

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-10

Questions Placed on Notice

Question 1: Small Bars

- a. What is your view about the prospect, despite a 12-month freeze on the granting of licences, of a proliferation of small bars in the laneways and alleyways of Sydney's CBD and entertainment areas?
 - i. Would, say, 1,300 additional small bars cause any problems in the regulation of liquor in the City and Regions?
- b. What has been the experience in Melbourne?
- c. [Depending on the answer] Are you aware that the small bars proposal, which saw over 1,000 new bars and coffee shop conversions in Melbourne, has been abandoned and the legislation closed down?
- d. When the freeze on licences in certain entertainment precincts ends, how will it be possible to supervise and police the responsible service of alcohol at these establishments, particularly when there may be only one staff member on duty late at night?
- e. As many of these small bars will not have toilets for the public, how will you be able to ensure the hygiene of Sydney's streets, especially late at night?
- f. Do you share the same Parisian streetscape vision as the current Lord Mayor, with alcohol being served, outdoor and indoor, at small bars in the laneways and alleyways of Sydney?

Answer:

Information regarding other jurisdictions should be sought from the appropriate authorities. The Liquor Act imposes a range of obligations on all licensees to ensure licensed premises are operated responsibly. General bar licences are subject to the same responsible service of alcohol requirements that apply to hotels and other liquor licences.

I am advised that the provision of toilets in small bars and other licensed venues is a planning matter determined by local councils. The *Liquor Act* 2007 provides the necessary flexibility for a range of drinking and hospitality venues to meet the needs of the tourism industry and the general public. This flexibility is balanced by a suite of regulatory tools which allow effective action to be taken quickly to prevent and address alcohol-related problems.

Question 2: Smoking

- a. Do you believe that the current smoking provisions at licensed venues in NSW are appropriate, given the investment of some \$800m a year ago by hotels and clubs to comply with your Government's laws?
- b. How long will these current smoking laws apply at licensed venues in NSW?

Answer:

Questions regarding smoking laws should be directed to the Minister for Health.

Question 3. Internet Betting Exchanges & Interstate Corporate Bookmakers

- a. What do you think are the impacts of internet betting exchanges in NSW?
- b. What do you think are the impacts of interstate corporate bookmakers in NSW?
- c. What is the Government doing about the decline in revenues attributable to corporate interstate bookmakers and betting exchanges?

Answer:

Interstate corporate bookmakers are licensed by their home jurisdiction and are in competition with betting exchanges, as well as traditional wagering operators such as State and Territory totalizators (TABs) and licensed bookmakers.

The Government has put in place a statutory Race Fields scheme which makes it an offence for a wagering operator to use NSW race fields without first making application for the approval of the relevant NSW controlling bodies (Racing NSW, Harness Racing NSW or Greyhound Racing NSW). Approval may be subject to the condition that a fee is payable to enable a fair share of wagering proceeds to be returned to the NSW industry.

The legislation has been challenged in the Federal Court. The Government, Racing NSW and Harness Racing NSW are defending the challenges.

Question 4. Declining Prize Money

- a. Do you think that interstate corporate bookmakers and internet betting exchanges are contributing to the decline of prize money available for racing events in NSW?
- b. Is it fair that such interstate operators are allowed to operate in NSW, considering they give next to nothing to racing in NSW?
- c. Does the Government have any plans to address this issue?
- d. Do you share your predecessor's enthusiasm for licensing a betting exchange in NSW?
- e. How much leakage is there from the NSW racing industry as a result of the diversion of wagering business to interstate-based bookmakers and betting exchanges?
- f. What is intended to halt and reverse this loss?

Answer:

As outlined under Question 3 above, NSW Race Fields laws are designed to ensure an appropriate contribution by wagering operators back to the NSW racing industry. The Government did not support the Cameron Wagering Review recommendation to authorise betting exchanges to operate from NSW.

Question 5: Liquor + Gaming Magazine

- a. What is the total cost of the quarterly Liquor + Gaming magazine?
- b. How many subscribers does the magazine have?
- c. With the constant and often complicated changes your department has made to liquor laws, wouldn't it be more beneficial if this publication were made available online and free for people within the hospitality industry, to minimise the number of breaches to the laws?

Answer:

The annual cost of the magazine is \$42,260 (excluding staff hours). There are 11,495 subscribers. This includes free subscribers such as liquor licensees, licensing police, local councils, researchers and community groups, plus fee-paying subscribers including businesses, legal firms, professional advisers and technical consultants.

Content from the magazine is re-published on the OLGR website, which is freely accessible. Since June 2006, a free opt-in liquor and gaming e-news service has also been in place. The Department regularly reviews its communications to ensure they are accessible to interested parties.

Question 6: Social Profile Report Series

- a. How much did it cost to develop the Social Profile Report Series?
- b. Can you tell me the total number of times these reports have been downloaded?
- c. Which LGA report has been downloaded the most?

Answer:

The cost to develop the Social Profile Reports Series was \$52,637.80 which included software purchases, data purchases and hardware upgrades (excluding staff hours). These tools will have broader application across the wider Communities NSW portfolio.

There have been 1,116 report downloads since 20 February 2009. This has enabled residents, councils, police and others to access the information they need to make informed submissions regarding applications for liquor licences. The most popular report was the Social Profile Report for the City of Sydney LGA.

Question 7: Cameron Review

- a. What is the intention regarding the Cameron Review recommendation to legislate an amendment to the inter-code shares of distribution?
 - i. Why did you not include this matter in your response to the Cameron Review, a matter at the centre of a campaign running within the greyhound industry for the scheme to be changed?
- b. What is your vision for the future of the racing industry?

Answer:

The Government provided a response to each of the Cameron Review recommendations. This specific recommendation was not supported on the basis that the Inter-Code Deed is a commercial agreement entered into by the three codes of racing and any amendments to the Deed are a matter for the industry.

The Government is committed to a strong and vibrant racing industry across the three codes, independent of Government, but supported by Government policy where appropriate to ensure its viability.

Question 8: AJC/STC Race club merger

- a. What is your view of the merits or otherwise of a merger between the AJC and the STC?
- b. As the Minister who commissioned the Review that recommended the merger, do you believe that the industry has shelved the Report?
- c. What do you intend to do should the AJC & STC decide not to merge? Will you apply Ministerial force or encouragement to the question?

Answer:

There is considerable merit in reviewing the potential impact of a merger, and any other related options which will benefit the racing industry.

A Merger Benefit Team has been established. Membership includes the Chairman and CEO of Racing NSW; the Chairperson and CEO of the Australian Jockey Club; the Chairperson and CEO of the Sydney Turf Club; and a representative from my Department.

The first meeting of the Merger Benefit Team took place on 11 September 2009. A Joint Communiqué was published and is available from <http://www.royalrandwick.com/media-and-news/media-releases.aspx>

The Communiqué in part states:

‘There was unanimous agreement that the Minister’s request and subsequent MBT process presented a unique opportunity to consider a strong vision and framework for racing in Sydney for the next 50 years, including merger options.’

The Merger Benefit Team will provide its final report at the end of November 2009.

Question 9:

A letter on the NSW Sports Federation website from the CEO, Debbie Kemp, addressed to yourself, Minister, states that Government funding for the Sports Development Program is currently at an unacceptably low level in comparison to other states, namely Qld, WA and Vic. Ms Kemp states that in monetary terms, funding from your department has not increased for the past 20 years and in real terms, has actually decreased. Why has funding not increased, Minister, in line with other states over such a long period?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed.

Information regarding a number of new funding opportunities to assist with the overall development of sport & recreation throughout New South Wales will be available shortly.

Question 10:

The NSW Government's Sports and Recreation website, under the "Grants" tab, states: "Information on the grants provided by NSW Sport and Recreation is currently being updated. Detailed information on grant programs will be available shortly". As the only "Grants" available on the website are links to the Australian Federal Government's – Volunteer Grants 2009. How long has this been the case?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed.

Information regarding a number of new funding opportunities to assist with the overall development of sport & recreation throughout New South Wales will be available shortly.

Question 11:

The website states that “Financial assistance and grants are available to sport and recreation groups and individuals through a number of sources, including the NSW Sport and Recreation’s grant programs”. Are “Grants” currently available and has there been a pull-back of funds on this front?

Answer:

Information regarding the next round of grants will be available shortly.

Question 12:

The latest departmental annual report on the website 2007-2008, states: "Through the Department's sports and recreation division, we invested \$22 million in sporting organisations and local councils".

- a) How much was invested in 2008-2009?

Answer:

This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 13:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, under the Capital Assistance Program, 300 projects received \$4 million in funding.

- a) Does the program still exist?
- b) How much, if any, was allocated to the program in 2008-2009?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed. This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 14:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, under the Regional Sports Facility Program, 300 projects received \$4 million in funding.

- a) Does the program still exist?
- b) How much, if any, was allocated to the program in 2008-2009?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed. This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 15:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, the Country Athlete Scheme, received a total of \$251,600.

- a) Does the program still exist?
- b) How much, if any, was allocated to the program in 2008-2009?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed. This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 16:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, the Far West Travel Scheme was awarded \$120,000.

- a) Does the program still exist?
- b) How much, if any, was allocated to the program in 2008-2009?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed. This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 17:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, the Scheme for Coaches and Officials in regional areas was awarded a total of \$55,000.

- a) Does the program still exist?
- b) How much, if any, was allocated to the program in 2008-2009?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed. This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 18:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, the Elite Athletes and Disability Program was funded to the tune of \$70,000, and \$35,000 was allocated for pre-elite development programs.

- a) Does the program still exist?
- b) How much, if any, was allocated to the program in 2008-2009?

Answer:

Sport and Recreation grant programs have recently been reviewed. This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 19:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, the Disability Sport Assistance Program funded 36 projects to the tune of \$350,000,

- a) Given this is an annual program that runs over four years, how much, if any, was allocated to the scheme in 2008-2009 and does the scheme still exist?
- b) Has it been superseded by another scheme of a similar nature?
- c) Why isn't this reflected on your website?
- d) What happened to the money for this scheme?

Answer:

This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 20:

According to your 2007-2008 annual report, \$25,000 was provided to support athletes' travel to international sporting competitions. How much was allocated in 2008-2009 for the same purpose?

Answer:

This information will be available in the Department's 2008/09 Annual Report.

Question 21:

Given the growing obesity epidemic amongst children, what is the NSW Government doing to better engage children in sporting and recreational activities and what are the results of any such program in this regard?

Answer:

Increased participation in sport and recreational activities, particularly by children and young people, is a key priority under the State Plan. Information regarding a broad range of programs within my portfolio can be found on the Communities NSW website. Information is also available in a range of Departmental publications, as well as in the Annual Reports and web sites for the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust, Parramatta Park Trust, Olympic venues and other public sources.

Additional information will also be available from my colleagues the Minister for Health and the Minister for Education.

Question 22:

In your department's 2006-2007 annual report, page 48 states that "in October 2006, over 70 staff from state sporting organisations attended the first in a series of sports industry forums" on the topic of developing 'healthy and active children'. How many forums were in the series and how many have been presented on this topic?

Answer:

Since October 2006, seven additional forums targeting development staff from State Sporting Organisations have been held on the following topics:

1. Strategies for maintaining and engaging young people at risk in community sport.
2. Sport Leadership – strategies for developing future sport leaders
3. Olympic fever and optimising the opportunities for your sport
4. Developing volunteers in sport
5. Parents and kids sport
6. Connecting with schools in 2009 – Premier's Council on Active Living Guidelines
7. School and Community Sport Connections

Question 23:

As you are aware, children and adults alike look up to sporting individuals as role models. Given this and the number of scandals throughout a number of sports, most notably Rugby League this year, what is the State Government doing to prevent incidents of unacceptable and anti-social behaviour of players away from the sporting arena?

- a. Hence, has the Government designed a series of workshops/ conferences/ forums with the relative Rugby League or sporting bodies to encourage better player behaviour outside the sporting arena?

Answer:

These matters have been the subject of extensive public discussion. I refer to the Government's public comments on these issues.

Question 24:

What is the NSW Government doing in regards to gender parity in sport?

Answer:

A number of programs administered by the Sport & Recreation Division of Communities NSW focus solely on increasing the participation of women and girls in sport. Examples of these programs are available in the Department's Annual Report.

In addition, the Government has committed \$500,000 to support the 2010 Women in Sport Conference which will be held in Sydney.

Questions 25-53:

25. Do you think NSW could ever compete toe to toe if Victoria is bidding for a major event, theatrical event or sporting fixture with the meagre budget, less than half of Victoria's, that you have given Events NSW?
26. Do you think a lack of funding in the major events portfolio hinders NSW's chances of attracting world-class major events to the state?
27. Considering that Victoria's major events budget is approximately \$67.5m per annum compared to NSW's budget of \$28.3m over three years, would you agree that major events is under funded in this state?
28. What is your vision and plan for Sydney and the burgeoning national and international conference and convention market?
29. Have you seen Melbourne's new Convention centre?
30. In what way can Sydney compete given its greatly inferior Entertainment Centre and Darling Harbour Exhibition Halls?
31. Will you grasp the opportunity, whilst it is in receivership, to redevelop the Entertainment centre site so that Sydney has a chance of competing with Melbourne and other cities around the world?
32. What is your vision to rival Melbourne's current superiority in both major events and in terms of a world-class conference facility?
33. Why is it that Melbourne hosts the premiere run of almost every blockbuster musical in Australia?
34. How is that when Sydney actually had the premiere run of 'Mary Poppins', it was snaffled by Melbourne as soon as events Victoria heard about it?
35. Did you hear Victoria has recently signed a deal with the AFL that will ensure the flagship AFL grand final is staged at the MCG until 2037?
36. Are you aware the NRL has indicated its Sydney grand final is up for grabs?
 - a. What are you going to do about the potential loss of NSW's heartland premier marquee sporting event?
37. Are you aware that the agreements to major sporting events in this state such as the NRL Grand Final, State of Origin, Bledisloe Cup and Socceroos matches will be coming to an end by 2011?
38. Are you aware that two English football clubs, Fulham FC and Wolverhampton Wanderers have all played pre-season matches in Queensland, Victoria and Perth, this year?
 - a. Did the Government try and get any of these sides to play games in NSW?

39. Did Sydney bid to host the Socceroos' farewell match before the FIFA World Cup Finals in South Africa?
40. Do you feel there is substance to the often heard statement that NSW has not taken an interest in major sporting events since the 2000 Olympic Games?
41. Do you think NSW has Australia's premier major events calendar? Why?
42. Following an article in the Sydney Morning Herald on August 27 that stated that Green Lantern movie production is considering moving overseas due to rising expenditure, can you inform us of recent negotiations you have had with Warner Brothers Studios?
43. Can you inform us what incentives you are providing to Warner Brothers Studios to shoot the film in Sydney?
44. Why was Eastern Creek Raceway deemed 'unsuitable' for Sydney's V8 Supercars event?
45. Don't you think \$30 million could have been spent upgrading Eastern Creek Raceway, a recognised motor sport venue, rather than erecting a temporary track at Sydney Olympic Park?
46. After spending years attracting businesses to Sydney Olympic Park after the games in 2000, did you even consult them despite this event causing them distractions for up to 10 weeks?
47. Do you have any plans for Eastern Creek Raceway?
48. Why did your Government push ahead with the Sydney 500 event, despite the opposition from the Chief of Events NSW, John O'Neill, and head of the Sydney Olympic Park Authority, Michael Knight?
49. Considering that media reports have dubbed you 'Minister for V8s' what bearing did your own personal liking of the sport have on your decision to ignore the views of those experts mentioned previously and commit \$30 million of taxpayers money to the event?
50. What was your role in bringing the Sydney 500 to New South Wales?
51. What influence did the Chairman of News Limited, John Hartigan, and Commercial Director of Channel 7, Bruce McWilliam, have in the lobbying of this event to your government?
52. Were you present, at any stage of discussions, in any meeting with Mr Hartigan and / or Mr McWilliam?
53. Repco Rally Australia
 - a. What consultations were there with the local communities prior to this event?

- b. World Rally Champion Sebastian Loeb stated that "...if it is a lot of people that are not happy to see us then I think we have to move somewhere else because we can understand that they don't like the rally." In light of this would you consider moving the event to another location in the state?
- c. Keeping in mind that two stages of the event were cancelled due to protest action, do you consider the event a success?
- d. Due to the community backlash surrounding this event, what future do you think this event has in the Tweed-Kyogle Shires?
- e. Would you consider moving this event elsewhere due to this backlash?

Answers:

The issues raised in Questions 25 to 53 pertain to Events NSW and as such should be directed to the Premier. However I would note a number of questions are based on incorrect information.