



**Chris Hartcher MP**  
Minister for Resources and Energy  
Special Minister of State and  
Minister for the Central Coast

**QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE PORTFOLIO OF RESOURCES & ENERGY,  
SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE, MINISTER FOR THE CENTRAL COAST**

**12 OCTOBER 2012, 9.00am – 1.00 pm**

**Questions from Dr John Kaye MLC**

**QUESTION 1**

- a) Why is the NSW Govt forcing electricity retailers to include misleading information on its post-1 July bills in the form of the new 'red text'?
- b) Why has the Minister not included the infrastructure component of bill increases?

**ANSWER**

(a) – (b)

The carbon tax and other green schemes figure required to be printed on the front page of customer bills has been independently determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) as part of its annual review of electricity prices.

Information on bill composition is publically available on IPART's website.

## **QUESTION 2**

What is the Minister doing to address climate change and the local health and economic impacts of coal mining and the use of coal to generate electricity in NSW?

## **ANSWER**

The economic benefits of the NSW coal industry are significant.

Coal is NSW's single largest export in value terms. In 2011-12, NSW coal exports were 136.4 million tonnes worth an estimated \$16.8 billion, representing an increase of over 12 per cent on the previous year's 121.7 million tonnes.

Coal generates substantial royalties which are used to fund infrastructure and services for the benefit of all citizens of the State. In 2011-12 coal royalties were more than \$1.3 billion.

Mining brings significant economic benefits and employment opportunities to people living in regional and rural areas of the State. Direct employment in the NSW coal industry as at December 2011 was 23,588, an increase of some 24 per cent on December 2010. Many of these jobs are highly-skilled and well-paid positions.

### **QUESTION 3**

What is the Minister doing to phase out coal mining and the use of coal to generate electricity?

### **ANSWER**

See previous response.

#### QUESTION 4

- a) Please provide a breakdown of the Solar Bonus Scheme costs to date and the sources used to pay them.
- b) What is the expected total cost at the completion of the Scheme and how does this cost compare to reduced infrastructure costs (ie. peak load demand) negated with the uptake of solar throughout the State?

#### ANSWER

a) – (b)

According to 2012-13 Budget figures, the most recent estimate of the total cost of the Solar Bonus Scheme is approximately \$1.314 billion.

IPART's *Solar feed-in tariffs: Setting a fair and reasonable value for electricity generated by small-scale solar PV units in NSW* determined that the installation of solar systems has had relatively little impact on peak demand across the network.

## **QUESTION 5**

Please provide the electricity network dividends and income tax equivalent payments to the NSW government for each of the past five financial years?

## **ANSWER**

This question should be directed to the Treasurer.

## **QUESTION 6**

- (a) Has any agency of the NSW government undertaken any research into the level of subsidy required to ensure that electricity generated by native forest wood biomass would be economic? Please provide details.
- (b) If not, what steps have you as Energy Minister taken to have such research undertaken?

## **ANSWER**

No recent direct study has taken place due to the existing regulatory regime at both State and Federal levels that constrain the use of wood residues from native forests.

## **QUESTION 7**

- (a) Has any agency of the NSW government undertaken any research into the quantity of greenhouse gases emitted per unit of electricity generated from native forest wood biomass (including GHG emissions from the logging itself)? Please provide details.
  
- (b) If not, what steps have you as Energy Minister taken to have such research undertaken?

## **ANSWER**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Primary Industries.

## QUESTION 8

- a) What is the current status of the NSW government's review into TransGrid's proposed Stroud to Lansdowne transmission line?
- b) If the review has been completed, what were the review's findings?
- c) If the review has not been completed, when will it be released?
- d) Does the NSW government share the view of TransGrid itself that:
  - i) The Lismore to Dumaresq transmission line is not required until at least 2016 and maybe not until the 2020s?
  - ii) The Stroud to Taree transmission line is not required until the early 2020s?
  - iii) If so, what steps has the Minister taken to have these two projects taken off the table and to work with the local communities affected to drive investment in strategic demand management and local renewable energy supply alternatives?

## ANSWER

The NSW Government announced an independent review into the future electricity and energy needs for the Mid North Coast on 2 November 2012.

A draft report will be made available for community submissions prior to being finalised in February next year.

*End of questions from Dr. John Kaye MLC*



## **Questions from the Hon Steve Whan MLC**

### **QUESTION - Land Use Strategic Planning**

Do you think the Minerals Council has got it wrong when it says "This added layer of assessment has the potential to cause delays in project development, making it more difficult for NSW to attract investment. The flow-on effect could impact the state economy including through lost jobs and royalties"?

### **ANSWER**

The NSW Government will continue working with all stakeholders in the application of the Strategic Regional Land Use Policy.

## **QUESTION 2 - CSG Investment**

At the APPEA conference in Brisbane this week you recommended that companies should be looking at undertaking initiatives to invest in CSG in NSW, what do you believe that should be looking at doing?

## **ANSWER**

The content of my speech has been widely reported and is consistent with statements I have made on the development of a domestic industry in Parliament.

### **QUESTION 3 - Wallarah 2 Coal Project**

Have you or any members of your office met with the proponents of Wallarah 2 since September last year?

### **ANSWER**

I meet with a number of stakeholders in my capacity as Minister for Resources and Energy.

#### **QUESTION 4 - Wallarah 2 Coal Project**

Are you aware if the proponents have re-submitted a Development Application for this project?

#### **ANSWER**

Questions relating to this proposal should be directed to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

**QUESTION 5 - Wallarah 2 Coal Project**

Do you believe that this is a State Significant Development?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 6 - Revenue**

- (a) What impact has the downturn in international markets for minerals had on employment in the NSW mining sector?
- (b) Has your office or the Department done any analysis on impact in regional NSW?

## **ANSWER**

Any impact has been minimal.

An additional 3134 direct jobs were created in the NSW coal industry between July 2011 and July 2012.

## **QUESTION 7 - Resources for Regions**

Has your office or the department identified any projects that it wishes to be delivered through the royalties for regions program?

## **ANSWER**

This question should be directed to the Treasurer.

### **QUESTION 8 - Resources for Regions**

Do you believe that Resources for Regions is an adequate funding model for regional projects?

### **ANSWER**

This question should be directed to the Treasurer.



### **QUESTION 9 - Resources for Regions**

Do you believe that enough is currently being spent on regional projects in Mining affected towns?

### **ANSWER**

This question should be directed to the Treasurer.

### **QUESTION 10 - Resources for Regions**

Have regional councils raised their concerns with your office about the level of funding currently being allocated to royalties for regions?

### **ANSWER**

This question should be directed to the Treasurer.

## **QUESTION 11 – CENTRAL COAST**

As Minister for The Central Coast do you have:

(a) An office (apart from your electorate office) in The Central Coast?

- (i) If so where the office is located?
- (ii) Which person or business owns the premises?
- (iii) What is the floor space?
- (iv) What is the annual rent?
- (v) What is the staffing of the office?
- (vi) And how frequently, if ever, do you work out of that office?

(b) Dedicated staff to deal with this portfolio responsibility?

- (i) If so, how many staff are there?
- (ii) What is their annual remuneration?
- (iii) In which office are they located?

## **ANSWER**

(a) – (b) No.

## **QUESTION 12 – CENTRAL COAST**

How many times in the last twelve months have you visited the Central Coast in your capacity as Minister for the Central Coast?

## **ANSWER**

Unlike former Labor Ministers for the Central Coast - including John Robertson, Ian Macdonald, Nathan Rees and John Hatzistergos - I live in the Central Coast and have done so for the past 42 years.

### **QUESTION 13 – CENTRAL COAST**

With whom did you meet and what was the purpose of the meetings?

### **ANSWER**

See previous response.

#### **QUESTION 14 – CENTRAL COAST**

- (a) Were you accompanied by any family members, staff or friends during those visits?
- (i) If so who accompanied you on each trip and what was the cost to the taxpayer of this?

#### **ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 15 – CENTRAL COAST**

- (a) How many representations have you made to other Ministers in your capacity as the Minister for The Central Coast? and
- (b) What was the nature of those representations?

## **ANSWER**

(a) – (b)

As Minister for the Central Coast I make representations to other Ministers as appropriate.

## **QUESTION 16**

How many blackberries are assigned to your staff?

## **ANSWER**

In 2011/12, 179 blackberries and iPhones were assigned to the Premier's and Ministers' offices.



## QUESTION 17

For each phone, how much was each bill in the 2011/12 financial year?

## ANSWER

The total expenditure on mobile phones by the Premier's office and Ministers' offices as represented in the Department's financial system is set out in the table below.

Please note that this expenditure may include mobile phone purchase costs as the financial system does not separate the purchase costs and mobile usage charges.

	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
<b>Premier's Office</b>	\$103,152	\$76,457	\$68,475	\$27,570
<b>Ministers' Offices</b>	\$475,539	\$358,396	\$120,285	\$169,655
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$578,691	\$434,854	\$188,761	\$197,226

Note: 2010-11 figures are a combination of 9 months of Keneally Government and 3 months of O'Farrell Government.

## **QUESTION 18**

How many have phones have been lost in your office?

## **ANSWER**

0

**QUESTION 19**

What is the cost of replacing those phones?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 20**

How many iPads does DPC assign to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?

## **ANSWER**

For Premier's office and Ministers' offices the number of iPads issued was as follows:

	<b>2011/12</b>
Premier	10
Ministers	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>53</b>

## **QUESTION 21**

How many iPads have you purchased for your office and to whom have they been issued?

## **ANSWER**

iPads are supplied by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and have not been purchased by Ministers' offices.

## **QUESTION 22**

How many iPhones does DPC assign to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?

## **ANSWER**

In 2011/12, 179 blackberries and iPhones were assigned to the Premier's and Ministers' offices.

### **QUESTION 23**

How many iPhones have you purchased for your office and to whom have they been issued?

### **ANSWER**

0

**QUESTION 24**

How many iPhones have been lost in your office?

**ANSWER**

0



## **QUESTION 25**

How many iPads have been lost in your office?

## **ANSWER**

0

**QUESTION 26**

What is the cost of replacing those phones or iPads?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 27**

How many media or public relations advisers are employed for each of your portfolio agencies?

## **ANSWER**

I refer you to my answer to this identical question asked by the Hon Amanda Fazio last year, and provided to the Committee.

## **QUESTION 28**

What is the forecast for 2012-13 for the number of media or public relations advisers to be employed and their total cost?

## **ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 29**

- (a) Have any of your overseas trips in the past year been paid for in part or in full by using public money?
- (b) If so, did any of your relatives or friends accompany you on these trips?

## **ANSWER**

I refer you to my answer to this identical question asked by the Hon Amanda Fazio last year, and provided to the Committee.

### **QUESTION 30**

What is the annual remuneration package for your chief of staff?

### **ANSWER**

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website.

### **QUESTION 31**

What is the annual remuneration package for your head media advisor?

### **ANSWER**

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website.

## **QUESTION 32**

What is the annual remuneration package for each of your staff?

## **ANSWER**

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website.



### **QUESTION 33**

What is the estimated expenditure for your office budget in 2012-13?

### **ANSWER**

The total budget allocation for the Premier's and Ministers' offices in 2012-13 is \$40,103,650, with \$5,744,883 allocated to the Premier's office and \$34,358,767 to the Ministers' offices.

### **QUESTION 34**

- (a) Have any office renovations or fit outs been undertaken in your ministerial office since April, 2011?
- (b) If so, could you give details of contracted costs?

### **ANSWER**

Information on the assets balances for leasehold improvements are available in the Department of Premier and Cabinet Annual Report.

### QUESTION 35

What is your Ministerial office budget for 2012/13?

### ANSWER

The budget allocations for the Premier's office and Ministers' offices are as follows.

	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>
<b>Premier</b>	\$7,002,312	\$8,500,000	\$9,075,038	\$5,309,465	\$5,744,83
<b>Ministers</b>	\$39,673,567	\$40,334,000	\$40,978,962	\$31,516,017	\$34,358,7 67
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$46,675,879	\$48,834,000	\$50,054,000	\$36,825,482	\$40,103,6 05

Note: 2010-11 figures are a combination of 9 months of Keneally Government and 3 months of O'Farrell Government.

### **QUESTION 36**

How many political advisors are in your office?

### **ANSWER**

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website.

### **QUESTION 37**

How many administration staff?

### **ANSWER**

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet website.

**QUESTION 38**

How many Department Liaison Officers are assigned to your office?

**ANSWER**

I refer you to my response provided to your Question on Notice # 2264.

**QUESTION 39**

How many staff in the Department are assigned to Ministerial support duties?

**ANSWER**

Agency staff numbers are in accordance with Government guidelines.

#### **QUESTION 40**

- (a) Are any contractors or consultants working in your ministerial office?
- (b) If so, in what capacities?

#### **ANSWER**

0



**QUESTION 41**

How much did your Ministerial office spend on contractors or consultants?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

## QUESTION 42

How much did your Ministerial office spend on taxi fares, including Cabcharge in the 2011/12 financial year?

## ANSWER

Taxi expenditure by the Premier's office and Ministers' offices as represented in the Department's financial system is represented in the table below.

	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>
<b>Premier</b>	\$26,418	\$32,525	\$27,600	\$15,485
<b>Ministers</b>	\$133,697	\$143,251	\$32,678	\$80,609
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$160,155	\$175,776	\$60,277	\$96,094

Note: 2010-11 figures are a combination of 9 months of Keneally Government and 3 months of O'Farrell Government.

**QUESTION 43**

Are any of your portfolio agencies undergoing a restructure?

**ANSWER**

No.

**QUESTION 44**

How many jobs are expected to be cut as a result of that restructure?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 45**

How many people are expected to have their wages cut as a result of that restructure?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 46**

How many voluntary redundancies were offered in your Departments since April 2011?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 47**

How many voluntary redundancies were accepted from employees in your Departments since April 2011?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 48**

How many voluntary redundancies are expected to be offered in 2012/13?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.



**QUESTION 49**

How much did your Department(s) spend on catering in 2011/12?

**ANSWER**

All agency costs are in accordance with Government guidelines.

**QUESTION 50**

How much did your Department(s) spend on stationary in 2011/12?

**ANSWER**

All agency costs are in accordance with Government guidelines.

**QUESTION 51**

What is your Department's catering budget?

**ANSWER**

The Department does not allocate a specific budget for catering.

**QUESTION 52**

What is your Department's stationary budget?

**ANSWER**

The Department does not allocate a specific budget for stationary.

**QUESTION 53**

- (a) Since April 2011 have any of the agencies in your Department(s) changed their branding?
- (b) If so, how much was spent on rebranding the agency?

**ANSWER**

No.

**QUESTION 54**

How long is the average turnaround for responding to correspondence in your Department(s)?

**ANSWER**

I refer you to my answer to this identical question asked by the Hon Amanda Fazio last year, and provided to the Committee.

**QUESTION 55**

How many pieces of correspondence have been outstanding for more than 60 days?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 56**

In 2011/12 how many invoices has your Department(s) failed to pay a supplier or contractor for more than 30 days?

**ANSWER**

All payments are made in accordance with Government guidelines.



## **QUESTION 57**

As a result of late payment, how much penalty interest has been paid to contractors since 1 January 2011?

## **ANSWER**

All payments are made in accordance with Government guidelines.

**QUESTION 58**

How many invoices have been outstanding for longer than 60 days?

**ANSWER**

All payments are made in accordance with Government guidelines.

## QUESTION 59

(a) Does your department provide recurrent grant funds to non-government organisations?

(b) If yes:

- i. What are the names of all organisations in receipt of funding?
- ii. What is the total amount of funding received by each organisation including goods and services tax?
- iii. On what date was the funding advanced?
- iv. What was the purpose for each grant or funding advance?
- v. Was any funding withheld or returned?
- vi. If so, what were the reasons for withholding or requiring the funding to be returned?
- vii. What is the indexation rate applied to non-recurrent grant funds in 2011/2012?
- viii. What are the details of any costs involved in each study, audit, taskforce or review?

## ANSWER

NSW Government agencies provide grants to local government councils and a range of non-government, non-profit organisations for the purpose of providing a service to the community or to undertake a project of benefit to the community.

Grants administration in New South Wales occurs within the legal and regulatory framework under which the NSW Government operates.

All Government Departments and authorities are required to publish details of grants made to non-government organisations in their annual report. The requirements are set out in Premier's Memorandum 91-34.

This policy has not changed since the change of Government.

**QUESTION 60**

How many contractors has your Department(s) retained since 1 July 2012 and at what cost?

**ANSWER**

All appointments have been made in accordance with Government guidelines.

## **QUESTION 61**

What is the current level of Aboriginal employment within your Department(s)?

## **ANSWER**

2009, 2010 and 2011 data can be found as published in the annual Workforce Profile Snapshot Reports.

2012 data is due to be released when the State of the Public Sector Report is released, late 2012.

Additionally, NSW Treasury Circular 11/03 prescribes the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Disclosure Requirements, requiring that NSW public sector agencies include EEO data in their annual reports.

**QUESTION 62**

How has that changed since 1 July 2011?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 63**

Since 1 July 2011, how much has been spent on charter air flights by your Department(s)?

**ANSWER**

All agency costs are in accordance with Government guidelines.

## **QUESTION 64**

- (a) In relation to feasibility studies, audits, taskforces and reviews: Is your department currently undertaking any feasibility studies, audits, taskforces or reviews?
- (b) If so -
- i) What are the terms of reference or details of each study, audit, taskforce or review?
  - ii) Who is conducting the study, audit, taskforce or review?
  - iii) Was each study, audit, taskforce or review was publically advertised seeking expression of interest or competitive tenders?
  - iv) Is there a contract in place detailing terms of engagement for the study, audit, taskforce or review?
  - v) What is the timeline of each study, audit, taskforce or review?
  - vi) What are the details of any costs involved in each study, audit, taskforce or review?

## **ANSWER**

As with the former Government, the Government undertakes feasibility studies, audits, taskforces and reviews to inform government decision making. A number of feasibility studies, audits, taskforces and reviews are currently being undertaken across the NSW Government.



**QUESTION 65**

Have any agencies within your Department(s) engaged consultants in the 2011/12 financial year?

**ANSWER**

This information will be available in the NSW Department of Trade and Investment Annual Report 2011-12.

**QUESTION 66**

If yes, which companies were engaged for consultancy services in the 2011/12 financial year?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 67**

For what purpose has your Department engaged consultants?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 68**

How much have your agencies spent on consultants in the 2011/12 financial year?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

**QUESTION 69**

What is your Department(s) budget for consultants in the 2012/13 financial year?

**ANSWER**

All agency costs are in accordance with Government guidelines.

## **QUESTION 70**

Have any agencies within your Departments sponsored any organisations or events in the 2011/12 financial year?

## **ANSWER**

NSW Government agencies provide grants to local government councils and a range of non-government, non-profit organisations for the purpose of providing a service to the community or to undertake a project of benefit to the community.

Grants administration in New South Wales occurs within the legal and regulatory framework under which the NSW Government operates.

All Government Departments and authorities are required to publish details of grants made to non-government organisations in their annual report. The requirements are set out in Premier's Memorandum 91-34.

This policy has not changed since the change of Government.

**QUESTION 71**

If yes, which organisations and events were sponsored in the 2011/12 financial year?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 72**

How much did your agencies within your Departments spend on sponsoring organisations and events in the 2011/12 financial year?

## **ANSWER**

See previous response.



**QUESTION 73**

What is your Department(s) budget for sponsorship in the 2012/13 financial year?

**ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 74**

Has the Minister been provided with Speech, Voice or Media Training since becoming Minister? If so, then;

- a) Who conducted the training?
- b) When was it conducted?
- c) Where was it conducted what were the costs of the training?
- d) Who paid for the training?

## **ANSWER**

No.

## **QUESTION 75**

Can you please list all travel related costs for your Parliamentary Secretary incurred in their capacity as Parliamentary Secretary since 1 July 2011

- a) kilometres travelled
- b) accommodation,
- c) air fares
- d) meals/entertaining?

## **ANSWER**

(a) – (d) Travel-related costs of my Parliamentary Secretary total \$1,245.47.

## **QUESTION 76**

Can you please provide details of the following activities undertaken by your Parliamentary Secretary since 1 July 2011;

- a) meetings attended in their capacity as Parliamentary Secretary?
- b) functions attended in their capacity as Parliamentary Secretary?

## **ANSWER**

Parliamentary Secretaries provide assistance to the Premier and other Ministers, including signing correspondence; receiving deputations; officiating at functions; and assisting the Premier and Ministers in some of their duties. The duties to be performed are those allocated by the Minister, or which have the Minister's endorsement.

## **QUESTION 77**

How often do you meet with your Parliamentary Secretary?

- a) Are these meetings documented?
- b) Who attends these meetings?

## **ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 78**

Who provides instructions and direction to your Parliamentary Secretary, you or your Chief of Staff?

## **ANSWER**

See previous response.

## **QUESTION 79**

Has the Parliamentary Secretary been provided with Speech, Voice or Media Training since becoming Parliamentary Secretary? If so, then;

- a) Who conducted the training?
- b) When was it conducted?
- c) Where was it conducted what were the costs of the training?
- d) Who paid for the training?

## **ANSWER**

The Division of Resources and Energy has not incurred any expense for this purpose.

*End of questions from the Hon. Steve Whan MLC*