



The Hon. Andrew Stoner MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services

18th November 2011

The Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC
Chair – General Purpose Standing Committee No.3
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ms Maclaren-Jones,

Please find attached copies of answers to questions asked of me both on and without notice by General Purpose Standing Committee No.3, as part of its inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2011-2012, on Tuesday 25th October 2011.

The questions cover proposed expenditure for the Regional Infrastructure portfolio area.

Yours sincerely

The Hon. Andrew Stoner MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5

Regional Infrastructure & Services Portfolio

Tuesday 25 October 2011

Answers taken without notice during committee hearings

1.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: Yes. Deputy Premier, where was the community west of the great divide that you last visited in your capacity as Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services, and what did you do there?

Mr ANDREW STONER: I would have to look at my diary for the last time that I visited a western community, but I frequently do.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: In your capacity as Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services?

Mr ANDREW STONER: I was in Broken Hill in that capacity approximately three months ago. I have been to Tamworth, I have been to Bathurst, I have been to Dubbo and I have been to Queanbeyan. If the member wants details on all of those I am happy to take the question on notice.

ANSWER: As Leader of the Nationals I have visited many communities right across regional NSW over the past 12 months. Since becoming Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services I have also visited a number of centres west of the divide including Bathurst, Broken Hill, Orange, Queanbeyan and Tamworth.

2.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: The question stands. Have you or representatives of your department met with coal seam companies to discuss infrastructure, planning or any other matters related to the establishment of export liquefied natural gas terminals in New South Wales?

Mr ANDREW STONER: I am sure the member would appreciate that I simply do not know every occasion on which—

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: You answered no before.

Mr ANDREW STONER: If the member will let me finish my answer, I was talking about myself. No, I have not. As to staff members of my department, I am simply not aware of every meeting they have with every business. It is their role to discuss matters with various businesses to try to grow the State's economy and jobs in New South Wales. I will have to ask the department to review that and provide an answer. I will take that question on notice.

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: Have you or members of your department had discussions with coal mining companies, for example with Shenhua or any other entity, in regard to infrastructure expansion related to coal exports from Port Kembla?

Mr ANDREW STONER: I personally have not had any such meetings regarding the expansion of Port Kembla with any coalmining interests. But, again, I am not aware of every meeting had by every staff member in my department. I will have to ask the department to take that as a question on notice.

Answer: The Division of Resources and Energy has not held any meetings to specifically discuss the issues raised however it is not uncommon for companies to raise a number of issues, including provision of infrastructure, when meeting with divisional staff regarding their various titles and future operations.