

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

WOMEN

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009
16 September 2009

PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

1. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 1): Do you set performance criteria for officers attending or participating in Interdepartmental committees, known as IDCs?

ANSWER:

All senior staff of the Office for Women's Policy attending interdepartmental senior officers committees must adhere to "*Principles for the Operation and Conduct of meetings of Senior Officer Groups*" as set out in the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet Circular C 2005-07. The document provides that: "While representing their agency, Members are ...expected to support inter-agency collaboration, coordination, integration and innovation with the goals of developing a comprehensive approach to existing or emerging issues, improving the conduct of public sector administration, delivering services to meet the holistic needs of communities and clients, and/or make cost effective use of public sector resources in ways that cannot be done by individual agencies working separately."

As part of their role, senior staff at the Office for Women's Policy are required to develop and maintain effective working relationships at a senior officer level across the public sector as well as with key external stakeholders. These relationships allow staff to facilitate thorough liaison, consultation and negotiation of women's policy issues.

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Minister for Women

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

2. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 2): Please provide the Committee with a timeline of the rollout of Staying Home Leaving Violence.

ANSWER:

Staying Home Leaving Violence currently operates in two sites. An Open Tender Expression of Interest process to identify service providers for the roll out to six new locations opened on 4 May 2009 and closed on 5 June 2009.

The successful applicants are currently being supported to develop formal agreements with partner agencies, including the NSW Police Force, the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services and Housing NSW, to ensure effective and efficient delivery of services.

By 2010/11, Staying Home, Leaving Violence will be expanded to 18 locations around the State, with a further ten new projects to be introduced in 2010/11. Selection of the new sites will commence in December 2009.

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WOMEN

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009
16 September 2009**

PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

3. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 3): How much funding does the Domestic Violence Committee Coalition receive?

ANSWER:

The Domestic Violence Committee Coalition received \$1000 in funding from the Office for Women's Policy in 2008/2009 as part of the small grants component of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Grants Program.

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**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009
16 September 2009**

PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

4. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 3): Has the department perhaps under the previous Minister made representations to the Minister for Police regarding the career path of police domestic violence liaison officers?

ANSWER:

The Office for Women's Policy has not made representations to the Minister for Police regarding the career path of domestic violence liaison officers.

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WOMEN

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

5. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 4): Has the previous Minister or the department made representations to the Minister for Education and Training about equal opportunity for women who apply for part-time executive positions in the teaching profession?

ANSWER:

Neither the former Minister for Women nor the Office for Women's Policy have made formal representations to the Minister for Education and Training regarding part time executive positions in the teaching profession.

However, the former Minister for Women, who at the time, also held the position of Minister for Education and Training, held a Round table forum on quality part time work on 19 February 2009. The Department of Education was invited to attend the forum, as were representatives of teacher unions. A summary report of this forum is available at <http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/RoundTable.html> .

In September 2008, the former Minister for Women also launched *Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women*, a sector-wide women's employment and development strategy developed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet to improve women's recruitment, development and retention over the next five years.

Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women identifies a number of strategies where public sector agencies can contribute to removing barriers to women's participation and recruit more women to senior roles. Alongside other equal opportunity initiatives these strategies include: increasing the number of part time positions available at senior levels; and advising women of their entitlements regarding returning to work on a part time basis following a period of maternity leave.

Further information about *Making the Public Sector Work Better for Women 2008-2012* and sector-wide programs and initiatives undertaken by the Government to support the strategy are available at http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au/women/womens_employment_and_development_strategy.

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6. The CHAIR asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 4): What are you doing—or what did the former Minister or Office for Women do—to support young pregnant women in the school system?

ANSWER:

In 2008-09 funding of \$31,560 was provided from discretionary funds administered by the Office for Women's Policy, on behalf of the Minister for Women, to the Family Child Care Services Central Coast Incorporated for the *'Babes with Babes: Live, Love and Be Happy!'* program which targets young mothers aged between 14 and 21 years. The program aims to help young mothers return to school with the support of a worker, a crèche and transport.

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**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009
16 September 2009**

PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

7. Dr John Kaye asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (page 4): Have you or your office made representations to the Premier or to the Attorney General in respect of abortion law reform in NSW?

ANSWER:

Neither the Minister for Women nor the Office for Women's Policy has made representations to the Premier or the Attorney General in respect of abortion law reform in NSW.

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

8. Dr John Kaye asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (pages 5-6): Please provide the Committee with details relating to how much funding has been allocated this year compared to last year's figures for women's programs administered or run by your office? Could you also refer that back to equivalent funding pre-2004 when there was a separate Department for Women before it was rolled into other departments?

ANSWER:

In 2008, the Office for Women's Policy was restructured to become a policy advisory unit. As a result, the Office has transitioned away from undertaking program work.

In 2009/10 \$2.9 million has again been set aside in the Office for Women's Policy budget for Domestic and Family Violence Grants. This is the same figure as the 2008/09 budget.

This year all 152 NSW local councils will be again be invited to apply for funds of up to \$1,000 to celebrate International Women's Day. This approach is consistent with International Women's Day funding in 2008/09.

In the Department for Women's 2003/04 annual report, the budget statements indicate that there was a budget of \$1,155,000 allocated to grants and other subsidies while the actual expenditure was \$1,072,000.

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9. Dr John Kaye asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP (pages 6): Could you give the Committee a breakdown of those (major domestic and family grants) and where they went geographically?

ANSWER:

Details of the 2008/09 major Domestic and Family Violence Grants are as follows (attached):

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BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009

16 September 2009

PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

10. Dr John Kaye asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP

(page 6): Could you give the Committee some information about what the office is doing with leadership programs for women?

ANSWER:

The Office for Women's Policy supports women's leadership through partnering on programs such as:

- The Lucy Mentoring Program, which aims to increase the number of women in senior executive positions in the areas of business, finance, economics, accounting and law by establishing mentoring relationships between women undergraduate students and mentors who are senior professionals.

This program is led by the University of Western Sydney, the University of Sydney, the University of Newcastle, the University of New South Wales, the University of New England, the University of Wollongong and Women Chiefs of Enterprise International (Australia) Ltd.

- The Tasting Success – Women Chefs' Mentoring Program, which aims to increase the likelihood that participants will complete their apprenticeships and embark on a career that brings them to senior positions in the hospitality industry by establishing mentoring relationships between female apprentice chefs and industry-leading chefs. This program is led by TAFE NSW.
- The SistaSpeak program, which aims to increase the likelihood that Aboriginal girls will complete their education, find employment and be financially independent through a six-week program which focuses on education, career development and financial independence for Aboriginal girls in Years 6–9.

The Office also promotes women's leadership through the Premier's Council for Women and the Premier's Council on Preventing Violence Against Women. It also selects and supports delegates from NSW that participate in the annual National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Gathering, a forum that advises the Ministerial Conference on the Status of Women.

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WOMEN

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

11. The Hon Christine Robertson asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP: Can the Minister advise what progress is being made in monitoring and preventing the domestic violence related deaths of women and children in NSW?

ANSWER:

A Domestic Violence Homicide Advisory Panel was convened in February 2009. Dr Lesley Laing, the Deputy Chair of the Premier's Council on Preventing Violence Against Women, chaired the Panel. Other members were Professor Julie Stubbs of the University of Sydney, Ms Betty Green, the Convenor of the Domestic Violence Coalition Committee, and senior representatives from relevant government agencies.

The Advisory Panel was asked to review domestic violence related homicides in NSW over the past 5 years and report back, with recommendations on any changes to practices and procedures that would contribute to a reduction in preventable homicides. In addition, the Panel were asked to make recommendations as to what form an ongoing review mechanism might take, if one were to be adopted in NSW.

The Advisory Panel submitted its report to the Premier on 22 May 2009. The Panel's Report is extremely thorough and is being given the detailed consideration it deserves. It will inform the Government's decision making process with respect to a wider domestic homicide review.

In addition, the NSW Government, through the Standing Committee of Attorney Generals, is working with other jurisdictions and the National Coroner's Information System to facilitate the recording of responses to coronial recommendations on their system in order to encourage responsiveness to coronial recommendations.

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

12. The Hon Christine Robertson asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP: What funding is the Government specifically directing towards initiatives which support victims of domestic and family violence in this budget?

ANSWER:

In the 2009/10 budget funding was provided to Government agencies for the following specific initiatives:

Department of Premier and Cabinet

- **Office for Women's Policy**

\$2.9 million was provided to fund innovative non-Government organisations' projects that address domestic and family violence. \$900,000 of this funding is aimed specifically at projects that support Aboriginal communities. About \$80,000 of this funding is also provided to Local Domestic Violence Committees (around 80 across NSW) to run community awareness campaigns around preventing domestic and family violence.

Department of Human Services

- **Community Services**

The Staying Home Leaving Violence program which assists women and children to remain safely in their family home will be extended to Blacktown, Campbelltown, Wyong, Walgett, Newcastle and Moree. The cost to extend the program is approximately \$1.356 million in the 2009/10 year.

A further \$3 million will be provided to support the multi-agency, Integrated Domestic and Family Violence Services Program, a coordinated response to prevent the escalation of domestic violence among high risk target groups and in targeted communities.

- **Housing NSW**

Housing NSW has received \$16 million over four years for a private rental subsidy scheme aimed at helping women with children escaping domestic violence obtain and maintain a safe home in the private rental market.

Department of Justice and Attorney General

- **NSW Police Force**

The NSW Police Force is employing an additional 20 police officers to work in areas with high levels of domestic violence. It is also committing \$545, 000 for additional Domestic Violence Liaison Officers in Wagga Wagga and Campbelltown and two project officers to support the Domestic Violence Intervention Court Model.

- **Legal Aid NSW**

Legal Aid NSW is receiving an extra \$2.6 million each year for the next three years for the Domestic Violence Court Assistance Program. This program assists women and children to obtain legal protection from domestic violence with the help of legal representation, specialised assistance from social welfare professionals and referrals to appropriate services.

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13. The Hon Christine Robertson asked the Minister for Women, the Hon LINDA BURNEY MP: Can the Minister advise the Committee what NSW is doing to measure indicators of women's progress?

ANSWER:

NSW is leading a national working group on the development of a nationally agreed set of key indicators of women's progress across a range of priority areas, including: economic security; work and family; education; representation; health and wellbeing; and safety and justice.

The national working group will present the indicators to the Ministerial Conference on the Status of Women on 2 October 2009. The outcomes of this project will be used to inform the national policy agenda on advancing the status of women.

Linda Burney
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