

**Legislative Council
General Purpose Standing Committee No.2
Budget Estimates 2010-2011**

VOLUNTEERING, YOUTH

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING THE HEARING

Question asked by the Hon Ian Cohen MLC

QUESTION 1:

(Official Transcript Page 20)

The Hon. IAN COHEN: I will probably leave it at that; it is indicative. Has the Government undertaken to address issues or has it already implemented strategies to address the issues identified during the December 2009 "What's Up West?" Youth Action and Policy Association [YAPA] of New South Wales Western Sydney Youth Conference report?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: The YAPA report?

The Hon. IAN COHEN: Yes, looking at western Sydney. One of the issues identified was that many more same-sex attracted youth experience physical and verbal abuse and violence than their heterosexual peers. Has any action been taken in that regard?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I am happy to take that question on notice. I receive advice on YAPA's activities and I have been to its functions. We are developing a new youth policy framework for young people age 12 to 25 years. That has been organised and managed through Communities New South Wales. The strategy will deliver the best possible opportunities for young people for work, study, sport and recreation, and actively involve them in community life. The strategy is being developed in partnership with young people, families, youth organisations such as YAPA, service providers and a range of government agencies. The Youth Advisory Council has a lead role in consultations with young people on youth issues and will be actively involved. We are happy to provide more information.

ANSWER:

The Youth Action and Policy Association distributed the "What's Up West?" report to selected Ministers, Members of Parliament and agencies in May 2010. The Minister for Youth has referred the 31 ideas and solutions under eight topic headings listed in the report to the NSW Youth Advisory Council for comment and advice.

QUESTION 2:

(Official Transcript Page 21)

The Hon. IAN COHEN: How many young people have utilised the services provided by the South West Sydney Youth Hub? This program was touted in the 2010-14 Youth Action Plan as a learning opportunity. Has any assessment of its effectiveness been undertaken to date?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I will take that question on notice.

The Hon. IAN COHEN: If not, can you indicate on notice when the department intends to conduct such an assessment?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: We fund a range of programs. As the member is aware, agencies also receive funding from local government, the Commonwealth Government and private agencies. If you wish to ask these questions, I am happy to take them on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised this question is more appropriately dealt with by the Minister for Housing.

Question asked by the Hon Christine Robertson MLC

QUESTION 3:

(Official Transcript Page 31)

The Hon. CHRISTINE ROBERTSON Will the Minister update the Committee on the current status of the Commission for Children and Young People review, which is very important

ANSWER:

As Minister for Youth, I am responsible for administering the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998* that governs the operations of the NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

The NSW Commission for Children and Young People is an independent organisation that works to make NSW a better place for children and young people. The Commission's principal functions are to promote the safety, wellbeing and welfare of children and young people. Additionally, the Commission is charged with the responsibility to participate and monitor background checking for child-related employment.

The Commission's Act was due for review at the end of 2010, but the Government brought the review forward to help facilitate the implementation of recommendations made by the Auditor-General in his performance audit of the Working with Children Check, as well as the findings of the 2009 Ministerial Review of the Commission.

With Cabinet approval, the Legislative Review commenced in March 2010, with a call for submissions from across the NSW community. More than forty submissions were received and the independent reviewer, Mr Michael Eyers AM, undertook extensive and informative face-to-face consultations with various stakeholders including children and young people.

The review process has demonstrated that there is strong support for the Commission and its role as an advocate for children and young people, promoting and monitoring the wellbeing of children in New South Wales, developing policy advice and conducting research relating to children and young people. There is also strong support for the continuation of a Working With Children Check but recognition that changes to the existing check are needed.

The review has tested the idea of adopting an accreditation system similar to those that exist in other jurisdictions and there is broad support for this model. The review has also received a positive response to the question of whether volunteers should be more fully included in the checking process. I am now considering the review report and will provide a response shortly.

Question asked by the Hon Dr Gordon Moyes MLC

QUESTION 4

(Official Transcript Page 29)

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: I am not quite sure who answered this question; it might have been Ms Mills. I have noted in the report there were 2,000 unemployed youth to undertake prevocational training courses. In which geographic areas are those courses?

Ms MILLS: I will have to take that on notice.

ANSWER:

I am advised this question is more appropriately dealt with by the Minister for Education and Training.

QUESTION 5:

(Official Transcript Page 31)

The Hon. IAN COHEN: Minister, I refer to the South West Sydney Youth Hub issue we were discussing earlier. I am wondering how young people are provided with information about the services provided at the South West Sydney Youth Hub. I had trouble finding any web portal—and it may be just me. I am wondering how young people know about these types of services. Or are they only referred?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I am not being facetious. Could you tell me where the South West Sydney Youth Hub is located?

The Hon. IAN COHEN: I do not know where it is physically located. It is in south-west Sydney.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It is a big area. I am happy to take it on notice—

The Hon. IAN COHEN: I am interested in how young people access these types of services, or whether they are referred by an organisation.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I am happy to take the question on notice. I think in the last few months I have been to about five openings and activities run by different user groups that all call themselves "The Hub", including the most recent one, I think, at Tahmoor. I think the one at Narellan calls itself "The Hub", and there are others as well. So I am not being facetious; I just do not know which one we are talking about here.

The Hon. IAN COHEN: If you could take that on notice, that will be fine.

ANSWER:

I am advised this question is more appropriately dealt with by the Minister for Housing.