

**General Purpose Standing Committee No 1.**

**Budget Estimates Hearing – 14 October 2008**

**Questions Taken on Notice**

**PREMIER**

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*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is the determining officer in the room?*

*Ms KRUK: No. I am happy to take the question on notice. Just tell me again, the issue is the number of media staff in the Premier's office?*

*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Yes.*

**ANSWER:** The number of media staff in the Premier's office is four, with two vacancies.

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*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: One of the things that you stated when you announced that you would be slashing the number of media staff in your office from 11 to six is that there would be more movement on the reduction of media staff across the government and that that would be announced later. What movements have been made?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I will have to get some advice on that, but we will make moves.*

**ANSWER:** Since coming to office, the number of media staff has been reduced by five.

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*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I do not understand. Where did that money come from if those staff are still employed?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: We will get the detail.*

*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: They are still working as spin doctors for your Government.*

*Ms KRUK: I am happy to provide more details on the basis of what made up the \$600,000.*

**ANSWER:**

SALARY SAVINGS	
Staff	Salary
Director, State Strategy	\$290,000
Director, Government Media	\$220,000
Liaison, ethnic media	\$84,398
Total	\$594,398

As a result of these savings, the funds will be redirected to the agencies involved in dealing with homelessness.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Just on the V8 Supercars, I want to check with you who are the sponsors for the V8 Supercar race. Are there any other sponsors on top of the current list of sponsors, which includes Big Pond, Fujitsu, News Ltd, Chrysler, Channels 7 and Dunlop?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I was aware of two or three of those, I think. If there are others –*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: That is my question to you. If you take it on notice, that is quite okay. I understand they are the sponsors that you have a list of.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I am happy to give you a list of all the sponsors and what they are putting up.*

**ANSWER:** The sponsors are Channel 7, Bigpond (Telstra), XXXX Gold, MTAA Super Fund, Armor All, XBOX 360 (Microsoft), Fuso, Jim Beam , Fujitsu, Bundaberg, Chrysler, Lawrence and Hanson, Kenworth, Dunlop, RE-CAR, Spies Hecker and Britax.

The government is not privy to the commercial arrangements between the sponsors and V8 Supercars Australia.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: I understand the New South Wales Government provides employer-sponsored child care facilities at Namboree Child Care Centre for New South Wales public sector employees in Sydney. Is that the case? Does the New South Wales Government provide access to similar employer-sponsored child care facilities anywhere else in New South Wales?*

*Ms KRUK: Yes to Namboree. I am quite happy to find out the arrangements. Having been the former head of Health I know probably most other employers have difficulty attracting staff. I think there are a number of arrangements in place where there are shared facilities with the community in relation to access to child care places. I am happy to give you more advice on that. I do not know the exact terms and conditions.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: So you are taking that on notice?*

*Ms KRUK: Yes, I will.*

**ANSWER:** Yes. In addition to Namboree, the NSW public sector has the following employer sponsored child care services:

- NSW Police Centre at Parramatta
- NSW Department of Corrective Services
- childcare centres for Area Health Service employees.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: To add to that, does provision of employer-sponsored child care facilities provide tax benefits to those New South Wales public sector employees in Sydney who use it?*

**ANSWER:** Financial modelling undertaken by NSW Treasury showed that for employees excluding those in NSW Health, there was little or no benefit for most employees. This arises because the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate are not available if childcare fees are salary sacrificed.

Whether or not individual employees receive tax benefits by using the Nanbaree childcare centre depends on their individual financial circumstances (eg annual taxable income of family, individual taxable incomes and marginal tax rates) and care requirements (eg number of children in care and hours of care required each week).

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*CHAIR: There was a reported statement in the media that implied that the official who approved the grant, I think the events coordinator, said something along the lines, "We don't need the Government's support" or "We don't need Parliament's support. I've made the decision." Would that be correct?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I would have to get some advice on that but my director general is telling me that it is an independent organisation.*

**ANSWER:** Events NSW has confirmed that it had made no such statement.

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*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: If I could just take you to another issue relating to a comment that was earlier made by Ms Kruk about a "bit of a mystery" in dealing with communications staff or officers. Are you able to indicate or provide some form of job description for each of the communications officers that are left under your control?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I do not see any reason not to.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: We will take it on notice and get it back to you in writing.*

**ANSWER:** The Ministers' Office Administration Handbook provides general advice on the role and function of Media Advisors in the following terms:

- Prepare editorial work, press releases and speeches.
- Answer media enquiries.
- Identify media opportunities and the need to respond to adverse media.

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- Control the media diary.
- Manage the advertising account.
- Liaise with other Ministers, Members of Parliament, agency staff and members of the community.

There are no formal job descriptions for these employees, just as there are no formal job descriptions for similar staff in the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

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*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Are you also able to indicate the names of each of those communications officers and staff?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I am not sure that is standard practice. Next you will want the salaries and all the rest of it. I will take that on notice. We have got to be reasonable. If it is a reasonable ask then we will try to accommodate.*

**ANSWER:** The current Media Advisors in the Premier's office are Mr Alex Cramb, Ms Korena Flanagan, Ms Sarah Conway, Ms Claire March, and there are two vacancies.

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*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: When did Mr Keneally commence his secondment to the Premier's office?*

*Ms KRUK: I would have to take that question on notice.*

*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Do you have any idea of the month, for instance?*

*Ms KRUK: From memory, it was for approximately five months. I am happy to take that question on notice. It is purely a matter of recall.*

**ANSWER:** 29 January 2008.

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*Ms KRUK: He had a performance contract, so there was a clear statement of responsibilities.*

*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Subject to issues of confidentiality, can you provide the Committee with a copy of that?*

*Ms KRUK: I will take some advice on that. I have no problems with that personally. As you know, my performance contract tends to be aired quite often.*

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**ANSWER:** Mr Keneally's performance is routinely reported in the Department's annual report.

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*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: When did his secondment end?*

*Ms KRUK: I will take both of those matters in terms of when it commenced and finished on notice.*

**ANSWER:** 12 September 2008.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Premier, Queensland, Northern Territory, Ireland, Canada and the United Kingdom all have an independent information commissioner. Your predecessors failed to overhaul the Freedom of Information Act for 19 years. Will you adapt an information commissioner and move to overhaul the laws without just relying on the Ombudsman? Your Government failed to do the review itself. Will you now move on it and do it?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I have already said I want to reform the freedom of information laws. I think there is a public expectation for it but most importantly there is a policy imperative around it. Since the New South Wales Act was passed there has been an explosion in Internet usage and electronic communications and so on. I meet with the Ombudsman this week. That will not be the sole source of advice I take on the matter. I am particularly interested in Anna Bligh's response to the report that was done in Queensland. There will be changes to freedom of information legislation. I would like to be able to give you more details today but our thinking on it is not that advanced yet except to say there will be significant reform.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Can you give us a time line? When is that going to happen? We had the promises before from Mr Carr and it just went off into the never never.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: Can I take that on notice? I do not know how comprehensive the process to date has been. I do not know when Mr Barbour's report is going to be finalised. I need to get advice on the Queensland response. Can I take it on notice?*

**ANSWER:** I advised the House on 23 October 2008 the NSW Ombudsman is conducting a review of the State's *Freedom of Information Act 1989*. I wrote to the Ombudsman recently expressing the Government's support for the review and his commitment to fundamental reform of FOI laws. I understand the Ombudsman's recommendations will be finalised early in the new year.

At my direction, the Government has already made changes to promote a pro-disclosure culture and practice in the public sector. Earlier this month, I issued memoranda requiring Ministers to ensure that their media releases are made available on the web, and directed them to ensure that their agencies take a more proactive approach to the release of public

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interest information.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Are you saying there is already a cooling-off period where Ministers want to take a job in areas where they have worked for a certain period of time?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: That is my understanding. I will get some advice.*

*Ms KRUK: I am happy to come back to you about the restrictions under the ministerial code of conduct. I wrote to all the outgoing members to run through those conditions. It is probably better that I just provide you with that.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: But could you just clarify. The Premier just said that there is a cooling-off period. The cooling-off period we understand to be a time period in which you cannot take work in the area where you have been a Minister?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I might be able to elucidate a little bit. This advice says that we amended the code in September 2006 to require former Ministers, within the first 12 months of leaving office, to obtain advice from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser before accepting any employment or engagement.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: But you understand what that means? They do not have to talk to the ethics adviser and, if they do, they do not have to take the advice. It is quite embarrassing at the moment. You cannot call that a cooling-off period.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I will have to get more advice on that. People are entitled to make a bob once they leave Parliament. The issue is making sure there is no real or perceived conflict of interest. If you have a particular example you are concerned about, I am happy to look at it, but it is an area that requires careful consideration. I am not going to rush to a policy position or a government position on it today. I am happy to take your questions on notice.*

**ANSWER:** The Ministerial Code of Conduct imposes continuing obligations on former Ministers in relation to confidentiality and post-separation employment.

The Government amended the Code in September 2006 to require former Ministers, within the first 12 months of leaving office, to obtain advice from the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser before accepting any employment or engagement.

This obligation applies where the proposed employment or engagement relates to the portfolio responsibilities held by the former Minister during the last two years of Ministerial office.

The Parliamentary Ethics Adviser is required to provide written advice to the former Minister, expressing a view on whether acceptance of the position could give rise to a reasonable concern that:

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- the former Minister's conduct while in office was influenced by the prospect of the employment or engagement or the proposal to provide services; or
- the former Minister might make improper use of confidential information to which he or she had access while in office.

The Ethics Adviser may propose conditions on the terms of acceptance of the proposed employment or engagement, for example, that the former Minister not accept the position for a specified time.

The advice of the Ethics Adviser is then forwarded to the Speaker or President of the relevant House if the former Minister accepts a position. That advice can then be tabled.

Those Ministers who recently resigned were reminded by the Director General of the Department of Premier and Cabinet of their continuing obligations under the Code.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: What is your understanding of the phenomenon of peak oil and are you aware of the considerable measures the Queensland Government has taken to deal with this problem?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: I would have to get some advice on peak oil. I am not going to pretend I have more than a rudimentary knowledge of the issues that will arise out of any answer to that question.*

**ANSWER:** I am advised that the concept of 'peak oil' refers to the point in time when the maximum rate of global production of oil from known resources is reached, following which production will begin to decline as existing oil field supplies run out and new sources become too expensive to recover.

I understand that the Queensland Government is currently developing an Oil Vulnerability Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan (estimated to be finalised mid-2009), with the aim of helping Queensland to prepare for an oil-restricted world. This is in response to the recommendations of the Queensland Oil Vulnerability Taskforce (tabled in Queensland Parliament 11 October 2007).

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: When you became Premier did you receive a briefing about the former Premier, Mr Iemma's, trip to China and the various agreements that were entered into with Chinese companies or exploring possible contracts, considering it was \$89,000, which is considerable money to spend on a short overseas trip that went for about nine days, as I recollect? Did you receive a briefing about the involvement of various Chinese companies, particularly in regard to future port development and future coalmining operations?*

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*Mr NATHAN REES: I do not recall receiving either an in-face briefing or reading a written outline of the trip. I will be honest with you; that is not to say that I did not read something but I do not recall it. The former Premier made a number of overseas trips. That is not one of them. I am happy to take your question on notice.*

**ANSWER:** Upon entering office, I did not receive briefings on the former Premier's trip to China.

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*CHAIR: I refer to Budget Paper No. 3 Volume 1 page 2-14, which refers to the Ombudsman's Office. Reference is made to the establishment of a new team on a trial basis to handle multi-agency matters that fall within two or more of the Ombudsman's business areas. Could you comment on the operation of that new team and how it will function?*

**ANSWER:** In March 2007, the Ombudsman began trialling a new cross agency team (CAT). The team was created to help the Ombudsman respond to emerging whole-of-government, multi-agency or across office issues – particularly those that affect some of the more vulnerable sections of the community. Increasingly, the work of the Ombudsman involves issues that cross more than one of his traditional jurisdictions. This partly reflects the business of government, which is increasingly focused on promoting interagency approaches to service delivery.

The CAT is led by a senior officer and brings together a project team, the Aboriginal Unit and a youth liaison officer. The CAT's main functions are to:

- direct, coordinate and manage the work of the Aboriginal Unit and youth liaison officer
- provide advice and information to staff of the Office about significant Aboriginal and youth issues and initiatives
- undertake major investigations into issues that cross a number of agencies
- develop expertise in relation to whole-of-government initiatives in relevant areas, and provide ongoing advice to the Ombudsman's business units about significant issues and progress in these areas.

An external evaluation of the CAT was conducted after 12 months. This evaluation found that the team had achieved their agreed performance indicators. The Ombudsman subsequently decided to establish CAT as a permanent business unit within his office.

In its first year of operation, CAT undertook a diverse range of projects and initiatives. These included completing a review into the supports provided to carers of Aboriginal children and starting a major investigation into the implementation of the Joint Guarantee of Service for people with mental health problems and disorders living in Aboriginal, community and public housing.

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**CHAIR:** I refer to page 2-15, which deals with the Ombudsman's Office. I have some concern about the item "Recommendations made in child protection jurisdiction that have been implemented by agency". The figure for 2005-06 is \$100, the figure for the next year is \$80, and the forecast for 2008-09 is \$80. I am concerned that it seems that only a percentage of recommendations are being implemented by the agency on such an important issue.

**Ms KRUK:** If I could take that on notice, we will discuss the matter with the Ombudsman. You should never second-guess. I know that a number of matters he is looking at would be currently within the remit of Commissioner Jim Wood's inquiry. I will take the question on notice and go back to the Ombudsman to seek verification. I know the Ombudsman prides himself on having a very high "hit rate", as he calls it, in terms of getting his recommendations implemented across government.

**ANSWER:** Please note that the figures reported are percentages (%) not dollars (\$). As the Ombudsman prepared material for the budget papers in March/ April 2008 he needed to estimate both expenditure and performance results as at 30 June 2008. Based on information available at the time of preparation of the budget papers, the Ombudsman estimated that about 80% of the recommendations made in our employment related child protection jurisdiction would have been implemented in the 12 months to 30 June 2008. The Ombudsman is happy to report that the actual implementation rate was 100%. The Ombudsman forecasts an 80% compliance rate for the 2008-2009 budget year as this figure is the general benchmark (performance indicator) that has set for all Ombudsman business units. It should be noted that all Ombudsman divisions, including the child protection division, aim to have a 100% compliance rate. However, to forecast a 100% compliance would eliminate flexibility – that is it would suggest that the Ombudsman is not willing to be persuaded by legitimate reasons for non compliance with a recommendation.

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**CHAIR:** I turn to a matter relating to the New South Wales Electoral Commission – and we are all very concerned about electoral reforms and so on. I refer to page 2-19 of Budget Paper No. 3 Volume 1, under the heading "To deliver unbiased public funding and open disclosure of campaign donations". There were four prosecutions in 2006-07 and in the 2007-08 budget there are nil and the forecast for 2008-09 is nil. Given the events in Wollongong and other places, if there were four prosecutions in 2006-07 I would have thought there would be a forecast of some quantity for 2008-09. I wonder why the forecast is nil. I assume this is advice by the Electoral Commissioner.

**Ms KRUK:** I need to take advice on that, if you do not mind. Certainly I remember some additional resources were provided to the Electoral Commissioner, responding to some changes in his responsibilities, but I need a bit more information.

**ANSWER:** There were four successful prosecutions in 2006-07 and nil in 2007-08.

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The New South Wales Electoral Commission (NSWEC) has been provided with additional funding for 2008-09 to address the recently legislated election funding and disclosure amendments. The NSWEC has developed and delivered a training programme during July this year to better inform candidates and parties of their obligations. Advertising has been placed for the transitional reporting period and will be further rolled out for the successive six monthly reporting periods. The Election Funding Authority's focus is education rather than prosecution. If we are successful at education the target for prosecution cases should be nil. The EFA will prosecute where there is sufficient evidence of breach of the Act that would lead to a prosecution.

(Note: Budget Estimates papers were produced before the change in legislation.)

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**CHAIR:** *During inquiries the Electoral Commissioner has indicated that it is very difficult for him to have successful prosecutions because he has no prosecution unit; indeed, he has no investigation unit. Does the change you are referring to include upgrading a unit within the Electoral Commissioner's Office?*

**Mr NATHAN REES:** *It would be his decision what he does with the additional funds. If my memory serves me correctly, this morning I signed off on a submission from the Electoral Commissioner to the Government for additional funds. But I will have to take on notice the detail of how they chose to spend the funds.*

**ANSWER:** Neither the NSWEC nor the EFA has prosecutors. All prosecutions are referred to the Crown Solicitor's Office.

**Ms KRUK:** *If I can give you a bit of information in a holding pattern. In 2008-09 the authority was granted capital funding of \$400,000, a one-off payment of \$624,000, and recurrent funding of \$1.3 million per annum to administer the new regime. But I will seek advice specifically in terms of how he has allocated that. All I can remember is when he got the additional moneys.*

**CHAIR:** *If you could check that there is some provision for that unit within the Electoral Commissioner's Office.*

**ANSWER:** EFA Transitional Funding Allocation - The one-off grant of \$624,000 is being expended as follows:

Communications awareness programme	\$282,000
Training programme	\$115,000
Systems support	\$ 77,000
Programme management and delivery	<u>\$150,000</u>
	<u>\$624,000</u>

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Recurrent funding of \$1,374,000:

Salaries and on-costs	\$730,500
Audit programme	\$200,000
Advertising and Training	\$200,000
Office expenses	\$143,500
Computer support	<u>\$100,000</u>
	<u>\$1,374,000</u>

A new position, Senior Principal Policy Officer (Legal), has been established to assist with compliance and liaise with the Crown Solicitor on referrals for breaches of the Act.

As well, a temporary legal position has been created to assist with compliance matters.

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*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Obviously notes are flying around. Premier, are you prepared, as the Prime Minister and former Prime Minister did, to post transcripts of press conferences on the website as well?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: Can I take that on notice?*

*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Sure.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: There are any number of people who tape every press conference. If they want to put them up, and that is over and above the other elements of media scrutiny, that is a call or them.*

**ANSWER:** Since coming to office I have instituted changes to provide more openness and transparency. As part of an ongoing commitment to improve access to information on Government activities, I have directed all Ministers to ensure that all press releases are available on departmental websites. In addition, I have asked Ministers to work with their agencies to identify and release information (which is normally requested under FOI) that can be made available at minimal cost and without compromising public interest.

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*The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: Ms Kruk, can you tell us when Mr Jack Whelan was seconded to the Premier's office?*

*Ms KRUK: I take the timing on notice. It was quite recently, in the last few weeks. Again, it was an arrangement in terms of utilising his expertise in the transport area. From my recall, it is for a time limited period. I think it is two months, but I would stand corrected on that.*

**ANSWER:** 1 October 2008.

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*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Premier, you spoke, in answer to a question from Government members, about the difficulties many people are facing in New South Wales and I wanted to return to this, considering an increasing number of people in New South Wales are going to be hit increasingly by rises in the cost of living. Three questions: Are you working with the Federal Government to align income support payments and price concessions? Do you have plans to broaden concessions on energy, water, local councils, public transport, et cetera, to include the working poor? Will you move at COAG to review concessions so the increasing number of disadvantaged people and working poor can access these benefits?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: With regard to the first and third parts of your question, we are putting together the New South Wales submission to the Don Henry tax review and those sorts of issues will be dealt with there. With regards concessions, I can get you some detail but we do have concession schemes for both water and energy, as I understand it, and some of those have only recently been increased – with regards water, which was my portfolio. If you would like more detail I will have to take it on notice.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: The particular aspect of the question that I want to explore is are those concessions being broadened so you will pick up the working poor, not just –*

*Mr NATHAN REES: Not just increase to the existing eligibility.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Yes. So it increases to a large number of people. That is one part.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: The other part of the question, which is arguably a fairer way to do it, is to reduce the number but increase the amount.*

*Ms LEE RHIANNON: Yes.*

*Mr NATHAN REES: Can I take it on notice? I will have to come back to you with the detail of those schemes.*

**ANSWER:** Both Sydney Water and Hunter Water operate a Payment Assistance Scheme (PAS), which is delivered as \$25 vouchers through welfare organisations as emergency assistance for people experiencing difficulty paying their water accounts.

The NSW Government also provides assistance to electricity consumers on low incomes, through the Energy Account Payment Assistance (EAPA), delivered as \$30 vouchers in the same way as the PAS. The Government also provides a Life Support Rebate to electricity customers who rely on certain types of life support equipment to cover the running cost of that equipment.

Both PAS and EAPA vouchers are allocated based on need, and are not limited to pensioners.

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Pensioner water rebates are provided by Sydney Water, Hunter Water and 107 local water utilities across NSW. Sydney Water recently increased its pensioner concessions in response to rising water prices. As well as pensioner concessions, Sydney Water also provides a range of other programs to assist consumers, including:

- the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) for water efficient appliances and fixtures;
- a free WaterFix service for eligible low-income, large or pensioner households;
- working with providers of the Building Maintenance Service to provide minor plumbing services to eligible households; and
- working with the St Vincent de Paul Society to provide tap turning devices to customers with disabilities.

The NSW Government provides an energy rebate of \$112 per year for pensioners. The Government also recently announced that it would provide 220,000 low income households with an energy efficiency overhaul, to help them reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and cope with rising electricity prices by reducing their overall energy use.

A variety of transport concessions and discounted travel options are offered by the NSW Government to members of the community who are studying, training or seeking paid employment, including:

- half fare concessions for full time students for travel on government rail and ferry services, and on all Sydney bus services;
- half fare concessions for apprentices and trainees (registered with the NSW Department of Education and Training under the Australian Indentured Apprentice or Australian Traineeship System Scheme) for travel between home, their workplace and their college on CityRail, Sydney and Newcastle Ferries, and on all government and private bus services in Sydney; and
- half fare concessions for jobseekers who are NSW residents, are registered as looking for work, and receive the benefits from a relevant Commonwealth program, on most urban and rural public transport services in NSW.

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***CHAIR:** I refer to page 2-29 and the section dealing with the Community Relations Commission of New South Wales. The commission's main aim is to achieve more harmonious communities. Has any policy been formulated with regard to signs in suburbs in the language of an ethnic group but not in English? Have any moves be made to assist harmony by requiring that an English version of the sign be included?*

***Mr NATHAN REES:** It has certainly not been initiated by me. I am not aware of any work that may be going on with regard to that issue. I will have to take that question on notice.*

***Mr NATHAN REES:** Do you mean beyond road signs?*

***CHAIR:** Yes.*

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*Mr NATHAN REES: I will get some advice. At the end of the day, there is argument that could be put to me. For example, if we were to seek to require small businesses to have the translations, they would have strong views about that being an impost and so on. There is a balance to be struck. I will get some advice on whether we get many representations about that.*

**ANSWER:** The NSW Government has on occasion received representations from community members concerned about shop signage in languages other than English.

The NSW Government recognises English as the common language, and it also values the rich linguistic diversity of the people of New South Wales.

These principles were introduced into legislation for the first time in Australia by the NSW Labor Government. The *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000* states that:

*“All individuals and institutions should respect and make provision for the culture, language and religion of others within an Australian legal and institutional framework where English is the common language.” (s.3(1)(b))*

A good example is the recent initiative of Ashfield Council. There are now a number of local businesses and restaurants in Ashfield that have made the effort of having dual signage. This was a positive outcome that came about by engaging business and community in addressing the issue.

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**CHAIR:** *On page 2-43, under the Premier's Department is a heading "Cash flows from operating activities – Grants and subsidies", which has increased from \$6.4 million in the 2007-08 budget to \$43 million in the 2008-09 budget. Is there a list of those grants and subsidies, or can you take that question on notice?*

**Ms KRUK:** *I am happy to provide more detail. The bulk of the increase is associated with the increased funding for Events NSW, which, from memory, is about \$22 million. It also represents almost \$3 million coming across from Health for grants and projects related to domestic violence. We are a post box for a number of activities. I will provide those details.*

**CHAIR:** *Are you saying that this may be a collation of a number of grants systems already operating; it is not new money?*

**Ms KRUK:** *It is the way that Treasury has grouped it. The bulk of it is the \$22 million for Events NSW. There is a range of other smaller grants. There was also an additional \$9 million for Aboriginal Trust Fund repayments. That may be in there as well. I will provide details about the components of that increase.*

Tuesday, 14 October 2008  
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008 – 2009  
General Purpose Standing Committee No 1.

**Questions on Notice to the Premier by Committee Members**

**ANSWER:**

Estimated 2008-09 DPC Grants and Subsidies

	<b>2008-09 (\$'000)</b>
Events NSW	30,000
Aboriginal Trust Fund Reimbursement Scheme	8,000
Premier's Miscellaneous Grants	2,081
Rural and Regional Grants	1,000
Strategic Projects	1,494
Enough is Enough	301
Office for Women	150
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>43,026</b>

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*CHAIR: We have raised this issue before, but is there any system for the allocation of those grants still being approved by the Premier?*

*Ms KRUK: The Premier has taken that on notice in terms of clarifying the events calendar. He has expressed concern about those processes. We will get back to you on that basis.*

**ANSWER:** Under section 4.1 of the Funding Agreement, Events New South Wales Pty Limited (ENSW) must submit a Business Plan for the coming year for the Premier's approval by 1 May each year.

Section 4.2 of the Funding Agreement specifies that each Business Plan must contain certain information. This includes the nature and scope of activities ENSW will undertake, key objectives and initiatives, and the key performance indicators by which performance will be judged.

In addition, ENSW must obtain the prior approval of the Premier for the provision of any event support in excess of \$1 million.

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*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Thank you for facilitating use of this time to continue our questions of the Premier. Premier, in relation to Bernie Frazer (sic.) and Ian Macfarlane, can you tell us how much those two gentlemen are being paid?*

...

*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: And are they billing on an hourly basis?*

*Ms KRUK: I will give you those details; I will get back to you on those details.*

**Tuesday, 14 October 2008**  
**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2008 - 2009**  
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**ANSWER:** Mr Macfarlane and Mr Fraser have each agreed to be remunerated at the rate of \$3,500 per day. If on any day their services are required for less than seven hours, then they will be remunerated on a pro rata basis calculated at \$500 per hour (or part of an hour). If on any day their services are required for seven or more hours, then they will be entitled to remuneration of \$3,500.

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*The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is it possible to release a copy of the contract?*

*Mr NATHAN REES: Could I take that on notice? It is an issue for them as well, so I need to consult appropriately.*

**ANSWER:** There were no contracts of engagement. Mr Fraser and Mr Macfarlane were engaged by way of an exchange of letters and agreed terms of reference.