



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 2

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2009-2010

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2

Aboriginal Affairs

Monday 14 September 2009

Answers to be lodged by: Thursday 8 October 2009

Budget Estimates Secretariat
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Hearing date	Portfolio	Answer to be lodged by
14 September 2009	Health	8 October 2009 [21 days]
14 September 2009	Central Coast	8 October 2009 [21 days]
14 September 2009	Ageing, Disability Services	8 October 2009 [21 days]
14 September 2009	Aboriginal Affairs	8 October 2009 [21 days]
16 September 2009	Education and Training	12 October 2009 [21 days]
16 September 2009	Women	12 October 2009 [21 days]
16 September 2009	Community Services	12 October 2009 [21 days]

Questions relating to the portfolio of Aboriginal Affairs

14 September 2009, 4.45 pm – 6.00 pm

Questions from Mr Cohen

1. I note that the Government has stated that the Two Ways Together Partnership Community Program is the key mechanism for local engagement between agencies and Aboriginal communities in identifying local needs, developing action plans and strengthening community well being. Are 20 FTE Partnership Community Project Officers sufficient to assist communities in setting up community governance bodies and developing community action plans?
 - a. If yes, does this indicate that the recommendation by the Inquiry that 40FTE staff be employed was unfounded and without empirical evidence support?
2. Given the evidence cited in the final report of the Standing Committee on Social Issues on Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage in NSW that Aboriginal communities must be genuinely engaged from the beginning of the process in identifying local problems and solutions and that new strategies for engagement need to be developed, will the Minister outline what new strategies will be developed to engage Aboriginal communities in identifying local problems and solutions, especially in areas where Two Ways Together Partnerships are not operating?

Questions from Ms Robertson

3. How will the recent amendments to the ALRA (Aboriginal Land rights Act) as they relate to land dealings, support Aboriginal Land Councils so that they may better deal with land and improve economic outcomes for their communities?
4. What are some of the initiatives the Government has introduced to strengthen economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people in New South Wales?
5. What is the Government doing to improve supply of water and provision and maintenance of sewerage facilities in Aboriginal communities?
6. How have the NSW Government's amendments to the Aboriginal Land Rights Act improved governance in Aboriginal Land Councils

Questions from Ms Pavey

7. DAA Departmental efficiency
 - a. According to your 2007-2008 annual report, 81 per cent of DAA staff earn above \$65,526 which is significantly above the average wage. Given your departments failure to narrow the gap on a number of fronts, do you think such high salaries are appropriate?
 - b. According to the 2007-2008 DAA annual report, section 4.8 Workplace Safety and Security states “workplace assessments were conducted for seven individuals by an accredited therapist and the recommendations were accepted and implemented” compared to none reported in the 2006-2007 DAA annual report. Given DAA have a total staff of 73 (from the 2007-2008 annual report), this equates to 9.6 per cent of your workforce which appears significantly high. Could you please elaborate as to the nature of the seven workplace assessments without revealing personal details of the individuals

involved, and in line with these statistics, would you agree that staff morale is a growing concern at DAA?

- c. Has staff morale decreased over the last five years?
- d. Have there been cases of bullying and intimidation at the DAA of late?
- e. What is the staff retention rate currently at the DAA and what has it been each year since 2005?

8. DAA Administration efficiency

- a. According to the 2007-2008 DAA annual report, section 4.21 Credit Card Certification states “there was one recorded breach of the department’s credit card policy”. Please explain the nature of this breach in detail.
- b. According to section 4.9 Risk Management and Insurance Activities of the 2007-2008 DAA Annual Report, it states “the DAA arranged a formal valuation of a number of Aboriginal artworks.” What is the value of the artworks as per the formal valuation and where is it housed?

9. DAA interagency efficiency

- a. Have numerous Aboriginal Tourism projects ceased or never got off the ground due to funding capacity. Are you aware of any such projects and if so, which ones?
- b. What are the reasons why the Kids Excel program in Ballina terminated?