



Department of  
**Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources**

27 APR 2005

Office of the Director General

Ms Tanya Bosch  
Director, Budget Estimates  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4  
Legislative Council  
Parliament of NSW  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Y05/1207

Dear Ms Bosch

I refer to your correspondence of 23 March 2005 concerning questions taken on notice during the Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4 on 21 March 2005.

Enclosed please find responses to the questions taken on notice during the Hearing.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Westacott  
Director General

**JOB CUTS IN THE HUNTER REGION**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Jennifer Gardiner MLC asked a question of the Deputy Director General, Office of Coastal, Rural and Regional NSW, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which was taken on notice—

**CHAIR:** Thank you. Mr Sutherland, can you advise the Committee how many jobs have been cut out of Natural Resources in the Hunter region?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** I do not have the exact numbers with me but I would be happy to take that question on notice.

**CHAIR:** I would appreciate that. Are you able to confirm that the Hunter region was given only 90 per cent of its staff budget?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** So far as the budget is concerned, perhaps Peter Lucas may wish to comment on that as Chief Finance Officer, but essentially the budget process looks at the draft work force numbers in the work performance plan, and also in matching those with available budget and operating costs. That balance has to be made each year.

**Mr LUCAS:** In relation to developing the budget for this year, we undertook a process of detailing out all the staff that we anticipated to be within the department, multiplied those out by their staff rates and various allowances for cash on-costs and non-cash on-costs, and then applied a factual old 90 per cent to that salary. In relation to operating expenses, however, we actually calculated through all of the operating expenses that were needed to run the department, reviewed those to ensure they were the appropriate and accurate, and then formed the budget on the basis of those calculations.

**CHAIR:** That was across the board for regions?

**Mr LUCAS:** For the salaries and wages, yes.

**CHAIR:** Did that make some redundancies inevitable?

**Mr LUCAS:** No. It was in light of a voluntary redundancy program that was being undertaken to reduce the head count down, as we have alluded to in previous estimates committees and in this one.

**CHAIR:** We will get the specific details on the Hunter.

**Answer:**

14 equivalent full time positions.

**MR SUTHERLAND'S TAXI BILL FOR 2003-04**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Jennifer Gardiner MLC asked a question of the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which was taken on notice—

**CHAIR:** Do you happen to know what Mr Sutherland's taxi bill was for 2003-04?

**Mr LUCAS:** No, I do not.

**CHAIR:** Could you provide that?

**Mr LUCAS:** I will take that on notice.

**CHAIR:** Are there any other examples in which senior officers of the department have racked up such a large taxi bill and have had to be reimbursed by the department?

**Mr LUCAS:** Not as far as I am aware.

**CHAIR:** Does the department take any action against a senior officer who does that?

**Mr LUCAS:** Yes, the senior officer is counselled about the excessive use of the cab fare.

**CHAIR:** Has Mr Sutherland been counselled?

**Mr LUCAS:** I understand he was.

**CHAIR:** Is that correct, Mr Sutherland?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Yes.

**Answer:**

The majority of Mr Sutherland's taxi usage relates to trips to and from airports as he undertakes significant interstate and intrastate travel. Mr Sutherland is responsible for national negotiations in natural resources management as well as extensive regional operations. Mr Sutherland's taxi usage in 2003-04 was \$2,837.04 and is consistent with the Department's policy on the use of taxis and cabcharges.

**SALARIES AND LOCATION OF MEDIA OFFICERS**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Jennifer Gardiner MLC asked a question of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which was taken on notice—

**CHAIR:** Mr Haddad, can you advise the Committee how many media relations staff are employed by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources [DIPNR]? I am interested to know what units they work in. For example, I think there is one unit that is attached to the director-general's office. I would like a breakdown of how many media officers there are.

**Mr HADDAD:** There is a media unit attached to the director-general's office and, to the best of my knowledge, there are about five media officers in that unit. If I am incorrect I will correct it separately, but I think there would be about five.

**CHAIR:** So there are five media officers at the disposal of the director-general, so to speak?

**Mr HADDAD:** They undertake a departmental function to the whole of the department, not the director-general only. So they look after all the media functions for the rest of the organisation.

**CHAIR:** Are there any others operating elsewhere in the department, or are they centralised there?

**Mr HADDAD:** They are centralised; it is a centralised unit and it is located in the office of the director-general, but, as I said, it is a department-wide function.

**CHAIR:** Would you be able to provide the Committee, on notice, with the salaries of those media officers right across the department?

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes, I will.

**CHAIR:** And advise the Committee where, apart from the unit that we have just referred to in the director-general's office, any others are located?

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes.

**Answer:**

There are five EFT media officers in the Department with a total salary budget of \$401,777.

**SHOALHAVEN RIVER**

On 21 March 2005 the Ms Sylvia Hale MLC asked a number of questions of the Deputy Director General, Office of Coastal, Rural and Regional NSW, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which were taken on notice—

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Mr Sutherland, the bulk of my questions will relate to the Shoalhaven River. Could you inform the Committee how much water Sydney Water currently pumps each day from the Shoalhaven to supplement Sydney's water supply?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** I do not have that exact figure with me, but I am happy to take the question on notice.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Fine. Do you have the figure for the amount of extra water that Sydney Water intends to extract from the Shoalhaven when the new pipeline is in place?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** There will be not only an increase in the volumes extracted from the Shoalhaven but also, importantly, an improvement in the timing of those flows. For example, currently, pumping from the Shoalhaven occurs during low-flow conditions during drought periods, for drought relief. The intention of the proposed pumping strategy under the Metropolitan Water Plan is to pump during times of higher flow and to augment Tallawa Dam so that there are opportunities to reduce the impacts of low flows. Investigations are currently going on into potential yields in both run of river releases as well as potentially piping higher flows for Sydney's water supply into the future. Those studies will determine the exact augmentation from the Shoalhaven system.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Do you have a figure for the proposed volume, or is that still to come?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** There are a range of figures, and they will depend on the nature of the scheme, both in terms of augmentation of upstream storages and the method of transfer, whether that be by pipeline or by run of river releases. But, in terms of your earlier question about current extraction, I can indicate in my response to that question the range of figures currently being explored. But there is still quite a lot of investigative work to do.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** You are saying it is impossible at the moment to provide the total extraction figure.

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** The exact extraction limit.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Depending upon whether it is by pipeline or by other methods, could you give me some indication of that figure?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** We could give you some broad indications.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Thank you. What does the department consider to be the minimum healthy flow for the river?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** You are referring to the Shoalhaven?

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Yes, the Shoalhaven.

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** We are currently undertaking investigations into the environmental flows for the Shoalhaven system, as distinct from the Hawkesbury-Nepean system, where there has been quite a lot of background scientific investigation in relation to environmental flows, water quality and other factors. There is more restricted information available for the Shoalhaven. So, one of the priorities of the work program in relation to the Sydney Metropolitan Water Plan is to actually do that investigative work in relation to environmental requirements for the Shoalhaven.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Do you have any notion as to the size of the flow that is required in the Shoalhaven to prevent the occurrence of algal blooms such as we have seen on the Hawkesbury?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Exactly that sort of question and other matters are being investigated: the dilution flows, modelling of various environmental flows and additional data collection in relation to the biota in the Shoalhaven system.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Presumably, the department is also investigating the requirements for oyster farmers, who rely upon consistent flows.

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** The investigations will take into account all uses. There has been commenced a water sharing plan process for the greater metropolitan catchments, including the Hawkesbury-Nepean and Shoalhaven rivers. That water-sharing plan will articulate the balance between consumptive uses, such as Sydney irrigation development, and the environment. So requirements in terms of estuarine uses will be taken into account as well in that process.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** I understand the proposal is to take advantage, as it were, of flooding rains and capturing some of that. Will there be any restriction on the capture of those flooding rains, so that there is a period during which the rivers themselves can be flushed?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Essentially, the environmental flows work will look at what extractions can occur during those high-flow periods, whilst allowing appropriate flushing flows for environmental purposes. That will be an important consideration in terms of the ultimate extraction rules, if you like.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Is it true that Sydney Water pumps from the Tallawa Dam, on the Shoalhaven River, up to the Wingecarribee catchment during low peak electricity periods, then sends water back down to Tallawa Dam during high peak periods to generate electricity?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** That is not a matter in which DIPNR is involved. But I am happy to take the question on notice.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Would you have any idea of the cost of pumping water up the mountain to the Wingecarribee catchment?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** No. That is a matter for Sydney Water, and I would defer on those questions to Sydney Water.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** So the total cost of the proposed water transfers would be a question for Sydney Water. So any question as to any comparison between those costs and the costs of water recycling within the Sydney Basin should be addressed to Sydney Water, rather than to your department?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** In terms of the recycling issues, the department is leading the process to evaluate a plan for major recycling of up to, ultimately, 80 gigalitres, based on the greenfields development sites in north-west and south-west Sydney. That work is being led by DIPNR. But, in terms of the day-to-day operations of the Shoalhaven, that is a matter for the Sydney Catchment Authority and Sydney Water.

**Answers:**

The operational management of extractions from the Shoalhaven River is a matter for the Sydney Catchment Authority and the Minister for the Environment.

**LAND MANAGEMENT BRANCH**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon David Oldfield MLC asked a number of questions of the Acting Director General and the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which were taken on notice—

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Absolutely. I completely understand that. Who is best placed to answer DIPNR Land Management Branch questions? Would that be Mr Haddad?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Yes.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Could you give me an outline of the role of the Land Management Branch of DIPNR?

**Mr HADDAD:** Essentially, it looks after the management of land as an asset within the department. It oversees broad transactions of land acquisition, corridor acquisition and disposal of lands and it advises the planning division in that regard.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** What sort of staffing does the department have?

**Mr HADDAD:** I will have to take that question on notice.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Can you tell me about planned expenditure for the remainder of 2004-05?

**Mr HADDAD:** I will have to take that question on notice.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** And also planned expenditure for 2005-06.

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Can you tell me what was spent in the last financial year?

**Mr LUCAS:** We would need to take that question on notice. One point that you should bear in mind is that Land Management Branch staff conduct the activity known as the corporation sole Minister administering the Environmental Protection and Assessment Act. It is outside DIPNR even though DIPNR staff are working in that facility. So that may put a slightly different slant on it.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** But it is still on DIPNR's payroll.

**Mr LUCAS:** It is not on DIPNR's payroll; it is on the corporation sole's payroll.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** So where does that fit into the scheme of things in relation to DIPNR?



**Mr LUCAS:** It is under the Minister, the corporation sole. They are DIPNR staff. This may not be 100 per cent legally right, but they are seconded to the corporation sole and they act as the Land Management Branch within that corporation sole.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Who fulfils the roles of seconded officers while they are in the Minister's other department?

**Mr LUCAS:** The use of the word "seconded" may be incorrect.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** They are your words.

**Mr LUCAS:** I know they are, but I did say that they might not be legally correct.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Could we be given a full explanation of the relationship between the two—where staff come from if they are seconded, or however you may wish to describe it, and who fulfils their role in DIPNR while they are seconded?

**Mr LUCAS:** We can do that.

**Answers:**

Land Management Branch has 23 full time staff.

Projected expenditure for the remainder of 2004-05 is \$40m.

Estimated expenditure for 2005-06 will be announced by the Government as part of the Budget.

Expenditure in 2003-04 was \$51.041m.

Land Management Branch staff are employed by DIPNR and their salaries paid from the Corporation Sole budget. Currently, no DIPNR staff are seconded to Land Management Branch.

**DEPARTMENT STAFF PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED IN THE MINISTER'S OFFICE**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon David Oldfield MLC asked a number of questions of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which were taken on notice—

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** How many of the staff who were previously employed in the Minister's office are now in DIPNR, either in permanent or consultancy appointments?

**Mr HADDAD:** To the best of my knowledge there are none in consultancy. I cannot recall. I will have to take that question on notice and come back to you on that issue.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** We would also like to know how many, if any, of those staff are on some form of extended leave without pay—be it sick leave, long service leave or whatever it may be.

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Have there been any terminations, redundancies or other separation costs associated with the departure from DIPNR of any former ministerial staff?

**Mr HADDAD:** Not that I am aware of, but we will include that answer with our other answers to questions on notice.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Where would Todd Clewett be now, for example?

**Mr HADDAD:** To the best of my knowledge Todd Clewett has left the department. I think he resigned recently. I will have to confirm that.

**The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD:** Could you let us know when he left and what costs were associated with his departure?

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes, sure.

**Answers:**

Ms Alice Spizzo is a permanent public servant in DIPNR who has worked in the Minister's office. Ms Spizzo was seconded in March 1997 as a permanent public servant from the then Department of Urban Affairs & Planning to the Minister's office until February 2002. She subsequently returned to the Department in September 2003 and won promotion via external merit selection to her current position.

Ms Spizzo is not on any form of extended leave without pay.

Ms Holly Parry was employed in DIPNR as a section 27 Temporary Officer for 18 months until December 2004. Ms Parry worked as a Senior Policy Officer in the Strategic Policy Reform branch. Prior to her employment with DIPNR, Ms Parry had been employed as a section 33/34 Temporary Employee in the Minister's office.

There were no severance costs associated with Ms Parry's resignation, other than the payment of normal leave entitlements.

There are no consultants employed by DIPNR who were previously employed in the Minister's office.

Mr Todd Clewett has resigned from the Department and will leave at the end of May 2005, at the conclusion of a short-term secondment to the Ministry for Police.

There will be no severance costs associated with Mr Clewett's resignation other than the payment of any outstanding leave entitlements.

**METROPOLITAN STRATEGY REFERENCE PANEL**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Greg Pearce MLC asked a question of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which was taken on notice—

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** I wish to ask you a question about Professor Blakely. What exactly is his position?

**Mr HADDAD:** He is the chair of a reference group that has been established, in a sense, broadly to advise the Government as part of the metropolitan strategy.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Who established that group?

**Mr HADDAD:** I will have to check on that to establish whether it was by the director-general as part of the preparation of the strategy. It is a peer review function – a function whereby external eminent people in different disciplines advise as part of the formulation of the policy. The idea is that whilst the strategy is being developed it is good to have others providing advice.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Who are the other members of the committee?

**Mr HADDAD:** I can give you a full list of those members, but there are practitioners and others.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Perhaps you could table it.

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes, we will.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Are the members and chair of that committee paid?

**Mr HADDAD:** I think they are paid honorary fees. I will have to check on that.

**Answers:**

The Metropolitan Strategy Reference Panel was established in November 2003 by the Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources. The members of the Panel are listed in the table below:

<b>Reference Panel Member</b>	<b>Role</b>
Professor Ed Blakely	Chair
Ms Janet Dore	Local Government
Mr John Mant	Planning
Professor FJ Marceau	Academic
Dr Ric Simes	Urban Finance
Ms Cathy Zoi	Environment
Mr David Brown	Transport
Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li	Community
Mr Neil Bird	Housing
Mr Les Stein	Governance

Each member of the Reference Panel is paid a sitting fee.

**STATE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIC PLAN**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Greg Pearce MLC asked a number of questions of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which were taken on notice—

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** At the last hearing the director-general indicated that the State infrastructure plan was being prepared. She said it was a DIPNR project. Who within DIPNR is responsible for that project?

**Mr HADDAD:** We have a team, the infrastructure co-ordinating unit, which is part of the planning division. It is co-ordinating the work on this.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Who heads up that team?

**Mr HADDAD:** At the moment it reports to an executive director, Gary Prattley.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** It reports to Gary Prattley, but who heads it up?

**Mr HADDAD:** Basically Gary Prattley is in charge of that.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** So he co-ordinates the work of that group?

**Mr HADDAD:** He does, yes, for the time being.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Do you know whether he was asked to make any contribution to the document that the Premier released on Sunday a week ago entitled "New South Wales Government's Plan for Infrastructure"?

**Mr HADDAD:** I will have to check on that.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** So you will take that question on notice. The document that was released is dated March 2005 and it is entitled "New South Wales Government's Plan for Infrastructure." Is that an update of the State Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2002?

**Mr HADDAD:** It is an update. In a sense it is partly an ongoing monitoring of all the infrastructure projects that have been announced by the Government—the \$30 billion over five years. That is part of an ongoing monitoring of which projects have been implemented, what stage they are at and the allocation of funds. That is basically the input that is being provided by the department.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** In other words, it is just an update?

**Mr HADDAD:** As I said, it is an ongoing monitoring of the status of various projects. It represents the current status of government commitments to various infrastructure projects.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** The State Infrastructure Strategic Plan 2002 said that it would be revised and reviewed each year. Why has that not happened, or is this the monitoring that you are talking about?

**Mr HADDAD:** It is the monitoring that I am referring to.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Who would have been responsible for the fact that the document put out by the Premier on 13 March based its commentary on a suggestion that the New South Wales unemployment rate was 5.1 per cent when the latest figures at that stage showed that the New South Wales unemployment rate had gone up to 5.2 per cent?

**Mr HADDAD:** I am not sure about the exact source of the documents. I will have to take that question on notice and double check to provide you with the figures.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** It is fairly embarrassing to have the Premier putting out a document on infrastructure that cannot even get the unemployment rate correct.

**Mr HADDAD:** As I said, I will have to check the figures.

**Answers:**

The employment rate cited in the NSW Government's Plan for Infrastructure was drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics January 2005 Labour Force figures (6202.0) dated 10 February 2005, which recorded the NSW unemployment rate as 5.1%

The employment rate in the Australian Bureau of Statistics February 2005 Labour Force figures (6202.0) dated 10 March 2005 recorded the NSW unemployment rate as 5.2%.

The NSW Government's Plan for Infrastructure was released on 13 March 2005.

The final drafting of the Plan occurred before the publication on 10 March 2005 of the Australian Bureau of Statistics February 2005 Labour Force figures (6202.0).

**NATIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Jennifer Gardiner MLC asked a number of questions of the Deputy Director General, Office of Coastal, Rural and Regional NSW, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which were taken on notice—

**CHAIR:** Mr Sutherland, I might return to the native vegetation issue. What has been the cost of developing the PVP developer to date?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** I do not have a one-off cost on that. I will have to take that question on notice.

**CHAIR:** Is a format available for the property vegetation plans as yet?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Yes. The output from the developer effectively is intended to be the certification documentation for the plan. So the concept is that the staff of the catchment management authority would go out and do a farm visit, work through the information that is available with the landholder and then use the PVP developer to produce a plan that will identify treatments in the areas to be cleared and any offsets in the areas involving incentives, such as fencing off land, et cetera. They would all be documented on a plan generated as part of the PVP developer tool and then effectively a certificate would be generated that sets out the obligations of the landholder.

**CHAIR:** Is that available now?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** There is a variation of that information that is provided by the PVP developer tool. The final form of that is yet to be agreed.

**CHAIR:** Has there been any socioeconomic assessment of the costs to communities and to farmers of the changes to native vegetation management in New South Wales?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** There has been a range of socioeconomic studies done on both a national and a State scale as part of programs such as the salinity program and the national land and water audit. They generally indicate very significant costs to the community in terms of further widespread clearing of the environment and document significant costs in terms of lost production and impact on the environment from the impacts of things like salinity in terms of infrastructure costs. There is an annual cost of \$9 million in terms of the impact of salinity on road infrastructure, which is borne by councils. That is a result, by and large, of land clearing. A number of those costs have been documented. It is difficult to get a total socioeconomic cost of implementing clearing controls but a regulatory impact statement is being prepared as part of the regulation process and that is documenting the sorts of costs and benefits as best as information is available.

**CHAIR:** Would you be able to provide on notice a list of any socioeconomic studies that have been done?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Yes, I am happy to do that.

**CHAIR:** I would appreciate the full titles and authors' names. In relation to the native vegetation legislation, is there any guarantee to farmers that the legislation now being implemented will not curtail their basic access to and enjoyment of privately funded farm dam infrastructure? Some concern has been expressed about this issue that perhaps dams could be classified as wetlands under the new regime. Are those fears unfounded or is there something to it?

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** The basic principle is that, while the regulations will bring an end to broad-scale clearing except where it can be shown that there is a net improvement or maintenance of the environmental values—such as, for example, in the clearance of invasive scrub—the situation with dams would depend on the location of the dams and whether, as you say, the dam was to be built in a high-value wetland. There would then be issues in relation to the potential siting of that dam.

**CHAIR:** That would apply to new dams.

**Mr SUTHERLAND:** Yes, new dams. But the regulations are based on the principle that clearing in relation to routine agricultural practices would be exempt from the controls in terms of the new vegetation Act. It would depend on the extent to which new dam building involved extensive clearing, the value of that habitat and its sensitivity. But in terms of routine agricultural practices if it could be shown that there were no high-value habitats involved in a relatively small area for clearing for a dam then that would be allowed under the regulations.

**Answers:**

The Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources expended \$270,764 in direct costs on the construction of the PVP Developer as at 1 April 2005. In addition to these direct costs significant staff time has also been spent on the project.

The Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources prepared a Regulatory Impact Statement on the *Draft Native Vegetation Regulation 2004*. It was released for public exhibition on 9 November 2004. The Statement includes a socio-economic assessment of changes in vegetation management in NSW. It is available on DIPNR's website.

A wider reference list of socio-economic assessments of vegetation management in NSW is attached.



## **Socio-economic assessment of changes in vegetation management in NSW:**

1. Dept of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (2004) *Draft Native Vegetation Regulation 2004 Regulatory Impact Statement*, DIPNR, Sydney

## **Other socio-economic analysis of vegetation management:**

1. Allen Consulting Group (2001) *Repairing the country – Leveraging Private Investment*. A Report Commissioned by the Business Leaders Roundtable.
2. Gillespie, R. (2000) *Economic Values of Native Vegetation*, Background Paper Number 4, Native Vegetation Advisory Council of New South Wales.
3. Lockwood, M., & Walpole, S. (1999) *Benefit Cost Analysis of Remnant Native Vegetation Conservation*, Johnstone Centre Report No. 130, Charles Sturt University, Albury.
4. Lockwood, M., Walpole S., & Miles C. (2000) *Economics of remnant native vegetation conservation on private property*, Research Report 2/00, National Research and Development Program on Rehabilitation, Management and Conservation of Remnant Vegetation.
5. Miles, C., Lockwood, M., Walpole, S., & Buckley, E. (1998) *Assessment of the On-farm Economic Values of Remnant Native Vegetation*, Johnstone Centre Report No. 107. Native Vegetation Reform Implementation Group, Final Report, October 2003.
6. National Land and Water Resources Audit (2001) 'Australian Dryland Salinity Assessment 2000. Extent, impacts, processes, monitoring and management options'.
7. Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (2002) *Sustaining our Natural Systems and Biodiversity*.
8. Productivity Commission (2003), *Impacts of Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Regulations*, Draft Report.
9. Reid, N. and Thompson, D. (1999) *Economics of windbreaks and sheep production on the northern Tablelands*. In *Sustainable and Practical Vegetation Management into the New Millennium – Economics and Environment* (eds Norsesearch Ltd). Conference Proceedings. Australian Association of Natural Resource Management, Coffs Harbour, 28-30 June 1999.
10. van Bueren M. and Bennett J., *Towards the development of a transferable set of value estimates for environmental attributes*, The Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics (2004), 48:1, pp. 1-32. Initial research undertaken with funding from the National Land and Water Resources Audit: van Bueren M. and Bennett J. (2000) *Estimating community values for land and water degradation*, Final Report, Project 6.1.4.
11. Walpole, S (2001) 'Assessment of the economic and ecological impacts of remnant vegetation on pasture productivity'. *Pacific Conservation Biology* 5, 28-35
12. Walpole, S., & Lockwood, M. (1999) *A revised incentive policy for remnant vegetation conservation*, Johnstone Centre Report No. 131, Charles Sturt University, Albury.
13. Walpole, S., Lockwood, M. & Miles, C.A. (1998) *Influence of Remnant Native Vegetation on Property Sale Price*, Johnstone Centre Report No. 106, Charles Sturt University, Albury.
14. Williams, D.G., Wallace, P., McKeon, G.M., Hall, W., Katjiua, M. and Abel, N. (1999) *Effects of Trees on Native Pasture Production on the Southern Tablelands*. A report for the RIRDC/LWRRDC/FWPRDC Joint Venture Agroforestry Program. RIRDC Publication No. 99/165, Canberra.
15. Reid, N. and Thompson, D. (1999) *Economics of windbreaks and sheep production on the northern Tablelands*. In *Sustainable and Practical Vegetation Management into the New Millennium – Economics and Environment* (eds Norsesearch Ltd). Conference Proceedings. Australian Association of Natural Resource Management, Coffs Harbour, 28-30 June 1999.

**RELOCATION OF DEPARTMENTAL EMPLOYEES**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Jennifer Gardiner MLC asked a question of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which was taken on notice—

**CHAIR:** Mr Haddad, the director-general told the Committee that the restructure of DIPNR would be completed at the end of last year. Was that timetable correct? Is the restructure now completely in place?

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes, the restructure is in place. It is mostly in place. Yes, it is.

**CHAIR:** Mostly?

**Mr HADDAD:** The restructure is in place.

**CHAIR:** How many of the 200 employees who were to be relocated to rural and regional offices from Sydney offices are now located in non-metropolitan offices?

**Mr HADDAD:** I will have to take that question on notice if you do not mind, Madam Chair, because I know that they are the subject of various discussions going on. When I referred to "restructure" I meant that the structure of the various offices and the number of staff within each office had been settled. In terms of moving people, this is the subject of discussions that I am aware of with the unions and others by way of seeking expressions of interest from various staff within the regions, inter regions and between the head office and the regions. If you do not mind I will take the question on notice and come back with more details.

**CHAIR:** Okay. Could you also advise the Committee how many of them have been relocated and where they have been relocated to?

**Mr HADDAD:** Yes, we will do that.

**CHAIR:** So when you say that the restructure is in place you mean that the framework is in place but the actual implementation as to who slots in where is still ongoing.

**Mr HADDAD:** The implementation is ongoing and is well advanced in that regard. But we had to set up the framework for the different organisations and functions and different offices. As I said, that has been completed, agreed and signed and now it is a matter of allocating the final people within those structures. In some areas it has been completed in others it is still ongoing.

**Answer:**

The Department is assessing the relocation of jobs to rural and regional centres with a particular focus on Newcastle as a major identified growth centre.

This is one of the few implementation issues remaining.

**COST OF CORPORATE PLANNING EVENT**

On 21 March 2005 the Hon Greg Pearce MLC asked a question of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which was taken on notice -

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Mr Haddad, what was the venue for the corporate planning events last week?

**MR HADDAD:** It was at the Quarantine Station at Manly.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** What was the duration? How many days?

**Mr HADDAD:** It was two days.

**The Hon. GREG PEARCE:** Could you give us, on notice, the total cost to the department of the event?

**Mr HADDAD:** Certainly, yes.

**Answer:**

The Quarantine Station Conference Centre was chosen by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources for its corporate planning workshop, consistent with Premier's Department guidelines that preference must be given to Government-owned training facilities. Thirty two staff, including regional staff, attended the workshop. The total cost of the venue was \$9,010.90. This comprised per person costs of:

Accommodation:	\$66
All meals/refreshments:	\$81
Venue hire:	\$40

**COMMUNICATION WITH THE RTA REGARDING THE F6 MOTORWAY**

On 21 March 2005 Ms Sylvia Hale MLC asked a number of questions of the Acting Director General, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources during Budget Estimates Supplementary Hearing 2 which were taken on notice—

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** In relation to the resurrection of the F6 motorway, what communication has occurred between the department and the RTA in the past two months?

**Mr HADDAD:** I am not aware of any communication, but I will take it on notice, if you do not mind. I will have to double check whether there have been formal or informal communications.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** What is the department's position in relation to the construction of the road? Does it support it? If so, under what conditions?

**Mr HADDAD:** Broadly speaking, we will have to look at it in the context of the work that we are doing in terms of the Metropolitan Strategy, really. That is basically it. We need to make sure that any of the infrastructure proposals, particularly the transport proposals, can fit into the Metropolitan Strategy context.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** Are you aware of any discussions between the Metropolitan Strategy team and the RTA about the F6?

**Mr HADDAD:** I am not personally aware, no, but as I said, we can clarify that as part of the answer to your previous questions.

**Ms SYLVIA HALE:** What are the implications for the resurrection of the F6? What are the implications for Cooks Cove development: does this mean it will not proceed?

**Mr HADDAD:** As I have said, the investigation into the feasibility of an F6 is what I understand has been announced, and what we are doing now is looking at it in the context of the Metropolitan Strategy as to whether it can go or not as part of the next step of the process of integrating transport and land use. So I think it is a bit too early to be able to pre-empt or to judge what are the implications of the potential project, which is at the very early stages of consideration in the context of that metro strategy.

**Answer:**

Two short phone calls between a mid-level DIPNR and RTA officer were made regarding the F6 corridor in the two months to 21 March 2005 in relation to an article in the St George and Sutherland Shire Leader, on 8 March 2005.

No formal communication, between the RTA and DIPNR, including Project Control Group meetings or provision of written advice was made in the two months to 21 March 2005.