



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 3

# **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012**

## **QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

### **General Purpose Standing Committee No. 3**

Regional Infrastructure and Services

Tuesday 25 October 2011

Answers to be lodged by: 18 November 2011

**Budget Estimates Secretariat**  
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Hearing date	Portfolio	Answer to be lodged by
25 October 2011	Regional Infrastructure and Services	18 November 2011 [21 days]

**Questions relating to the portfolio of Regional Infrastructure and Services**

**25 OCTOBER 2011, 9.00 am – 11.00 am**

**Questions from the Hon Amanda Fazio MLC**

1. Very Fast Trains
  - a. Has the NSW Government met with the Federal Government regarding any Very Fast Train projects?
  - b. Does the NSW Government have a preferred corridor for a Very Fast Train between Brisbane and Melbourne?
  - c. If yes, please provide the Committee with details of the preferred corridor?
  - d. Has the NSW Government set aside any funds in the 2011/2012 budget for investigations or assistance for a Very Fast Train corridor through NSW?
  - e. Is the NSW Government working with Local Government bodies to develop or amend Local Environment Plans for any Very Fast Train corridors?
  - f. How is the NSW Government assisting communities who may be impacted by any proposed Very Fast Train corridor?
  - g. Has the NSW Government made financial assistance available for any Very Fast Train projects?
  - h. If yes, how much and which projects?
2. Bells Line of Road
  - a. What are you doing as Minister for Regional Infra-Structure and Services to progress the Nationals long-stated support for the Bells Line of Road?
  - b. What is the NSW Governments timeframe for securing a suitable corridor for the proposed Bells Line of Road Expressway?
  - c. Has there been funds allocated for securing a suitable corridor for the proposed Bells Line of Road Expressway
3. Visits to Regional Infra-structure Projects
  - a. What is the Department's involvement in developing, supporting and advancing regional infrastructure projects such as the Bomen Inter-model?
4. Country Living
  - a. In policy documents before the election the National Party discussed the creation of a marketing fund to promote Country living. When is that marketing programme going to be rolled out?
  - b. Will the Marketing Fund support programs such as Evocities and the work of the Foundation for Regional Development and its Country Living Expo?
5. Glendale Interchange
  - a. Does the Department have a role in advancing the Glendale Interchange Project?
  - b. What is that role?
  - c. There has been money set aside for the Glendale Interchange (\$1million), can the Minister please advise which departmental budget these funds are being advanced from and which Minister is responsible for administering the funds?
6. Hunter Infrastructure
  - a. Do you consider funds going into Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund to be funding for 'Regional' infrastructure?

- b. Will the Hunter Infrastructure and Investment Fund include investments into Newcastle?
  - c. Is Newcastle considered by the Coalition Government to be 'Regional'?
  - d. Will all future claims by the Coalition Government of 'Regional Investment' include funding to Newcastle?
7. Infrastructure NSW
- a. Are there written guidelines on how the Department of Regional Infrastructure and Services will interact with Infrastructure NSW?
  - b. If yes, can you please provide the guidelines?
8. Regional Relocation Grants
- a. Why is Newcastle not included, in fact it is explicitly excluded, in the Regional Relocation Grants?
9. Previous Commitments
- a. Can you confirm that most of the \$63m for regional development programs to be spent in 2011/12 are actually carry over programs and commitments from the previous Government?
  - b. Please list all new funding for Regional Development in the budget? Please exclude carry over programmes from the previous Government and Commonwealth funding?
10. Regional Infrastructure Projects
- a. What regional infrastructure projects has the Department of Regional Infrastructure and Services been responsible for funding in the 2011/2012 Budget? Please provide a list and the funding allocations?
11. Regional Development Offices
- a. How many Regional Development Offices are there in NSW?
  - b. Where are they located?
  - c. How many staff (FTE) are employed at each office?
  - d. Which Regional Development Offices will be closed in your term in Government?
12. Regional Policy
- a. There have been very few statements or policy announcements with regard to Regional Development by the O'Farrell Government. When will there be policy initiatives in the important area of Regional Development announced for regions west of the dividing range?
13. Regional Relocation Grant
- a. How many people have been successful in receiving the Regional Relocation Grant as of today's date?
  - b. How many people have applied?
  - c. Where in Sydney were they located before the move?
  - d. Where did they move to?
  - e. How many west of the dividing range?
  - f. What were the ages of the successful recipients?
  - g. With regard to the marketing of the programme. How much has been spent so far in advertising the scheme out of the 1 million?
    - i. Is there a budget for the campaign?
    - ii. Who was engaged to prepare the marketing?
    - iii. Was the ad campaign an open tender or a selective/exclusive process?
    - iv. Contract for the work?

- h. How many people are responsible for administering the Grant program?
  - i. How many Staff are paid to check compliance with the Grant Program?
  - j. How do you intend to recoup the money if recipients do not adhere to the conditions of the Grant Program?
  - k. Can you guarantee that unspent funds will not be considered "windfall gains"?
  - l. Can you guarantee that any unspent funds will in fact be spent in Country NSW – West of the dividing range?
14. Resources for Regions
- a. Before the election the Nationals had a policy – Resources for Regions. That has now been relegated to one line in the Restart NSW Legislation. Will there be a separate Resources for Regions fund?
  - b. Is the current Resources for Regions arrangement a part of the 30% allocation for NSW?
  - c. The Government has promised to create \$160m resources for the regions program for mining affected areas, how much funding will be available from Restart NSW in each of the next four financial years for this program?
  - d. How will you determine which communities are eligible for the funding?
  - e. What mechanisms have you put in place to ensure that projects receiving funding under the Resources for Regions component of Restart NSW would not have received funding under other programs – in other words how are you guaranteeing this is not replacement funding?
  - f. Will the unspent funds from this programme each year be considered "windfall gains"?
  - g. Will unspent funds from this programme each year be quarantined and only spent in communities impacted upon by mining?
15. Restart NSW
- a. The Government suggested that its Restart NSW fund would have nearly \$5 billion, being \$1.5 billion from the arrangement with the desal plant and \$3.5 billion from 'windfall gains'. What is Treasury's prediction for how much will be in the fund and in which years will it be available?
  - b. What arrangements does the Government have in place to ensure that Restart NSW funds are not replacing other Government capital funds?
  - c. Can you guarantee that all infra-structure funded by the Restart NSW programme will not be for projects already funded? It is for new infra-structure projects?
  - d. When will projects commence to be funded from Restart NSW?
  - e. Why is the rural component capped at 30%?
  - f. Will spending from Restart NSW for Country NSW exceed the 30% limit?
  - g. Please provide the Local Government Area's that are defined as "Country" for the purposes of Restart NSW funding?
  - h. When can we expect this programme to actually start?
16. Road Maintenance Contract Contestability
- a. How will regional jobs be affected by the road maintenance contestability policy being implemented by the Government given that it will likely lead to a number of country Councils no longer providing these services?
  - b. Has the Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services had any involvement in developing the proposals for road contestability or implementation of the road maintenance contestability policy?
  - c. If yes, what was the nature of this involvement?
17. Phones
- a. How many blackberries does DPC assign to your Ministerial staff and to whom have they been issued?
  - b. How many iPads does DPC assign to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?
  - c. How many iPads have you purchased for your office and to whom have they been issued?

- d. How many iPhones does DPC assign to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?
  - e. How many iPhones have you purchased for your office and to whom have they been issued?
  - f. For each phone or device, how much was each bill from April to October?
  - g. How many phones or devices have been lost in your office?
  - h. What is the cost of replacing those phones or devices?
18. Media and Public Relations
- a. How many media or public relations advisers are employed for each of your portfolio agencies?
  - b. What is the forecast for 2011-12 for the number of media or public relations advisers to be employed and their total cost?
  - c. How many media or public relations advisers are employed in your ministerial office?
19. Overseas Trips
- 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?
20. Office Costs
- a. What is the annual remuneration package for your chief of staff?
  - b. What is the annual remuneration package for your head media advisor?
  - c. What is the annual remuneration package for each of your staff?
  - d. What is the estimated expenditure for your office budget in 2011-12?
  - e. Have any office renovations or fit outs been undertaken in your ministerial office since April?
  - f. If so, could you give details of contracted costs?
  - g. What is your office budget?
  - h. How many political advisors are in your office?
  - i. How many administration staff?
  - j. How many Department Liaison officers are assigned to your office?
  - k. How many staff in the Department are assigned to Ministerial support duties?
21. Cabcharge
- a. In terms of your ministerial office, how much did your office spend on taxi fares, including Cabcharge since April?
22. Restructure
- a. Are any of your portfolio agencies undergoing a restructure?
  - b. How many jobs are expected to be cut as a result of that restructure?
  - c. How many people are expected to have their wages cut as a result of that restructure?
  - d. How many voluntary redundancies are expected to be offered as a result of that restructure?
23. Agency Costs
- a. What is your agency's catering budget?
  - b. Since April, has the agency changed its branding?
  - c. How much was spent on rebranding the agency?
  - d. How much has been spent on stationary?
24. Correspondence
- a. How long is the average turnaround for responding to correspondence in your agency?
  - b. How many pieces of correspondence have been outstanding for more than 60 days?
25. Paying bills on time
- a. Since April, on how many occasions has the agency not paid a supplier or contractor for more than 30 days?
  - b. How many bills have been outstanding for longer than that period?

26. Grants to non-government organisations

- 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?
  - vii. If so, what were the reasons for withholding or requiring the funding to be returned?
  - viii. What is the indexation rate applied to non recurrent grant funds in 2011/2012?

27. Feasibility studies, audits, taskforces or reviews

- a. 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?

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**There were no additional questions on notice lodged by members relating to the portfolio of  
Regional Infrastructure and Services.**