



Inquiry into Economic and Social Development in Central Western NSW
Responses to Questions Taken on Notice

Mr Simon Smith, Deputy Director General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, appeared before the Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development on 9 March 2012. He was asked the following questions by the Hon. Mick Veitch and the Hon. Steve Whan which he took on notice. The responses are due by 3 April 2012.

QUESTION 1

The Hon. Mick Veitch: You might be able to job my memory here, but is Restart NSW for local government infrastructure or State-owned infrastructure? It is going to be funded from windfall gains, but what are the actual projects that will be funded from that Program?

Mr Smith: I would have to take on notice a detailed description of the project. But that is recorded, and I will certainly provide information to the Committee.

RESPONSE:

The purpose of the Fund is to improve economic growth and productivity in the State, and for that purpose:

- to fund major infrastructure projects; and
- to fund infrastructure projects that will improve:
 - public transport
 - roads
 - infrastructure required for the economic competitiveness of the State (including the movement of freight, inter-modal facilities and access to water)
 - local infrastructure in regional areas that are affected by mining operations
 - hospital and other health facilities and services
 - workplaces for law and justice officers, teachers, nurses and other staff providing services to the public.

Sources of funds and actual projects will be determined through the Budget process.

QUESTION 2

The Hon. Steve Whan: Are you aware whether a regional impact statement was undertaken before the decision was made to close the small business offices in Tweed Heads, Coffs Harbour, Broken Hill and Goulburn, which the departments announced today? Surely your regional coordinators should have been involved in assessing the impact of such a decision?

Mr Smith: Yes. No, I am not aware of whether an impact statement has been prepared.

The Hon. Steve Whan: Was it not a pre-selection commitment by the Government to do regional impact statements on all things that affected regional communities?

Mr Smith: I am not sure about that. I would have to take that on notice.

RESPONSE:

I would refer the Hon. Steve Whan to statements made by the Hon. Duncan Gay, Minister for Roads and Ports, in the Legislative Council on 14 March 2012 in relation to NSW Trade and Investment Regional Office Closures (Hansard Page: 9502).

The Hon. MICK VEITCH: My question is directed to the Minister for Roads and Ports. In response to a question in this place yesterday in relation to the decision to close Department of Trade and Investment, Small Business and Regional Development offices in regional New South Wales the Minister stated that his answer to "whether a rural or regional impact assessment was conducted" was "Yes, there was." Will the Minister publicly release this statement as was promised by the Coalition in the lead-up to the 2011 State election?

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY: Oh, come on. Does the member mean just like some of the stuff put out by the former Government? In answer to the question whether we conducted rural and regional impact statements, I indicated that anything that went through Cabinet was subject to a rural and regional impact statement. With particular emphasis on the staff and offices in Parramatta, Broken Hill, Coffs Harbour, Goulburn and the Tweed, the Government is delivering responsible and stable government after many years of reckless financial management in New South Wales. The New South Wales Government is taking the hard decisions, the right decisions, to get the budget back on track so that we can build much-needed infrastructure and improve front-line services to our business community.

Simon A Y Smith
3 April 2012