets?

**ANSWER:**

I am advised there was an input error when entering the revised budgets. This resulted in the "Closing Cash and Cash Equivalent" being overstated by \$999,000. The Cash and Cash Equivalent balance should be \$8.666 million. The main difference is \$2.8 million being held on behalf of the Companion Animals Fund.

102. Also at 13-5, under "*Receipts*" and under the sub heading '*Other*' there is a figure of \$4.740 million for the budget figure for 2005/2006. However the revised figure is \$5.662 million.

What makes up the receipts under the heading "*Other*" and why is there such a significant revision of the figures over the year?

**ANSWER:**

The figures reflect both actual receipts (not accrual accounting) of Companion Animal Income and Investment Income.

103. At 13-6, under “*Assets – Current Assets – Receivables*”, there is a budget figure of \$902,000 and a revised budget figure of \$1,000. Please explain why such a significant variation has occurred.

**ANSWER:**

The revised Budget amount for Receivables of \$1,000 is a typing error. It should read \$1,000,000. Cash Assets should read \$8,666,000.

104. At 13-7, in particular, in relation to 38.1.1., ‘*Development, Oversight and Assistance to Local Government*’, it is noted that there are 60 effective full time staff anticipated for 2006/2007.

At that same page, it shows ‘*operating expenses employee related*’, at \$5.970 million.

In simple mathematical terms that work out as an average salary and other employee related expenses at \$99,500.

Would this be correct and if not what is the average salary for staff and what is the range of salaries for the staff? What is the number of employees in each range or bracket of salary?

**ANSWER:**

Yes, with on-costs.

105. At 13-7, under '*Operating Statement – Grant and Subsidies – Public-Private Partnerships Project Assessments*', there is a budget item of \$500,000 for 2006/2007 but it also shows only \$125,000 being expended for 2005/2006.

- a. Why was it expected that you need another \$375,000 for the year 2006/2007.
- b. Please itemise how the \$125,000 was expended under this heading and how you expect the \$500,000 to be expended and the end payments to be made.

**ANSWER:**

(a) A budget of \$500,000 for PPPs is provided annually which is only available as needed. The purpose of the funding is so the Department can call in the necessary specialist expertise to evaluate PPP proposals from councils. The exact amount to be expended will vary from year to year depending on the number and complexity of proposals.

(b) \$113,000 was expended in 2005/06 on a contractor with PPP expertise to evaluate the PPP proposals for that year. \$12,000 was spent on Local Government Managers Australia to provide PPP training sessions for councils across NSW.

106. At 13-7, it is noted that complaints processed by the department have increased from 1050 in 2003/2004 to an anticipated 1,300 in 2006/2007.

- a. Why do you anticipate such an increase?



- b. Is this evidence that you, that your department's criteria of *“working towards an effective informed streamlined process by council”* (second bullet point 13-1) is not working and is ineffective?

**ANSWER:**

The number 1200 was only an estimate. The actual was 1107.

107. Please breakdown how the 1200 complaints for 2005/06 were made. That is the type of complaint, the council or councillor the complaint was made against and the outcome of such a complaint.

**ANSWER:**

There is a breakdown in the Department's annual report.

108. At 13-7, *‘Operating Statement-Expenses Excluding Losses – Other Operating Expenses’*, it is noted that \$2.908 million has been allocated for 2006/2007. Please break down those other operating expenses.

**ANSWER:**

Lease Rentals	\$ 565,000
Auditors Remuneration	\$ 40,000
Travelling and Subsistence	\$ 160,000
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$ 81,000
Advertising and Publicity	\$ 30,000
Fees for Services	\$ 330,000
Contractors	\$ 201,000
Consultants	\$ 300,000

Insurance	\$ 40,000
Postage and Telephone	\$ 120,000
Printing	\$ 52,000
Retainers and Fees	\$ 106,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 883,000
TOTAL	\$ 2,908,000

109. At 13-9, in relation to *'Rebates for Pensioners'*, there are a number of figures given as to the pensioner households assisted across the rating categories.

*It shows that 370,000 rebate claims were processed for 2005/2006.*

- a. How many of those claims were for general rebate only?
- b. For water rebate only?
- c. For sewerage rebate only?
- d. For general water and sewerage rebate only?
- e. For general and water rebate only,
- f. For sewerage and water rebate only?
- g. For general and sewerage only?

**ANSWER:**

The total of 370,000 for *'Rebates to Pensioners'* was based on a best estimate from data collected by the Department's Pensioner Rebates

System. The system does not currently capture the number of pensioner households; it captures the number of concessions granted by councils.

Answers to specific questions regarding claim types follow. These figures do not relate directly to pensioner households but to concessions granted by councils, and multiple claims per year and pro rata concessions apply. As such, there is no direct correlation between claims processed by councils and eligible pensioner households.

- a. 287,775
- b. 21,067
- c. 1,173
- d. 668,873
- e. 308,873
- f. 73,310
- g. 309,086

110. At 13-10, at 38.3.1, '*Companion Animals*', it is noted that there are 96,000 animals registered. Please breakdown the registration numbers between cats and dogs.

**ANSWER:**

In the 2005-2006 financial year there were 96,699 dogs and cats lifetime registered as follows:

Lifetime Registered dogs: 76,569

Lifetime Registered cats: 20,130

111. What is the amount of fees actually collected in each category for each animal, that is a de-sexed animal, non-desexed animal, breeder desexed animal and pensioner de-sexed animal?

**ANSWER:**

Desexed dog registrations	\$1,597,760
Non desexed dog registrations	\$2,533,250
Dog breeder registrations	\$81,085
Dog pensioner registrations (desexed dog)	\$151,485

Desexed cat registrations:	\$593,565
Non desexed cat registrations:	\$40,500
Cat breeder registrations:	\$4,900
Cat pensioner registrations: (desexed cat)	\$54,120

112. It is note at 13-10, that the term '*average staffing*' is used. Is that effective full time staff?

**ANSWER:**

In the case of the Companion Animal Fund, the average staffing and EFT is 4.

113. Further at 13-10, under '*Expenses Excluding Losses – operating expenses – employee related*', that an amount of \$380,000 has been attributed to those expenses. This averages at \$95,000 per employee in relation to the Companion Animal Act legislation.

Is this correct? In any event please outline the salaries for each of the four persons who are employed under this part of the accounts.

**ANSWER:**

No.

The salaries are as follows:

Grade 9/10	\$76,142
Grade 7/8	\$73,937
Grade 5/6	\$61,916
CO 3/4	\$46,916

114. At 13-10, 38.3.1, '*Companion Animals*' it notes in the program objective is, "*to improve companion welfare and monitor their ownership*".

Why have you not included in that objective something that can be attributable to also safeguarding the public against dangerous or restricted dogs? Or is the concept to "*improve companion welfare*" in line with your comments following the tragic mauling of a young child, that "*dangerous dogs have rights as well*"?

**ANSWER:**

The program objective to improve companion animal welfare also addresses the management of dangerous and restricted dogs, including issues such as inappropriate keeping and housing of such dogs. Monitoring the housing and whereabouts of dangerous and restricted dogs is consistent with objectives to ensure community safety.

115. Also noted at the same place under *'Program Description'* that part of the program is to "*promote appropriate care and management of companion animals*".

How is this done and at what cost, and if there is a cost where is the cost reflected in the budget?

**ANSWER:**

Promotion of appropriate care and management of companion animals is done in a number of ways.

Brochures, posters and information sheets are regularly developed, reviewed and distributed. Maintenance of a comprehensive website that the public can assess is included in the promotion of responsible pet ownership. The costs for these activities are included in the Funding Program.

116. It is noted from the Budget documents there is provision for an education program to educate children about behaviour around dogs. Further from press statements it appears that you intend to introduce the education program in schools next year.

Why have you delayed the implementation of that program until next year when there has been such a significant number of dog attacks in recent times?

**ANSWER:**

Following the execution of the funding agreement, recruitment of a Statewide Coordinator is underway and the program materials are being finalised in readiness for delivery at the commencement of the 2007 school year. There has been no delay to the implementation of the program, it was always intended to commence early in 2007.

117. What have been the ages of children that have been attacked by dogs for the past 12 months?

i) As your education program specifically refers to education in schools isn't your program for the education of children deficient in that it is not going towards those children obviously most vulnerable, that is preschool children?

ii) How will you educate those children in relation to the education program?

**ANSWER:**

The dog attack statistics reports available to the Department indicate that children who are bitten by dogs and treated fall into the 1 – 4 and 5 – 9 age brackets.

**Rating Questions**

118. Which councils applied for a rate variation for the 2006/2007 rate year and how many were successful?

**ANSWER:**

Ashfield, Ballina, Bega, Berrigan, Bombala, Burwood, Byron, Campbelltown, Cessnock, Coffs Harbour, Dubbo, Eurobodalla, Greater Hume, Greater Taree, Hurstville, Kogarah, Ku-ring-gai, Lake Macquarie, Lithgow, Liverpool Plains, Maitland, Nambucca, Penrith, Port Stephens, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Singleton, Tumut, Warringah, Waverly, Wellington, Wingecarribee, Palerang, Parramatta, Ryde, Tweed, Wagga Wagga, Wakool, Woollahra, Auburn Dungog, Great Lakes, Hawkesbury, Kempsey.

**Section 508(2)**

No. approved as sought	27
No. approved but for lesser amount than sought	5
No. approved for amount sought but lesser period	1
No. not approved	4
No. applications withdrawn	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>

**Section 508A**

No. approved as sought	4
No. approved but for lesser period	1
No. approved for first year only at this stage	1
No. not approved	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>

119. Which councils were the ones that were successful and how much were their increases?

**ANSWER:**

Ashfield 8.75%, Ballina 7.92%, Bega 6.42%, Berrigan 5.6% (5yrs), Bombala 9.43%, Burwood 9.9%, Byron 7.57%, Campbelltown 5.73% (5yrs), Cessnock 9.65%(5yrs), Coffs Harbour 9.56%, Dubbo 8.5%, Eurobodalla 8.37%, Greater Hume 9.7%, Greater Taree 9.55%, Hurstville 9.95%(15yrs), Kogarah 6.67%(7yrs), Ku-ring-gai 8.57%(7yrs), Lake Macquarie 3.75%(3yrs), Lithgow 9.47%, Liverpool Plains 4.67%, Maitland 9.73%, Nambucca 6.11%, Penrith 8.8%(10yrs), Port Stephens 9.96%, Shellharbour 9.5%, Shoalhaven 6.5%, Singleton 9.19%, Tumut 7.85%(14yrs), Warringah 9.5%, Waverly 7.64% (5yrs), Wellington (Minimum Rates only), Wingecarribee 8.6%



120. How many councils were unsuccessful, totally in receiving their requested rate rise?

**ANSWER:**

Five councils

121. What was the amount requested by those councils that were unsuccessful and why was each of those councils unsuccessful?

**ANSWER:**

Auburn sought 13.5% - Council's application was not supported by asset management plans linked to a financial plan.

Dungog sought 9.45%. Application did not identify specific projects and did not appear to be linked to asset management plan.

Great Lakes sought 9.6%. Concern about impact on ratepayers particularly pensioners.

Hawkesbury sought 37.25% over four years. Council's application did not demonstrate community support and did not properly consider other funding options.

Kempsey sought 9.6%. Council's application was not supported by asset management plans linked to a financial plan.

122. What councils had their request for a variation approved but the amount of their proposed increase decreased? What was the amount by which each

council had their request decreased by and why did you decide to decrease the amount they asked for?

**ANSWER:**

Palerang Sought 10.13% Approved 9.9%. Concern about impact on ratepayers.

Parramatta sought 9.83 approved 8.24%. Difference can be raised through stormwater levy.

Ryde sought 12.21% approved 6.41%. No asset management plan to support infrastructure component.

Tweed sought cumulative increase over 7 years Y1-7.6% , Y2-8%, Y3-9%, Y4-9%, Y5-8%, Y6-7%, Y7-7%. Approval for Y1 & Y2 only because of community concerns over impact.

Wagga Wagga sought cumulative increase over 6 years Y1-9.25%, Y2-5.63%, Y3-9.25%, Y4-9.25%, Y5-4.18%, Y6-4.18%. Y1 approved only. Future years to be reviewed further.

Wakool sought 47.84%, approved 13%. Concern about impact on ratepayers and rating structure.

Woollahra sought 14.28%, approved 9.58%. Amount sought considered to be excessive.

**Cost Shifting**

123. Local Government, the Allan Report and general observers of Local Government all have identified cost shifting as singularly the biggest threat the to the sustainability of local government.

- a. *What are you doing, as the representative of local government, to stop the constant cost shifting by the Carr/Lemma Government from all sources over to local government and thus relieving the State Government of their financial responsibilities?*
  
- b. *Isn't this effectively the double taxing the residents of NSW which already have the highest taxes in Australia and then requiring local government to implement charges and fees against those who are paying the state government taxes to undertake state Government transferred responsibilities?*
  
- c. Will you stand up to your Ministerial colleagues and tell them to stop the cost shifting across to local government and in particular the Minister for Planning and if not why not?

**ANSWER:**

I answered this question in the Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 August.

**General**

124. Two matters that are of great concern to councils are timber bridges and water and sewerage provision.

Why do you support the cabinet decision and or the Minister's personal decision to axe the timber bridge replacement program?

How do you justify that support and/or decision of the Cabinet or the Minister to wipe the program and will you tell Local Government why you supported the decision? If not, why not?

**ANSWER:**

I answered this question in the Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 August, I refer to my opening statement. It is not in my portfolio responsibilities.

125. Likewise why did you support the Cabinet decision and or the Minister's decision to downgrade the country town water sewerage scheme to such an extent there is no possibility of new work being undertaken and the backlog is unending?

How do you justify that support as the person that local government looks to leading it?

**ANSWER:**

I answered this question in the Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 August, I refer to my opening statement. It is not in my portfolio responsibilities.

126. At many of the conferences and other local government forums that you attend you have the habit of saying to councillors what your phone number is so that they can allegedly contact you directly.

*How many calls have you personally taken following this invitation? That does not include your staff taking calls, it means you personally taking those calls.*

**ANSWER:.**

I liaise closely with the Local Government sector which includes meeting with industry stakeholder groups such as the Local government and Shires

Association. I also converse over the phone extensively with members of the local government sector.

Providing additional specific information in response to this question would be an unjustifiable diversion of public resources

### **The Allan Report**

127. The Allan Report calls for the State Government to provide financial incentives and technical assistance to enable all councils, within three years, to adopt a total asset management system with consistent asset accounting practices. What have you or the department done in relation to that recommendation?

#### **ANSWER:**

The Allan report was prepared on behalf of the Local Government and Shires Associations. While it raises important issues in relation to local government it is only one source of information and it is their report.

I am currently examining the report and working with the LGSA to identify where improvements to the system of local government can be achieved. As this work is ongoing and involves many of my ministerial colleagues, I am not in a position to respond to individual recommendations from the report. Having said that however, I wish to emphasise that I am strongly committed to strengthening local government as evidenced by the number of initiatives I outlined in response to questions at the Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 August 2006.

128. The Allan Report also states that most councils in danger of sustainability are rural ones whose small population densities mean that they do not have the financial capacity to maintain appropriate road infrastructure.

*Professor Allan states an increase in government grants and or transfer of regional roads into state responsibility make it their only chance of survival.*

*In regard to the transfer of Regional Roads to a State Government responsibility:*

- i. Are you prepared to support that recommendation of Professor Allan and if so have you held meetings with the Minister for Roads on this recommendation?*
- ii. What has been the outcome of such meetings that have been held?*
- iii. If you are not prepared to support the recommendation or have not had meetings with the Minister for Roads, why not?*

*In regard to increasing government grants:*

- i) Have you met with the Treasurer to discuss a whole of government approach to increasing grants to Local Government, if so what was his response? If not, when will you meet with the Treasurer, if you won't meet with the Treasurer, why won't you?*

**ANSWER:**

See answer to question 127 in terms of the Allan report. However, it should be noted that roads funding is the responsibility of my colleague, the Minister for Roads. As I indicated at the Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 August 2006, I have been, and continue to be, a strong advocate increased funding for local government. I have been lobbying hard for the Australian

Government to increase its funding to local government through the Financial Assistance Grants.

129. The Allan Report notes that councils with infrastructure renewal gap and backlog should voluntarily agree to restrain operating expenses by adopting an optimalist approach to review current services, noting that Professor Allan said an optimalist approach means leveraging of resources in third parties, for example private enterprise, not for profit organisations, and other tiers of government rather than funding most local issues themselves.

What has your department done in relation to that recommendation in giving assistance to local government to implement the views of Professor Allan?

**ANSWER:**

See answer to question 127.

130. Professor Allan states in his report that an improvement to council financial reporting could be undertaken by the Department of Local Government amending its code of accounting practices and financial reporting of councils to standardise key accounting and reporting policies, especially in relation to assessment conditions, asset valuation, depreciation, capital expenditure (including the distinction between asset maintenance renewal and expansion), a high level of chart of accounts, a workforce database and key financial indicators.

*What have you or your department done in relation to this recommendation of Professor Allan?*

**ANSWER:**

*See answer to question 127.*

131. Do you as Minister or your department intend to require councils to publish, in their annual reports, a financial governance statement using the standard template provided by the inquiry of Professor Allan?

*If so, when would that come into place? If not, why not?*

**ANSWER:**

*See answer to question 127.*

132. Professor Allan identifies that about a quarter of New South Wales local councils will become financially unsustainable if action is not taken to rectify the infrastructure funding crisis in New South Wales.

*He also notes than another half will struggle with growing deficits, which will impair their capacity to operate effectively.*

What will the Lemma Government do to overcome this observation of Professor Allan and what will you and your department do specifically in that regard, particularly in regard to the duty you have of sustaining local government in New South Wales?

In this regard are you prepared to take on other Ministers to ensure that local government does not collapse in New South Wales because of the inordinate demands placed on local government by your government and the lack of funds made available for councils to carry out infrastructure work within their council areas from the State Government?

**ANSWER:**



See answer to question 127.

133. A further recommendation by Professor Allan was that the Department of Local Government issue best practice guidelines on the pricing principles and key costs concepts necessary for pricing council's services, of a commercial nature.

*Has your department introduced such guidelines? If not, do they intend to? If not, why not?*

**ANSWER:**

See answer to question 127.

134. Professor Allen also said that the New South Wales Government should publicly document its total assistance to New South Wales Local Government and show its breakdown by major components of assistance.

*Most other state governments publish this data as part of their annual budget papers and the New South Wales Treasury, which Professor Allen was the head of at one stage, is able, according to Professor Allen, to extract this information from the financial database. Wouldn't this be of assistance in Local Government?*

- i. Will you support a call for such break down of the total assistance given to Local Government? If not, why not?
- ii. Professor Allen further notes that any breakdown of grants should distinguish between payments for services provided on behalf of the state and payments to Local Government for its own purposes. Do you agree with this type break down? If not, why not?

- iii. Will you personally approach the Treasurer to put into place this recommendation? If not, why not?

**ANSWER:**

See answer to question 127.

135. A further recommendation of Professor Allen said that the State Government should provide financial incentive and professional assistance to councils to facilitate key structural, financial and administrative reforms.

- i. What have you done in relation to this recommendation?
- ii. If nothing, has any other Member of the government done anything, and if not, why not?
- iii. *Will you take the leadership on the issue? If not, why not?*

**ANSWER:**

See answer to question 127.

**The Tweed Council Inquiry**

136. *It is noted the Tweed Administrators have outlined a plan for seven years, which includes \$133 million for additional projects, not currently funded.*

- a. *Isn't it true that council, according to the then Acting General Manager, in March 2006, said that council only have \$16 million out of what is \$133 million program for transport and roads and that they have "a couple of million for programs that support social*

*development.” And that council “ have \$5 million for programs that support cultural development”.*

- b. *Therefore how can your Director General as the then Chief Administrator and the other Administrators comply the “Results and Services” statements at 13-11 in the Budget papers of “effective informed and transparent decision making by local councils” and “efficient, effective local councils with a culture of continuous transparent and best practise, financial sustainability and capacity to comply with legislation”?*

**ANSWER:**

Refer to page 36 of the transcript of committee proceedings held on 28 August at 9am where Mr Payne spoke about Tweed Shire’s seven year plan.

**Questions from Ms Hale**

**137. Reduction in councillor numbers**

- (i) Is the Minister concerned at all that this process has led to a loss of local representation of over 40 councillors across the state and given majorities of councillors an opportunity to gerrymander their Council?
- (ii) Will the Minister rule out providing such an opportunity again without requiring the usual referenda?

**ANSWER:**

- (i) No evidence has been presented to support your proposition. In his report of April 2001 in relation to Local Government, Professor K Sproats found that it

was possible to reduce councillor numbers on a council without any detrimental consequences to the community. I am pleased that the opportunity for councils to reduce their councillor numbers has resulted in savings for ratepayers. That is, by reducing the costs of representation as well as removing the requirement and cost of holding a constitutional referendum.

(ii) No.

**138. Wards**

(i) The Government did not allow any councillor reduction applications during the recent process to deliver less than three councillors per ward. Will the Government extend this excellent principle and legislate to prohibit wards with less than three councillors or, at the very least, ensure that no more councils establish such wards?

(ii) Will the Minister legislate to require a referendum for any changes to the number of wards and any changes to ward boundaries other than minor changes due to population shifts?

**ANSWER:**

(i) No. See hearing transcript p27-28.

(ii) I support the ward provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 in their current form. See hearing transcript pp26-27.

**139. Council administrator terms**

What is the longest term that the Minister would give a council administrator? Will the Minister commit to setting a maximum term limit for council administrators? Are there any councils facing the risk of an administrator at this time?

**ANSWER:**

As Minister responsible for the administration of the Local Government Act I base my decisions on advice from the Department of Local Government and on the individual circumstances of the case.

**140. Companion animals**

(i) Is the Minister aware that the Companion Animals Fund generates approximately \$5M pa, about one third of which is spent on promotion and departmental administration? Given that it costs approximately \$100,000 pa to employ a ranger, will the Minister conduct a review of licensing fees to enable councils to recover the costs of enforcing the government's legislative changes?

(ii) While the Minister has been active on restricting dangerous dogs, what is he doing to reduce the significant impact cats have on native fauna, including may endangered species?

**ANSWER:**

(i) There is no licensing system in NSW. However recent amendments to the Companion Animals Regulation have increased registration fees, especially for undesexed animals. This will significantly assist councils with costs associated with animal control. Further amendments also introduced a requirement for those councils to spend registration monies received on companion animals activities.

(ii) This issue was answered by me during the Budget Estimates hearing.

**141. Private certification**

(i) Is the Minister aware of the massive cost that clearing up the disasters created daily by private certification is putting on local government?

(ii) Has the Minister raised the concerns of local government about private certification with the Minister for Planning?

(iii) Why doesn't the government heed the calls from local government and the community and scrap private certification?

**ANSWER:**

I answered this question in the Budget Estimates Hearing on 28 August. It is not in my portfolio of responsibility.

**142. Affordable housing**

Does the Minister support provisions for councils to levy for affordable housing? If not, why not? If so, has he raised this with the Minister for Planning and the Premier?

**ANSWER:**

Affordable housing is not in my portfolio of responsibility.

**143. Council amalgamations**

Will the government retain its policy of no forced amalgamations of councils beyond March 2007?

**ANSWER:**

The current policy is that there will be no forced amalgamations.

**144. Financial Sustainability of Local Government - response to the Allan Report**

(i) What is the government's response to the independent Inquiry into the Financial Sustainability of Local Government, conducted by Professor Percy Allan and his team?

(ii) What actions is the government taking to work with the Local Government and Shires Associations, and the local government sector to analyse the Allan report's recommendations, and identify and implement solutions?

(iii) Will the Minister establish a framework to consider the Allan report's recommendations, in concert with the Associations?

(iv) Infrastructure is only one aspect of the report. How are you and your department responding to the other recommendations?

**ANSWER:**

See answer to question 127

**145. Autonomy and inter-governmental restrictions**

(i) Does the Minister support recognition of local government in the NSW Constitution?

(ii) You have entered into an inter governmental agreement with local government and the Federal Government to ensure local government gets a better deal on cost shifting. Will you enter into an inter governmental agreement to ensure local government gets a better deal from the NSW government?

**ANSWER:**

(i) The Constitution Act 1902 (NSW) recognises Local Government. Section 52 provides:

(1) There shall continue to be a system of local government for the State under which duly elected or duly appointed local government bodies are constituted with responsibilities for acting for the better government of

those parts of the State that are from time to time subject to that system of local government.

(2) The manner in which local government bodies are constituted and the nature and extent of their powers, authorities, duties and functions shall be as determined by or in accordance with laws of the Legislature.

(3) The reference in subsection (2) to laws of the Legislature shall be read as a reference to laws that have been enacted by the Legislature, whether before or after the commencement of this section, and that are for the time being in force.

Please refer to page 45 of the transcript of proceedings.

**146. Transparency, Accountability and State Government reporting**

Is the Minister aware that in other states, budget papers report in detail on local government programs? Will future NSW state budget papers provide detailed, meaningful and transparent information on state expenditure affecting local government?

**Answer:**

No.