

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008-2009
17 OCTOBER 2008, 4.15PM – 6.00PM
JUVENILE JUSTICE, VOLUNTEERING AND YOUTH

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions from Ms Cusack

Children and Young People's Centre, Southern Cross University

Question 1

Are you aware of the innovative work, and models for youth consultation that have been developed by the Children and Young People's Centre (CYPC) at Southern Cross University?

Response: Yes, I am aware of the work of the Centre for Children and Young People and their models for youth consultation. The Commissioner for Children and Young People met with the Centre's Advisory Board on 7 November 2008. I want to acknowledge Ms Cusack's role in arranging that invitation.

The Centre supports the "Young People, Big Voice" group who provide young people's perspectives to all of their research, education and advocacy work.

The Department of Community Services Regional Director, Northern is a member of the Centre's Board and recently joined the Commissioner for Children and Young People at a seminar, co facilitated by "Young People, Big Voice". on children's participation.

Question 2

Will you consider this research and possible involvement of CYPC in forums and consultations to ensure the needs and aspirations of rural and regional youth are better understood by State Government?

Response: The Centre invited the Commissioner for Children and Young People to present at one of their major regional seminars in Lismore on Thursday 6 November 2008. This seminar was an opportunity for researchers in various organisations, including the Centre and the Commission for Children and Young People, to share knowledge and ideas on how to improve children and young people's participation.

I am happy to consider the work and involvement of the Centre in understanding the needs of rural and regional young people.

I will also consider referring the matter to the Youth Advisory Council for its information in planning its next round of consultations.

Kariong

Question 3

How many juvenile offenders aged under 18 years were transferred from Kariong JCC to the adult corrective services system and which facility were they sent to? How many were transferred back to Kariong?

AG's response:

The Attorney General, the Honourable John Hatzistergos MLC, has advised that this question falls under his area of responsibility and should be directed to him, as the appropriate Minister.

Question 4

How many juvenile offenders aged over 18 years were transferred from Kariong JCC to the adult corrective services system and which facility were they sent to? How many were transferred back to Kariong?

AG's response:

In the 2007-2008 financial year, the department transferred to Department of Corrective Service's Kariong Juvenile Correctional Centre, 55 detainees under the age of 18 and 21 detainees over the age of 18. Of those 55 detainees, 16 transfers were offence-related and 39 transfers occurred as a result of the reclassification of those detainees to the highest risk classification level.

The Attorney General, the Honourable John Hatzistergos MLC, has advised that the question also falls under his area of responsibility and should be directed to him, as the appropriate Minister.

Detention Centre occupancy figures

Question 5

In response to the request for a copy of the report for detention centre occupancy figures for the night of Fri 17 October 2008, will you please expand that request to give us a better appreciation of the situation, by providing copies of the 14 reports for the 14 nights leading up to and including 17 October 2008?

Response:

The Department of Juvenile Justice's daily reports for the capacity of the system from 30 September 2008 to 17 October 2008 are attached (Attachment C). On days that Department administrative staff are unavailable to produce daily reports (for example on weekends or public holidays), the Deputy Director General (Operations) reviews the capacity data via the Department's Client Information Management System and receives verbal reports from juvenile justice centre managers.

Question 6

For each of the detention centres for the years 2006-07 and 2007-08 what was:

- a. the total number of admissions?*
- b. average length of stay?*
- c. average occupancy for the year?*

Response:

The Department of Juvenile Justice's total number of admissions, average length of stay and average occupancy for each juvenile justice centre for the years 2006-07 and 2007-08 are attached (Attachment D).

The Department of Juvenile Justice examines occupancy rates by average daily number.

Question 7

With regards to the budget for transport, how much was expended for each of 2006-07 and 2007-08 and what is the budget for 2008-09 for:

- a. air charters*
- b. other air travel*
- c. road transport*
- d. other transport (if applicable)*

Response:

a) The Department of Juvenile Justice air charter expenditure in 2006/07 = \$987,983. Expenditure in 2007/08 = \$701,477. Budget for 2008-09 = \$240,000.

b) and d) are not applicable as the department does not use any other transport method for young offender transfers.

c) Prior to 2007/08, the Department did not record costs for road transport movements separately. Road transport expenditure in 2007/08 = \$3,303,116M. Budget for 2008-09 = \$3,774,800M.

d) Refer to (b) above

Question 8

Which court houses have technology installed to allow appearances by videolink and
a. are not utilising this facility at all
b. intermittently utilise this technology?
c. utilise the technology 100%

Response:

The Attorney General, the Honourable John Hatzistergos MLC, has advised that this question falls under his area of responsibility and should be directed to him, as the appropriate Minister.

Questions from Mr Ajaka

Family Day Care

Question 9

How many background checks did the Government conduct on family day carers for each of the past five years?

Response:

The Commission's Employment Screening System database does not have a mandatory field for job titles of applicants for the Working With Children background check. Therefore the following data must be read as indicative, rather than authoritative.

2007/08: 1,313
2006/07: 1,226
2005/06: 1,180
2004/05: 172
2003/04: 944

Question 10

How many background checks were conducted on other adults living with the family day carers for each of the past five years?

Response:

As indicated in response 9, the Employment Screening System database can only provide indicative data.

2007/08: 177
2006/07: 1,107
2005/06: 1,116
2004/05: 323
2003/04: 828

Question 11

Does the Minister agree other adults living with family day carers could pose a threat to children?

Response:

Children in our community are innately vulnerable, so people throughout the community may pose a threat to them. The *Children's Services Regulation 2004* sets child protection requirements for family day care establishments. The regulation makes family day carers establish and follow policies to protect children in their care. It also makes family day carers report when any person who normally lives at their home is charged with or convicted of a notifiable offence.

Question 12

Does the Commission for Children and Young People have the legislative power to conduct checks on other adults living with the family day carers?

Response: No.