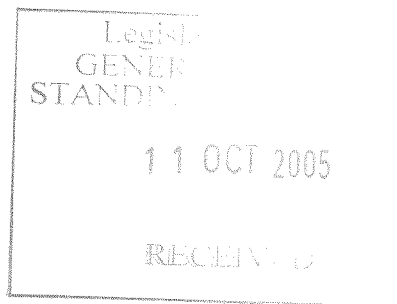




New South Wales
ATTORNEY GENERAL
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

10th October 2005

The Director
Budget Estimates
Room 812
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Director

I refer to the questions taken on notice at the Budget Estimates Hearing on 16th September 2005 in front of the General Purpose Standing Committee No 5.

Please find my answers attached.

Yours sincerely

BOB DEBUS

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No. 5

Friday 16 September 2005

Portfolio – Arts

Question

The Hon Rick Colless asked the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Bob Debus MP -

With the grants and subsidies from the Ministry slashed by 9.5 per cent from \$82.2 million to just \$74.3 million, how do you justify increases in the Ministry's operating expenses of 10.75 per cent from \$6.5 million to \$7.2 million, which is also stated on page 2-93?

Answer

The above question was answered at the committee hearing on Friday 16 September 2005.

Question

Mr Cohen asked the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Bob Debus MP –

The Opera House, an iconic public arts venue, recently hosted the Forbes summit, which was controversial and resulted in the entire precinct being closed off for security reasons. Was there any cost to your arts portfolio as a result of that process? I am not including, of course, the publicly funded police presence, but was there any cost to your portfolio by way of loss of revenue for other arts activities? Did your portfolio have to contribute in any other way?

Answer

The Sydney Opera House received a hire fee of \$100,000 from Forbes Inc. for the conference. This was offset by rental waivers totalling \$31,836 provided to retail and food and beverage outlets that closed during the conference, additional other operating costs of \$34,936 and an estimated loss of revenue of approx. \$40,000.

Question

Ms Sylvia Hale asked the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Bob Debus MP –

On the question of State Government assistance to public libraries, can you provide figures for the past 10 years outlining per head of population the amount of State Government subsidies to local public libraries?

Answer

The Hon Bob Debus MP –

I cannot guarantee absolutely that we could give information about the per capita funding, for instance. But of course we can supply information about funding over the past 10 years.

1996/97 - \$16.67m
1997/98 - \$16.67m
1998/99 - \$16.67m
1999/00 - \$17.92m
2000/01 - \$19.67m
2001/02 - \$19.92m
2002/03 - \$20.92m
2003/04 - \$21.99m
2004/05 - \$22.42m
2005/06 - \$24.80m

Question

The Hon Rick Colless, asked the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Bob Debus MP –

Are you able to tell me, then, how much money Tamworth Regional Council will receive in library grants from the State Government in this budget?

Could you please provide a detailed list to the Committee of exactly how much each regional council in New South Wales will receive in this budget for Library grants?

Answer

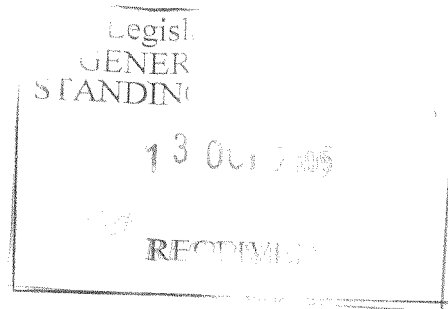
Library grants for 2005-06 are yet to be approved. A full list of 2004-05 library grants will be included in the State Library's 2004-05 annual report.



New South Wales
ATTORNEY GENERAL
MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
MINISTER FOR THE ARTS

13th October 2005

The Director
Budget Estimates
Room 812
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Director

I refer to the questions taken on notice at the Budget Estimates Hearing on 16th September 2005 in front of the General Purpose Standing Committee No 5.

Please find my answers attached.

Yours sincerely

BOB DEBUS



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5 BUDGET ESTIMATES 2005-06 INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

PORTFOLIO: Environment

ISSUE: Asbestos material on the site (Mawland Development)

QUESTIONS:

On 16 September 2005 the Mr Ian Cohen MLC asked the Attorney General, and Minister for the Environment, the Hon Bob Debus MP, the following question:

Has asbestos material been found on the site? (Mawland Development)

ANSWERS:

Asbestos products have been found at the Quarantine Station, for example in walls, roofs, tiles, pipes and gutters as is common in most buildings built between the 1940s and the 1970s.

It is in an inert form which is not considered a significant risk and so does not require any specific management unless and until any structures containing asbestos are demolished.

Asbestos materials present a risk to human health where it is likely that asbestos dust will be generated and inhaled.

Any such risk in the Mawlands redevelopment will be addressed in the implementation of the conservation management plan and the development approval conditions for the site.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Debus".

Bob Debus



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

**GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2005-06 INQUIRY
QUESTION ON NOTICE
No. 4**

PORTFOLIO: Environment

ISSUE: Wirong Dairy Operation, Cowra

QUESTIONS:

On 16 September 2005 the Hon Sylvia Hale MLC asked the Attorney General, and Minister for the Environment, the Hon Bob Debus MP, the following question -

Ms SYLVIA HALE: Minister, are you aware of an intensive dairying operation called Wirong in Forbes Road in Cowra?

Mr BOB DEBUS: No.

Ms SYLVIA HALE: These people have some difficulty, because you can stand near this property and you see the overflow pond is flowing across the neighbour's yard—this is containing faecal matter and contamination from the dairy—and Cowra Shire Council has built a culvert and pipe to direct that overflow into the Lachlan River. When people have complained to the Environment Protection Authority they are told is not your responsibility, it is council's responsibility. So, you will sit back and allow—

Mr BOB DEBUS: You did just make a number of quasi-legal assertions there.

Ms CORBYN: If allegations of the pollution of water were provided to us, we would talk to the appropriate people to find out what is occurring. One of the things that often happens is that people, because they feel they wish to challenge what councils have done, say that there is a pollution issue.

Ms SYLVIA HALE: They have challenged the council twice in the Land and Environment Court and have won. The place is still operating without development approval, and council is not acting and, rather, is assisting this diversion.

Ms CORBYN: I think we should take that on notice.

ANSWERS:

The Wirong dairy Ms Hale refers to is a 300 milking cow intensive dairy located 22 km from Cowra. The dairy is adjacent to the Lachlan River.

Cowra Shire Council is the appropriate regulatory authority under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act).

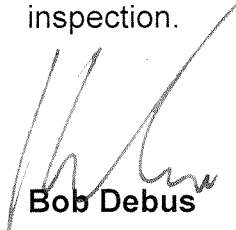
While the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is not the appropriate regulatory authority for the premises, it has provided technical support for Council in dealing with the issues.

Residents neighbouring the dairy recently complained that Cowra Shire Council had undertaken drainage works that were directing runoff water from the dairy to the Lachlan River.

As DEC is the appropriate regulatory authority for these drainage works, a DEC officer inspected the works on 22 August 2005 and found they were solely for the purpose of relieving road flooding and associated traffic safety concerns. The works did lack some sediment and erosion controls and DEC has raised this issue directly with Council.

DEC understands that Cowra Council has subsequently installed additional temporary sediment and erosion controls at the site and further permanent control works have been scheduled for construction before the end of October 2005.

DEC has also advised the neighbours of the results of the 22 August 2005 inspection.



Bob Debus



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5 BUDGET ESTIMATES 2005-06 INQUIRY QUESTION ON NOTICE

PORTFOLIO: Environment

ISSUE: Property valuation for Norwood and Oolambeyan purchases

QUESTIONS:

On 16 September 2005 the Hon Richard Colless MLC asked the Attorney General, and Minister for the Environment, the Hon Bob Debus MP, the following questions: -

What was the valuation that was supplied to the National Parks and Wildlife Service that was supervised by Mr Grant Kennett, who was regional manager of the State Valuation Office at that time?

You took on notice to give to us the valuation of Norwood that was supplied by the State Valuation Office. Can you tell me what you ended up paying for the property Norwood?

Will you undertake to supply to the Committee the valuation and the final sale price on completion of the sale of Yanga?

ANSWERS:

The Property Valuation Services' (the new State Valuation Office) market value range for the Norwood property was up to \$1.7 million. Norwood was purchased for this amount using, in part, funding provided by the Commonwealth Government.

Yanga was purchased at market price from the Department of Environment and Conservation funds. Contracts have been exchanged.

However, as some of the share cropping lands are to be sold next year, I am not able to say what the final net cost of the purchase will be. I can say that it will be **much less** than the ridiculously inflated figures of up to \$40 million being suggested by the Coalition MPs.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bob Debus', with a flourish at the end.

Bob Debus



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

**GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2005-06 INQUIRY
QUESTION ON NOTICE**

PORTFOLIO: Environment

ISSUE: Maintenance at the Manly Quarantine Station

QUESTIONS:

On 16 September 2005 the Hon Rick Colless MLC asked the Attorney General, and Minister for the Environment, the Hon Bob Debus MP, the following question:

In 1997-98 the Government spent \$621,217 on the maintenance and conservation of the Manly Quarantine Station, and by 2000-01 this had dropped to \$178,275. How much money did the Government spend on maintaining the Manly Quarantine Station in 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, and 2004-05?

ANSWERS:

Annual maintenance costs for the Quarantine Station are estimated to be between \$262,000 and \$392,000 for the years indicated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Debus".

Bob Debus



MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

**GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2005-06 INQUIRY
QUESTION ON NOTICE**

PORTFOLIO: Environment

ISSUE: Fire management

QUESTIONS:

On 16 September 2005 Ms Sylvia Hale MLC asked the Attorney General, and Minister for the Environment, the Hon Bob Debus MP, the following question:

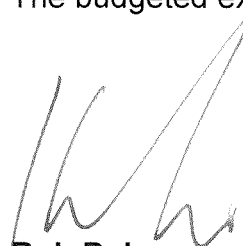
How much has been allocated to the Department of Environment and Conservation, including the National Parks and Wildlife Service, for fire management each year over the past five years? How much has been allocated for this year and for next year?

ANSWERS:

During the past five financial years, the Parks and Wildlife Division of DEC spent amounts of between \$2.3 million and \$4.3 million on fire related activities from its recurrent operating budget.

However, these amounts do not include salary costs associated with fire management, expenditure against external grants or fire-related insurance premiums. With these included, expenditure would be considerably higher.

The budgeted expenditure for 2005/2006 is \$2.6 million.



Bob Debus