

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2014-2015

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

FAIR TRADING

- 1. Can the Minister please provide information on any efforts made to liaise with his federal colleagues to address the issue of palm oil labelling?**

Ministerial liaison on the issue of palm oil (food) labelling occurred through the Legislative and Governance Forum on Consumer Affairs (CAF) meeting in Sydney on 7 December 2012. Ministers noted a verbal update on the issue from Tasmania which observed that two recent Federal Parliamentary inquiries had recommended against legislating mandatory labelling requirements for palm oil. The issue of palm oil has not been formally discussed in the CAF forum since that time.

- 2. Is the Minister planning to conduct any consultation as part of the development of a draft information standard for the labelling of free-range eggs under the Australian Consumer Law?**

(a) If not, why not?

(b) If so please list the individuals and bodies involved, including

i. Individuals

ii. Corporate bodies

iii. Associations

iv. Non-government bodies

v. Other government agencies

(c) If so, will the consultation be public in nature?

There will be public consultation as part of the development of a draft information standard for the labelling of free-range eggs. A number of corporate bodies, associations, and non-government bodies, representing both the producers and consumers have been identified or have come forward to assist in the consultation. Other government agencies have also expressed their willingness to assist New South Wales.

- 3. Can the Minister please specify the egg producers he intends to visit in the process of developing the draft information standard, as stated in an answer to a question without notice on 17 June 2014?**

See answer 2.

- 4. Does the Minister have any intention of spearheading efforts to develop information standards under the Australian Consumer Law for the labelling of free-range meat products, including chicken, pig, turkey and duck products?**

Not at this time.

- 5. What changes to tenancy law can be made to assist tenants to undertake environmental initiatives, including installing solar technologies or plant vegetable plots, if and when the landlord does not wish to support such changes to the property?**

This issue may be considered during the statutory review of the *Residential Tenancies Act 2010*, scheduled to commence in mid-2015.

- 6. It has been widely reported that Fair Trading Commissioner Rod Stowe was vacant from his position between 4-10 July 2014. What events transpired which led to Commissioner Stowe being vacant from his office during this period?**

I refer to my answer given in Budget estimates.

- 7. On which date did Mr Stowe commence his leave?**

I refer to my answer given in Budget estimates.

- 8. Did you, or any individual, whether employee of Fair Trading, the Minister for Fair Trading's Office, the Minister for Finance and Services' Office, the Minister for Finance and Services, or any employee of the Office of Finance and Service, direct Mr Stowe to undertake his period of leave between 4-10 July 2014?**

I refer to my answer given in Budget estimates.

- 9. Were you or your office in contact with Fair Trading Commissioner Rod Stowe between 5 July – 10 July 2014?**

- (a) How many times and on which dates?
(b) What was the nature of each communication?

I refer to my answer given in Budget estimates.

- 10. Was the Acting Executive Director of the Office of Finance and Services delegated to deal with Fair Trading media inquiries at any time between 4-10 July 2014?**

- (a) Who gave the delegation and on which date?

No.

- (a) Not applicable

- 11. What reviews into the operation of the Commissioner or his office have been undertaken in the last year by you, a former Minister for Fair Trading, or any individual, either employee of Fair Trading, Office of Finance and Services, or the Minister's office?**

- (a) Who was directed to undertake each review?
(b) Who gave each direction?
(c) When did each review occur?
(d) What was the outcome of each review and will each outcome be made public?
i. If not, then why not?
(e) What were the terms of reference for each review?

Since my appointment as Minister for Fair Trading, no reviews have been undertaken into the Commissioner or his office.

12. What role does Assistant Commissioner Robert Vellar have within the internal Audit Office in the department?

None.

13. Has Assistant Commissioner Robert Vellar ever undertaken any review into the operations of Commissioner Rod Stowe?

- (a) Who gave the direction to undertake each review?**
- (b) When did each review occur?**
- (c) What was the outcome of each review and will each outcome be made public?**
 - i. If not, then why not?**
- (d) What were the terms of reference for each review?**

See question 11.

14. How many over the counter Fair Trading related consumer inquiries have been made at each Service NSW location in NSW?

Service NSW has expanded access to services for Fair Trading customers. In 2013-14, Service NSW served approximately 74,431 customers with Fair Trading enquiries and transactions through the 18 service centre outlets and 20,781 calls to the 24/7 phone service in addition to emails received through the digital portal.

The average wait time across all customer interactions in the Service NSW centre outlets is below seven minutes. The average wait time for phone service is under a minute. Service NSW has surveyed approximately 4,421 Service Centre Fair Trading customers with mean satisfaction scores of 4.89 (99% either satisfied or very satisfied). Satisfaction scores at the Contact Centre is 4.87 out of 5.

15. Of the 22,014 consumer counter related inquiries made in 2013-14, can the Minister provide a breakdown of where and how each inquiry was received?

The 22,014 consumer counter enquiries recorded at NSW Fair Trading Centres in 2013-2014 were lodged at the following locations:

Albury	1,470
Armidale	1,573
Bathurst	2,757
Broken Hill	327
Coffs Harbour	4,018
Dubbo	313
Gosford	1,348
Goulburn	326
Grafton	1,918
Hurstville	863
Lismore	385
Liverpool	2,108
Newcastle	586
Orange	437
Parramatta	774
Penrith	524
Port Macquarie	988
Queanbeyan	28
Strata Mediation Services	345

Sydney	400
Tamworth	153
Tweed Heads	136
Wagga Wagga	186
Wollongong	51
TOTAL	22,014

16. Can the Minister provide statistics relating to the average time a consumer has to wait to resolve a Fair Trading related counter inquiry at each Service NSW centre in 2013-14?

Service NSW falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Finance and Services. This question should be directed to the Hon Dominic Perrottet MP as Minister for Finance and Services.

17. Can the Minister provide statistics relating to the average time a consumer has had to wait to resolve a Fair Trading related counter inquiry at each Fair Trading branch or office in 2013-14?

Equipment to record waiting times was installed at four Fair Trading Centres, up to 31 January 2014. Waiting times were recorded as follows:

Location	Dates recorded	Average wait time (mm:ss)
Parramatta	1 July 2013 to 30 September 2013	5:31
Hurstville	1 July 2013 to 31 January 2014	8:27
Penrith	1 July 2013 to 31 January 2014	5:51
Liverpool	1 July 2013 to 31 January 2014	4:48

18. How many compliance checks or investigations for unsafe USB chargers has Fair Trading undertaken since the death of Ms Sheryl Aldeguer?

(a) Does Fair Trading have a record of which locations have been investigated?

On 26 June 2014, the Commissioner for NSW Fair Trading issued a public warning to consumers about the potentially fatal risk of using non-compliant USB style chargers, following the death of Ms Sheryl Aldeguer in which a USB charger was potentially implicated.

Since 27 June 2014, Fair Trading inspectors have inspected shops and markets suspected of selling unapproved USB devices in more than 140 suburbs and towns in New South Wales.

As at 22 August 2014, a total of 2,124 articles had been inspected at the premises of 1,166 individual traders. 160 articles were found to be non-compliant and were removed from sale.

As a result of the inspections, Fair Trading has issued 17 penalty infringement notices. Two matters are the subject of ongoing investigation.

19. On what basis did Fair Trading choose the locations to investigate or undertake these compliance measures?

- (a) Who gives the direction to Fair Trading to undertake these kinds of compliance measures?**

The planning and execution of operations are approved by the managers and NSW Fair Trading executive responsible for the division undertaking the operation. The operation to inspect premises for unsafe USB chargers was planned and approved by the Energy and Utilities Unit of Fair Trading's Home Building Service.

The inspection locations were selected based on information and intelligence gathered by Fair Trading, as well as knowledge and experience of traders and locations known or likely to be selling electrical items.

20. Has Fair Trading conducted compliance checks on merchants/traders who are not known to stock an uncompliant product?

- (a) If yes, on how many occasions?**

Yes, compliance checks on traders of electrical items may be undertaken on a random audit or sampling basis as part of general marketplace surveillance, intelligence-gathering and deterrence.

In the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, electrical safety investigators visited 744 traders in total as part of general inspections, the majority of which were not the subject of specific information or intelligence related to non-compliance at the time of inspection.

21. How many qualified electricians were employed by Fair Trading to investigate or inspect complaints regarding electrical goods (including solar panels and electrical wiring) in the following years:

- (a) 2011;**
(b) 2012;
(c) 2013;
(d) 2014?

NSW Fair Trading employed the following number of qualified electricians and electrical engineers in the respective years:

- a) 2011: 9
b) 2012: 9
c) 2013: 9
d) 2014: 8

22. How many qualified builders were employed by Fair Trading to investigate or inspect home building complaints in the following years:

- (a) 2011;**
(b) 2012;
(c) 2013;
(d) 2014?

NSW Fair Trading employed the following number of qualified building inspectors in the respective years:

- a) 2011: 25
b) 2012: 25
c) 2013: 24
d) 2014: 24

- 23. How many qualified plumbers were employed by Fair Trading to investigate or inspect complaints regarding plumbing and draining in the following years:**
- (a) 2011;**
 - (b) 2012;**
 - (c) 2013;**
 - (d) 2014?**

NSW Fair Trading employed the following number of qualified plumbing inspectors in the respective years:

- a) 2011: 17
- b) 2012: 20
- c) 2013: 19
- d) 2014: 19

- 24. How many certified body repair technicians were employed by Fair Trading to investigate or inspect complaints regarding motor vehicle repairs in the following years:**
- (a) 2011;**
 - (b) 2012;**
 - (c) 2013;**
 - (d) 2014?**

NSW Fair Trading has not employed certified body repair technicians in the years 2011-2014.

- 25. In response to Question on Notice 5186, you described Fair Trading as “relentless in its pursuit to protect consumers from unscrupulous online operators”. If this is the case, why is it that only 4 prosecutions, fines or investigations occurred (QON 5642) from 6668 complaints for which the method of purchase was recorded as either an internet sale or online auction in 2013?**
- (a) Minister, do you believe that 4 prosecutions from 6668 complaints is a reasonable number?**

I refer to my answer given during question time on 10 September 2014 in response to a question asked by the Hon Ernest Wong MLC.

- 26. In 2014, how many complaints have been received by NSW Fair Trading regarding online traders, including where the method of purchase includes online auctions?**

A search of NSW Fair Trading’s complaint database for the period 1 January 2014 to 29 August 2014 identified 3,986 complaints where the method of purchase was recorded as online, including online auctions.

- 27. How many prosecutions, fines or investigations have resulted from the total number of online related complaints in 2014?**
- (a) What was the nature of each prosecution, fine or investigation?**

Fair Trading has conducted 36 investigations following complaints about online trading received in 2014. Those investigations concerned:

- alleged unsafe/unapproved electrical items
- alleged unlicensed residential building work
- partial or non-supply of goods
- refunds
- unsatisfactory or defective goods or services

- delays
- misleading and/or deceptive conduct
- miscellaneous consumer issues such as fees and charges and alleged misleading advertising

28. Of the total number of online related complaints so far received in 2014, how many of those complaints currently remain unresolved for the consumer?

(a) How many of these complaints related to unsafe or faulty electrical or electronic goods?

193 complaints are subject to ongoing intervention by NSW Fair Trading.

(a) 6

29. Of the total number of online related complaints received in 2013, how many of those complaints currently remain unresolved for the consumer?

All online related complaints received in 2013 are finalised.

30. What measures has Fair Trading implemented in 2014 to cease the proliferation of unsafe or faulty electrical goods on the online marketplace?

There is no proliferation.

31. Can the Minister provide a full breakdown of the total number of online related complaints in 2014 relating to the following areas

- (a) trader conduct;**
- (b) contract agreements and documentation;**
- (c) misrepresentation;**
- (d) pricing and charges;**
- (e) quality;**
- (f) rights and responsibilities;**
- (g) safety and standards;**
- (h) scams;**
- (i) supply.**

A full breakdown of the categories of online complaints received in 2014 is as follows:

Trader conduct	364
Contract agreements and documentation	9
Misrepresentation	214
Pricing and charges	184
Quality	828
Rights and responsibilities	1,072
Safety and standards	21
Scams	7
Supply	1,280
TOTAL:	3,979

An additional seven complaints did not fit within the categories above and were noted for administrative purposes only.

32. According to the 2014-15 budget forecast, there are 779 FTE employees employed by Fair Trading. This is a decrease of 10 employees from the 2013-14 revised forecast.

(a) Specifically within which sections of the Department will these job losses occur and how will they impact operations?

It is expected the opening of Service NSW centres in Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Hurstville, Bathurst and Broken Hill will result in a decrease of 10 Full-Time Equivalent employees.

There will be no impact on operations.

33. Minister, in 2011-12 there were 1,080 FTE staff employed by Fair Trading. This is a decrease of 301 FTE staff in the last three years. In the same period, almost \$20 million in funding has been slashed from the Fair Trading budget. In light of the rise in the total number of consumer complaints from 44,102 in 2012/13 to 45,108 in 2013/14, and the record numbers of online consumer complaints, how is Fair Trading meant to keep up with significantly fewer staff and resources?

I refer to my answers given to questions 5822 and 5824 asked on 19 June 2014 by Ms Tania Mihailuk MP.

34. Has there been a decrease in the number of contract and permanent Fair Trading employees based in Regional NSW since the implementation of Service NSW and closure of Fair Trading specific branches?

(a) What has been the decrease?

No.

(a) Not applicable

35. How many contract and permanent Fair Trading employees are based in regional NSW in 2014?

(a) How many contract and permanent Fair Trading employees were based in regional NSW in each of the years 2011-2013?

The number of contract and permanent NSW Fair Trading Full Time Equivalent employees based in regional NSW for each of the last four years is:

Date	Number of Full Time Equivalent employees
1 July 2014	130.6
1 July 2013	155.07
1 July 2012	140.28
1 July 2011	158.03

However, the launch of Fair Trading's Renting Services relocation from Sydney to Grafton on 31 July 2014 saw the addition of 25 permanent employees and five contractors based in regional NSW.

- 36. How will the \$19.2 million dollar cut to the 2014-15 Fair Trading budget affected the following functions of the Department:**
- (a) Consumer complaint handling;**
 - (b) Public warnings compliance and enforcement;**
 - (c) Enforcement action compliance and enforcement;**
 - (d) Home Building operations, compliance and enforcement;**
 - (e) Plumbing Inspection and Assurance Services;**
 - (f) Energy and utilities electrical and gas;**
 - (g) Civil Litigation;**
 - (h) Consumer service delivery;**
 - (i) Dispute resolution;**
 - (j) Compliance and enforcement actions in the area of:**
 - i. Prosecutions;**
 - ii. Inspections;**
 - iii. Investigations;**
 - iv. Penalty notices issued?**

Refer to question 33.

- 37. What impact has the \$19.2 million cut to the 2014-15 Fair Trading budget had on the forecasted reduction in the number of complaints finalised within 30 days from 90% to 85%?**

NSW Fair Trading's 30-day Guarantee of Service for the finalisation of complaints remains at 85 percent.

- 38. Can the Minister provide a full breakdown on the nature in the decrease of "other operating expenses" from \$35,452,000 (2013-14 revised amount) to \$22,414,000 (2014-15 budget forecast)?**

See 2013-14 and 2014-15 Budget Papers.

- 39. Can the Minister provide a full breakdown on the nature in the increase of "other expenses" from \$3,334,000 (2013-14 revised amount) to \$6,384,000 (2014-15 budget forecast)?**

See question 38.

- 40. What impact has the removal of a Federal Minister for Consumer Affairs from Tony Abbott's cabinet had on the operations of Fair Trading and the enforcement of the Australian Consumer Law in NSW?**

None.

- 41. Will the Minister call on the Federal Liberal Government to reinstate the position of Minister for Consumer Affairs to the federal cabinet?**
- (a) If not, then why not?**

This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.

- 42. How many voluntary redundancies have been offered to Fair Trading employees since April 2011?**
(a) Of these, how many were offered as a result of the closure of a Fair Trading branch or office and transition to Service NSW?

The Government's program of voluntary redundancies remains on track. The target of 5,000 positions by June 2015 (announced in the 2011/12 Budget) was already exceeded by a further 1,789 positions by December 2013. The Labour Expense Cap introduced in the 2012/13 Budget is also well on track with Secretaries given as much flexibility as possible to achieve these savings in the most appropriate way to meet the service requirements of their agencies. Nurses, police officers and teachers in schools have been quarantined from this measure.

- 43. What has been the total cost of voluntary redundancies offered to Fair Trading employees since April 2011?**

See question 42.

- 44. How many voluntary redundancies have been accepted from Fair Trading employees since April 2011?**
(a) Of these, can the Minister please provide a complete breakdown of which Fair Trading branch or office each employee was employed in?

See question 42.

- 45. Of the Fair Trading employees made redundant since 2011, how many of those were from Regional NSW?**

See question 42.

- 46. How many voluntary redundancies are expected to be offered in 2014/15?**
(a) Of these, how many will be offered to employees currently employed in a Fair Trading branch or office that will be shut in 2014/15?

See question 42.

- 47. Can the Minister guarantee to staff at the following Fair Trading branch/office locations will that they will be offered equivalent positions and salaries at their nearest Service NSW location:**

- (a) Hurstville;**
- (b) Albury;**
- (c) Armidale ;**
- (d) Bathurst;**
- (e) Broken Hill;**
- (f) Coffs Harbour;**
- (g) Goulburn;**
- (h) Grafton?**
 - i. If not, then why not?**

As Service NSW centre outlets are being rolled out, staff will be invited to join Service NSW through a priority assessment process. As Service NSW continues to refine the physical network design, it will ensure all staff are appropriately informed so they have every opportunity to put their hands up if they wish to join Service NSW. Service NSW gives priority consideration to directly affected staff from Fair Trading.

48. Minister, do you consider that the residential park industry was profitable and viable before the implementation of the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill?

(a) If not, then on what basis?

The Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill was passed by Parliament in November 2013. It has not yet commenced and is yet to be implemented.

49. How many residential parks have been sold by park operators in each of the years 2011-2014?

Since the commencement of the register in 2011 to 31 August 2014, Fair Trading has received notification of 11 changes in park owner details.

50. How many residential parks have ceased operations as a residential park in each of the years 2011-2014?

(a) How many of these sites were sold off for commercial development?

There has been one notification of a park closure submitted to Fair Trading. Fair Trading does not collect information about the reason or purpose for any closure.

51. Do you believe that the Australian Residential Parks Residents Association (ARPRA) fairly represent the interests of park residents during consultation prior to the implementation of the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill?

A thorough consultation process was implemented prior to the Bill being introduced.

52. Between the start of the public consultation process and the tabling of the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill, how many times did the Minister or his representatives meet with representatives from ARPRA?

(a) How many requests for a meeting did representatives from ARPRA make in total?

I was appointed Minister on 7 May 2014 after the Bill had passed through Parliament.

53. Between the start of the public consultation process and the tabling of the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill, how many times did the Minister or his representatives meet with representatives from the Camping and Caravan - Industry Association?

(a) How many requests for a meeting did representatives from the Camping and Caravan Industry Association make in total?

See question 52.

54. Between the start of the public consultation process and the tabling of the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill, how many times did the Minister or his representatives meet with representatives from Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association/Parks and Village Service?

(a) How many requests for a meeting did representatives from Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association/Parks and Village Service make in total?

See question 52.

55. Will the NSW Government commit to reinstating funding withdrawn from the Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association for the delivery of the Parks and Village Service?

No funding was withdrawn. The Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association and the Park and Village Service did not apply for funding for the 2013 to 2016 period.

56. How many complaints has Fair Trading and the Minister's Office received from residential park residents since the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill 2013 has been tabled in Parliament?
(a) Can the Minister provide a full breakdown of the nature of these complaints?
(b) Of these complaints, how many were in relation to rent increases?

Since the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Bill 2013 was tabled in Parliament, NSW Fair Trading has received 101 letters from residents about the proposed legislation.

These letters cover a range of important matters, including utility charges, termination provisions, stakeholder consultation, special levy for community upgrade, residents committees, voluntary sharing arrangements and site fee increases.

Of these letters, 81 were either wholly or in part in relation to site fee increases, 66 of which were a standard campaign letter.

57. Minister, do you consider that it is fair on the many retirees living in residential park communities that rent increases can be linked to either an increase in the aged pension or for the 'projected costs' of park developments?

Under the *Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act 2013*, residents will be able to negotiate to have future site fee increases set out in their agreement.

Whether site fee increases are set out in the agreement, and what, if any, method will apply, will be negotiable at the individual level by each resident before they sign an agreement.

58. Will the Minister commit to a full scale review and inquiry of the impact of the Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act 2013 on park residents?
(a) If not, then why not?

The *Residential (Land Lease) Communities Act 2013* provides for a statutory review of the requirements of the Act five years after the commencement of the law.

59. What actions have been undertaken to educate and encourage owner's corporations to implement child window safety devices before the required statutory period commences in 2018?

The child window safety requirements for owner's corporations commenced on 11 December 2013 and are based on the Building Code of Australia. The law requires that a screen, lock or any other device is acceptable if it:

- (a) is capable of restricting the opening of a window so that a sphere having a diameter of 125mm or more cannot pass through the window opening, and
- (b) is capable of resisting an outward horizontal action of 250 newtons, and
- (c) has a child resistant release mechanism, in the case of a device that can be removed, overridden or unlocked.

Owner's corporations are responsible for ensuring the devices are installed but are not required to report to Fair Trading when the devices have been installed. Lot owners can also choose to install child window safety devices in their own lots instead of waiting for their owner's corporation to take action. After 13 March 2018, owners corporations will face fines if they have failed to install required safety devices. Lot owners will also be able to apply for orders from the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal requiring the owners corporation to install safety devices if not yet completed.

NSW Fair Trading plays no direct role in monitoring the sale of child window safety devices however has produced a series of short videos about how to prevent children falling out of windows. The videos also include easy step-by-step instructions on how to install appropriate devices.

Fair Trading has also undertaken the following activities as part of a comprehensive awareness-raising campaign:

Brochure mail out by NSW Fair Trading

- 40,000 copies of a 'Think Child Safe' brochure sent to real estate agents, strata managers and community housing providers since 2011.
- 430,000 'Kids Don't Fly' brochures sent to new tenants with their rental bond receipts from November 2012 - April 2014.

YouTube video series

- Fair Trading produced three short YouTube videos, aimed at parents and carers of young children. They have attracted more than 13,000 views on YouTube since December 2013.
- The videos feature TV personality and DIY guru Rob Palmer from Better Homes and Gardens.
- The first two videos in the series, 'Window locks save lives' and 'How to install window locks', were launched in September 2013. The Spring launch coincided with reforms being introduced to Parliament and the beginning of the warmer months as per the recommendations of the report from the 'Working party for the Prevention of Children Falling from Residential Buildings' at the Children's Hospital at Westmead
- The videos provide simple tips on how to prevent falls from windows and balconies, plus easy step-by-step instructions on how to install window locks as well as other practical advice.
- The third video in the series, 'Window locks and your rights', provides information to tenants, landlords and strata owners on their rights and responsibilities when installing window locks and safety devices.
- The video series has been widely promoted to local Councils, media outlets, project partners and stakeholder groups, relevant peak bodies, children's services, and parenting publications and websites. The series has also received prominent promotion by making it a "featured video" on Fair Trading's YouTube channel.

Social media activities, online resources, e-news and advertising

- Promotion in The Letterbox - Fair Trading's e-newsletter about tenancy issues (sent to approximately 8,000 subscribers).
- One quarter-page advertisement promoting Fair Trading's window safety information and resources was placed in the June 2014 'Child Safety' special edition of the leading free parenting magazine, *Sydney's Child* (127,000+ circulation).
- A dedicated 'Window and balcony safety' page for tenants and homeowners on the Fair Trading website has featured prominently (with visitors directed to this page

through a promotional banner on the Fair Trading homepage). This is complemented by content on Fair Trading's mobile website.

- Various Facebook posts and Twitter tweets have prompted engagement and helped to raise awareness about the new laws and video series.

As well as dedicated promotion for this specific campaign, child window safety messages will be incorporated into other important safety campaigns where there is a target audience overlap (such as for blind cord safety).

Fair Trading's awareness-raising campaign will intensify again in the year leading to the 2018 commencement of new window safety measures

60. How much funding in the 2014/15 budget has been allocated for these child window safety education campaigns?

See question 59.

61. Is Fair Trading aware of how many existing strata schemes have child window safety devices installed within their buildings?

See question 59.

62. What actions has Fair Trading undertaken to monitor the sale of non-compliant child window safety devices in 2014?

See question 59.

63. Minister, will your Government commit to fully implementing the recommendations made in the report of the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Committee, to ensure that consumers, motor dealers and smash repairers are afforded the much-needed and essential protections—originally called upon by the New South Wales Opposition—for a fairer and more open and transparent motor vehicle industry?

- (a) If not, which recommendations will not be implemented and why won't these recommendations be implemented?**

The NSW Government response to the report is due to be tabled in Parliament by 2 January 2015.

64. When will the NSW Government formally respond to the Report made by the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Committee?

See question 63.

65. Will the NSW Government commit to immediately amending the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act to implement the recommendations of the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Committee?

- (a) When does NSW Government intend on implementing the recommendations of the Report made by the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Committee?**

See question 63.

66. What has been the outcome of the consultation undertaken since the release of the Draft Regulation and Regulatory Impact Statement for the Motor Dealers and Repairers Act 2013?

The new Regulation is expected to be published shortly.

- 67. Can the Minister provide a complete breakdown of how many times he or his representatives have met with representatives from an insurance company since the tabling of the report of the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Committee, including:**
- (a) The name of the insurance company.**
 - (b) How many times each company requested a meeting.**

The Ministerial diary will be released in accordance with Premier's Memoranda M2014-07 – Publication of Ministerial Diaries.

- 68. Since the tabling of the report of the Motor Vehicle Repair Industry Committee, on how many occasions has the Minister or his representatives met with representatives of the Motor Traders Association of NSW?**
- (a) How many requests for a meeting have been made by the Motor Traders Association of NSW?**

See question 67.

- 69. Given that in New South Wales, 57 per cent of low-income private renters are in housing stress and acknowledging the Rental Bond Board generates \$60 million a year in interest on tenants bonds, could the Minister give an explanation and breakdown of how this money is used to benefit the tenants of NSW.**

Details of the operations of the Rental Bond Board are set out in its annual report which can be located on the NSW Fair Trading website www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

- 70. What portion was being channelled to the National Rental Affordability Scheme before the Abbott government scrapped the program?**

See question 69.

- 71. What measures has Fair Trading implemented to reduce the total number of tenancy related complaints in 2014?**

On 31 July 2014, NSW Fair Trading launched an enhanced specialist tenancy complaint service to provide a voluntary alternative to tenants, landlords and their agents for the resolution of tenancy disputes.

- 72. Minister, following a consultation process that began in September 2012, and the release of the Government's *Strata Title Law* position paper in November 2013, the reform to strata governance in NSW has yet again been delayed. Why aren't these reforms a priority for this Government?**

The NSW Government will progress strata reforms as part of a broader package of reforms within the building industry including community title, security of payments and home warranty insurance. These reforms are expected to be introduced to Parliament in the first half of 2015.

- 73. What impact has the chaos of having three Fair Trading Ministers in a span of 6 months had on the decision to once again delay the reforms to strata governance in NSW?**

There has been no chaos.

74. When does the Minister intend on tabling the reforms?

See question 72.

75. Will the Minister guarantee that dissenting owners, especially the elderly who may not own any other property, will be either fairly compensated, or offered an equivalent property in a new strata scheme in the same location, in the event of the extinguishment of their strata scheme?

See question 72.

76. 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?**

No.

(a)-(d) not applicable.

77. Given the manner in which pay day loans, being high-interest short-term loans, severely impact low-income earners and create a cycle of debt, what measures has Fair Trading implemented in the last 12 months to crack down on pay day lenders that breach their statutory obligations?

The NSW Government does not have responsibility for the regulation of consumer credit, including pay-day lenders.

78. In your time as Minister, have you had to declare to the Premier any conflicts of interest that may have breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

- (a) What was the nature of each conflict of interest?**
- (b) When did you make the declaration to the Premier?**

I have fully complied with the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

79. How many Ministerial staff were employed when the Hon. Anthony Roberts was the Minister?

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the DPC website at:

http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/about/publications/premiers_and_ministers_staff_numbers

80. How many Ministerial staff were employed when the Hon. Stuart Ayres was the Minister?

Of these staff, how many were employees retained from Minister Roberts period as Minister for Fair Trading?

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the DPC website at:

http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/about/publications/premiers_and_ministers_staff_numbers

- 81. How many Ministerial staff are employed by your office?**
(a) Of these staff, how many were employees retained from Minister Roberts or Minister Ayres period as Minister for Fair Trading?

Ministerial staff numbers and salary bands are available on the DPC website at:
http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/about/publications/premiers_and_ministers_staff_numbers

(a) None.

- 82. Have many office renovations or fit outs been undertaken in your ministerial office since April, 2011?**
(a) If so, can you provide the details of contracted costs and when the renovation was undertaken?

Information in relation to repairs, maintenance and relocation for 2011-12 and 2012-13 is available on the Department of Premier and Cabinet Disclosure Log at:
http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/165616/Disclosure_Log_Information_-_Ministerial_Renovations.docx.pdf

- 83. How many staff within Fair Trading are assigned to Ministerial support duties?**

The number of Department Liaison Officers for NSW Government Ministerial officers at 30 June 2014 is 56.

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

Financial statements, including expenditure on consultants, are available in agency annual reports.

- 85. How much did your Ministerial office spend on contractors or consultants in each of the years 2011-2014?**

Financial statements, including expenditure on consultants, are available in agency annual reports.