

The Director
Budget Estimates
Room 812, Parliament House
Macquarie Street, Sydney, 2000

Attn: Ms Victoria Pymm
Principal Council Officer

Dear Ms Pymm,

Please find attached answers to questions taken on notice during my appearance before the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4 on 26 October 2007 in relation to the inquiry into the Budget Estimates 2007-2008 for the portfolio areas of Women, Science and Medical Research and Health (Cancer).

This information has also been emailed as requested.

Please feel free to contact Ms Jo Tilly in my office on jo.tilly@firth.minister.nsw.gov.au or ph: 9228-4174 should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Verity Firth MP
Minister for Women
Minister for Science and Medical Research
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)
Minister Assisting the Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water

19 November 2007

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2007-2008
26 OCTOBER 2007**

PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

1. The Chair asked the Minister for Women (page 3): Can you advise the Committee on the expenditure proposed, either directly or indirectly, on firstly publications, secondly public information campaigns, and thirdly any other promotional activity?

ANSWER:

Proposed 2007/08 expenditure by the Office for Women on publications (including "NSW Women" newsletters and support material for programs) \$90,500; public information campaigns (including International Women's Day poster) \$2,200; and other promotional activity (including OFW website, OFW brochures and programs flyers) \$3,000.

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

2. The Chair asked the Minister for Women: You may have to take this on notice, but it would be appreciated if you could give us a break down of how they are relegated between programs and the administration of programs, public information and promotional activities and policy coordination and advice. Would that be possible?

ANSWER:

The Office for Women is a small strategic unit and as such staff of the Office are required to work across the areas of policy coordination and advice, administration of programs, public information and promotional activities, and policy coordination and advice, depending on current projects and Ministerial priorities.

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3. The Chair asked the Minister for Women (page 5): Can you give us on notice a list of the (interdepartmental committees) you participate in?

ANSWER:

The Office for Women participates in the following interdepartmental committees:

- Apprehended Violence Legal Issues Committee
- NSW Department of Education and Training Advisory Group for Gender Equity in Education
- Housing and Human Services Senior Officers Group
- The Partnership Against Homelessness Sub-Committee of the Housing and Human Services Senior Officers Group
- Senior Officers Group for Volunteering
- NSW 16 Days of Activism to Stop Violence Against Women Working Party
- The Network of Government Agencies – Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Issues - Strategic Framework Implementation Group

In addition, the Assistant Director General (Policy) represents the Department for Premier and Cabinet, including the Office for Women, on:

- Human Services and Criminal Justice Senior Officers Group
- Violence Against Women State Management Group
- Working Group on Ageing

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WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH
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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

4. The Chair asked the Minister for Women (pages 5-6): With respect to pay equity, can you give us an indication of the gender pay gap within the New South Wales public service? [...] The question you have taken on notice involves providing the gender pay gap as a ratio of female to male full-time ordinary earnings within the New South Wales public sector.

ANSWER:

In the New South Wales public sector at June 2006, the average annualised full-time remuneration rate for non-casual employees was \$59,567 p.a. The average annualised rate for women was \$56,610 p.a. and the average annualised rate for men was \$63,940 p.a. The average annualised remuneration rate for females was 88.5 percent of the average for males.

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WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

5. The Hon. Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Women (page 13): Minister, how much is the Government providing for the Girl\$avvy Program in 2007-08 and what percentage increase does this represent over last year?

Ms Verity Firth: The budget for the Girl\$avvy Program in 2007-08 is \$70,000. In relation to that increase on last year, we will take that on notice.

The Hon. Don Hawin: You do not know what was spent on the program last year?

Dr Bigsworth: It is approximately the same budget as last year.

ANSWER:

The budget for the Girl\$avvy Program in 2007-2008 is the same as the budget for the Program 2006-2007.

Expenditure on the Girl\$avvy Program in 2006-2007 was \$67,721.

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WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

6. The Hon Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Women (page 14): The feedback received following the workshop at Mulwaree High School was that a number of female students from low-income families who might have benefited from the day did not attend due to lack of money. This was certainly the view of a lot of the teachers. Are you concerned about this Minister, and do you think the current arrangements need to be looked at again?

ANSWER:

A Girl\$avvy workshop was held at the Trappers Motel and Conference Centre on 5th September 2007 in response to a request from Mulwaree High School. Some 41 girls from Goulburn and Mulwaree High Schools attended. 14 students from Mulwaree who were registered to attend did not and the Office for Women (OFW) was advised by teachers that there had been a virus circulating and this had affected attendance at the workshop.

Planning for each workshop takes place in the preceding school term. Each school is sent comprehensive information on how the program operates including costs. OFW staff then regularly communicate with schools to ensure they understand the planning process of the program and also to discuss any areas of concern. Each school promotes the workshop to students differently, depending on what other programs or activities are operating.

Schools are charged \$12 per student to participate. This fee goes towards the costs of catering and workshop materials. The Office for Women supplements the overall cost, and the fee charged has not risen since the program began in 2002. The figure of \$12 has been calculated to make the program as accessible as possible to all young women.

I am advised that the contact at Mulwaree High School did not express any concerns about the cost of the Program, and that the school charged students \$12 for the workshop fee. I am advised that the school also charged the students \$2 for transportation costs.

As is usual practice students, teachers and all mentors were surveyed at the conclusion of the workshop. 40 students completed evaluation forms and each one stated she would recommend the workshop to others. Two teachers present also completed evaluation forms and stated they would recommend it to others.

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7. The Hon. Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Women (page 14): In terms of the GirlSavvy study, can you make that available for the Committee to look at?

ANSWER:

Since its inception in October 2002, GirlSavvy participants have completed an evaluation-survey after each workshop. These have been used to monitor the content and delivery of the Program.

An evaluation was conducted in November 2003 (covering the period January to September 2003) which measured the appropriateness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Program.

A Longitudinal Study was completed in October 2006 measuring longer term benefits to participants (up to 18 months after attending a workshop). I drew from the results of this study in my original answer to the Committee.

All of these evaluations are being compiled into a comprehensive report which measures the performance of the Program over time. The comprehensive evaluation report is not yet finalised. When it is complete, a copy can be made available to the Committee.

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8. The Hon. Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Women (page 15): Is there a document which describes the research agreement between the office and the department on one hand and the organisation?

Dr Bigsworth: Absolutely. We do not give any money without a contract.

The Hon. Don Harwin: Naturally. I am pleased to hear that. Can you provide a copy to the Committee to have a look at?

Ms Verity Firth: We will take that question on notice but we will ensure that you are provided with appropriate information.

The Hon. Don Harwin: In particular I am interested in knowing what the objectives of the project were as they were described in those documents. I cannot see why there would be a problem with providing the Committee with a copy of it.

Ms Verity Firth: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER:

The Office for Women entered into a Funding Agreement with the Inner City Legal Centre on 22 May 2006 to provide \$100,000 for the Women's Employment Rights Project. The purpose of the project as outlined in the Agreement was to:

“provide up to date employment law advice and information to community advocates and organisations assisting women. The project-

- will establish a 1800 statewide phone advice and information service for advocates. This service will be provided by part time solicitor located at ICLC office
- will design and deliver community legal education resources and workshops at key locations across NSW
- will monitor and document case studies
- target services working with vulnerable women, including women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, women in casual/part-time employment and award free areas, including home based employment”.

Strategies to achieve each objective were then further detailed in a Project Plan which formed an attachment to the Agreement.

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

9. The Hon. Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Women (page 16):
How much money has the NSW Government committed to implementing the recommendations of the New South Wales Ombudsman (report) into police practice in domestic violence?

ANSWER:

The recommendations contained in the report of the NSW Ombudsman, *Domestic Violence: Improving Police Practice* are directed towards the NSW Police, the Attorney General's Department and the Department of Community Services. The question should be referred to the Minister for Police, the Hon. David Campbell MP, the Attorney General, the Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC and the Minister for Community Services, the Hon. Kevin Greene MP.

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10. The Hon. Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Women (page16): In what way is the Office for Women liaising with police to help implement the Ombudsman's recommendations into police practice in domestic violence?

ANSWER:

The Office for Women facilitated a stakeholder forum between police, government agencies and domestic violence service providers to consider policing practice, standard operating procedures, police training strategies and corporate police policies on domestic violence. These were issues dealt with in the recommendations of the report of the NSW Ombudsman, *Domestic Violence: Improving Police Practice*. The Office for Women is also represented on the Apprehended Violence Legal Issues Consultative Committee, a multi-agency committee, including government and non-government agencies, that discusses legal and operational issues in relation to domestic violence. The police are also represented on this committee.

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PORTFOLIO: WOMEN

11. Dr John Kaye MLC asked the Minister for Women (page 18): Many of our public institutions are full of images and statues of men [...] Are there any conscious moves to change the imagery of our public institutions and buildings? [...] I would put it to you that it is worthwhile having a look at those institutions for the imagery they put across. I wonder if you would undertake to allocate some resources to start doing that project?

ANSWER:

As Minister for Women, I will write to the Speaker, President and my Ministerial colleagues to bring to their attention the imagery of our public institutions and buildings.

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2007-2008
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PORTFOLIO: MINISTER FOR SCIENCE & MEDICAL RESEARCH

1. Dr John Kaye MLC asked the Minister for Science and Medical Research (page 25): How does NSW's medical research funding of \$280m compare as a percentage of Gross State Product with that of other States?

ANSWER

Data is not collected in this way. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) does not provide a State by State breakdown of health and medical research funding.

The nearest available statistic is for all Government Research and Development funding as a proportion of GSP. The most recent statistics available indicate that in 2004-05 NSW invested 0.10% as a proportion of GSP, Victoria invested 0.09%, Queensland 0.15%, South Australia 0.17%, Western Australia 0.10%, Tasmania 0.02%, NT 0.24% and ACT 0.02%.

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WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

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PORTFOLIO: MINISTER FOR SCIENCE & MEDICAL RESEARCH

2. Dr John Kaye MLC asked the Minister for Science and Medical Research (page 27): Is NSW likely to cooperate with DITR's national nanotechnology strategy around health issues?

ANSWER

The NSW Government will work within the national framework to create a balanced environment that is safe yet supportive of innovation.

The most effective mechanisms for supporting and engaging in implementation of the Strategy are currently under consideration in NSW and are being coordinated by the Department of State and Regional Development, which will represent NSW on the Strategy Taskforce.

The Department of State and Regional Development has been involved in national discussions concerning the National Nanotechnology Strategy Taskforce. This process has involved representatives from the scientific and research communities, Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments.

As a result of these discussions the Commonwealth Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources (DITR) has now developed a National Nanotechnology Strategy, with \$21.5 million allocated for its implementation.

More recently, in October 2007 DITR wrote to the Department of State and Regional Development seeking its engagement in the implementation of the Strategy. The National Nanotechnology Strategy will include initiatives to

- address the health safety and environmental (HSE) impacts of nanotechnology on regulations and standards;
- undertake a public awareness and engagement program to provide balanced advice on nanotechnology;
- establish a nano-particle metrology capability at the National Measurement Institute; and
- facilitate a whole of government approach to nanotechnology through establishing the Australian Office of Nanotechnology.

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PORTFOLIO: MINISTER FOR SCIENCE & MEDICAL RESEARCH

3. The Hon Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister for Science and Medical Research (page 29): Regarding the Medical Research Support Program, as the special supplement to the current triennium that has been made over the past two years to overcome these shortfalls runs out on 30 June 2008, will the government extend the supplement to the third year of the current triennium so that New South Wales research institutes are not further disadvantaged?

ANSWER

Medical research is a clear priority for the NSW Government, with over \$280m committed since 2005 to initiatives including the Medical Research Support Program (MRSP), which was boosted by \$10m in the last triennium. Budgetary decisions, including those related to the final year of the MRSP funding triennium, are currently under consideration as part of the normal budget cycle.

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WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

**BUDGET ESTIMATES 2007-2008
26 OCTOBER 2007**

**PORTFOLIO: MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH
(CANCER)**

1. The Hon Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer) (page 29): Why will the Government not release a list of times for radiotherapy treatments across all the area health services?

ANSWER:

I am advised that NSW Health does not currently have a centralised system that can report information on waiting times for radiotherapy across all Area Health Services.

In order to obtain this information, advice would need to be sought from each Radiation Oncology Treatment Centre, which would only be accurate at that point in time.

Therefore, the diversion of public resources necessary to answer this question is not justifiable.

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

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**PORTFOLIO: MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH
(CANCER)**

2. The Hon Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer) (page 30):

- (1) How many x-rays and other medical scans have not been diagnosed by radiologists in New South Wales?
- (2) How many films and scans have been lost?

ANSWER:

I am advised:

- (1) The Department of Health does not collect specific data sorted by the professional grouping (eg; Radiologist, ED physician etc.) who read and interpret films and scans in NSW.
- (2) The Department of Health does not collect specific data regarding the number of lost films and scans.

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WOMEN, SCIENCE AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2007-2008

26 OCTOBER 2007

**PORTFOLIO: MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH
(CANCER)**

3. The Hon Don Harwin MLC asked the Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer) (page 31):

- (1) How many of the mobile vans visits have been cut this year, and in what locations?
- (2) In particular, I would like to know will the BreastScreen New South Wales mobile vans still be visiting Richmond?

ANSWER:

The Cancer Institute (NSW) has advised:

(1) The BreastScreen mobile van visit to Gosford was discontinued following the opening of the new BreastScreen facility within Gosford Hospital.

The BreastScreen mobile van did not visit:

- Revesby or Casula as clients now attend fixed screening locations in both Liverpool and Bankstown.
- Urunga in the North Coast, as clients now attend the nearby vans in Coffs Harbour and Nambucca.

(2) BreastScreen NSW - Sydney West is exploring options for a fixed screening site in the Hawkesbury area. In the absence of a new location being established beforehand, it is anticipated that the mobile van will revisit Richmond in April 2008.