

CORRECTED COPY

# GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No. 1

Tuesday 15 September 2009

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

## ARTS

The Committee met at 4.35 p.m.

### MEMBERS

Reverend the Hon. F. J. Nile (Chair)

The Hon. K. F. Griffin  
Dr J. Kaye  
The Hon. T. J. Khan

The Hon. C. J. S. Lynn  
The Hon. P. G. Sharpe  
The Hon. M. S. Veitch

---

### PRESENT

**The Hon. N. Rees**, *Premier, and Minister for the Arts*

**Communities NSW**  
**Ms Carol Mills**, *Director General*

---

**CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS**

**Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:**

**Budget Estimates secretariat  
Room 812  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

**CHAIR:** I declare this hearing for the inquiry into the budget estimates 2009-2010 open to the public. I welcome Premier Rees and Ms Carol Mills to the hearing, and I would like to put on record our appreciation for the officers who were here with you earlier, Mr Premier, from your office and other departments. I regret that I forgot to thank them.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I will relay that.

**CHAIR:** The Committee will now examine the proposed expenditure for the Arts portfolio. I refer witnesses, the audience and members of the media to my earlier statement about procedural matters such as the broadcasting of proceedings.

**CAROL MILLS,** Director General, Communities NSW, affirmed and examined:

**CHAIR:** We will commence with questions from the Opposition.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Premier, I am not sure if I should direct this to you or to your director general, but I understand that the Pacifika program, which is run by Mission Australia, has had its funding discontinued for the 2009-10 financial year. Is that correct?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Mr Lynn, I have to ask the director general to answer that.

**Ms MILLS:** I am sorry, I am not familiar with that program or its details, but I am happy to take it on notice.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** I understand the program basically is for Pacific Island youths and costs about \$2,500 a year to run. It compares obviously very favourably to the high cost of juvenile detention.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Is this a program in south-western Sydney?

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Yes.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I think we were at a school at Minto and I did give a grant to a group of Pacific Island young fellows.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** I am not sure if that is Pacifika—there are a number of them.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I may have to take it on notice, but I am certainly aware of the importance of arts, and particularly their indigenous art, and if there are programs that we can support that make a real difference on the ground I am happy to have a look at them.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** I would appreciate that because I am aware that Mission Australia runs a very good program and this one has the support of local police and so forth.

**Ms MILLS:** Could I make one additional comment? As it is not familiar to me, I do not believe it is currently funded through one of our programs.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** I think that is the problem.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Mr Lynn was suggesting that funding had been withdrawn, as I understood it.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** My understanding is that it has been discontinued for the year 2009-10.

**Ms MILLS:** As I said, it is unlikely to have received funding from Arts NSW, as it is not a program I am familiar with.

**CHAIR:** But you will take it on notice and check?

**Ms MILLS:** I will take it on notice.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Premier, following on from the 2008-09 budget estimates, it was stated that as a result of Minister Linda Burney's trip to the Cannes Film Festival serious interest had been expressed in productions in New South Wales, including a major animation feature with an estimated budget of about \$30 million, a joint United Kingdom-Australian co-production animated feature with an estimated budget of around \$40 million and an Australian-German live action feature film with an estimated budget around \$30 million. Could you advise how many of those productions have come to fruition and how much money has been injected into New South Wales?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Some of the productions that we have secured are *Guardians of Ga'Hoole*, *Tomorrow When the War Began*, post-production for the Peter Weir film *The Way Back*, a children's television series, *My Place*, and the New South Wales-German co-production television series *Dance Academy*. There is a \$300 million-plus direct investment in the New South Wales economy and an estimated 2,180 jobs to be supported. These visits, contacts and networks and the financial incentive packages we put in place, whether with regard to payroll tax or direct assistance, pay dividends. From memory, we have 55 per cent of the national creative arts workforce in Sydney.

This is an area, like events, that we have not pursued as energetically in the past as we perhaps could have. We have relied on our status as a global city to attract filmmakers, but that has changed. We are energetically pursuing these opportunities. The Minister assisting me, Virginia Judge, has worked with local councils to make them film friendly to attract more film productions to Sydney. As I said, we have incentive packages and I have gone out of my way to meet with executives who have come to New South Wales and Sydney looking at where they may invest. I have gone out of my way to meet very senior executives in key organisations to let them know we are deadly serious about attracting their investment and making films here.

Filmmaking, particularly out of the United States, can be heavily impacted by the value of the dollar. In some cases we have had a real struggle to retain pre-existing commitments to production in New South Wales because the dollar has appreciated so considerably since the initial decision was made. We just have to live with that, but where we can we pursue this investment. It helps support the creative industries, in particular, the digital media side of things, which is burgeoning. Kennedy Miller Mitchell is doing extraordinary work on that front almost on our doorstep as they make *Happy Feet 2*. We have to support it because we get the investment but also we have the talent here that should be nurtured.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** I understand that \$5.1 million has been allocated for New South Wales production of Australian-based screen projects. Can you advise how much of that has been allocated?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I will have to take the breakdown of that question on notice.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** The old King's School site at Parramatta is the property of the Department of Health and is managed by the Department of Commerce. How much is currently being utilised and by whom?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** My notes are silent on existing use. I will have to take that question on notice.

**Ms MILLS:** I cannot answer your question about the amount of space but the Department of Planning has two offices co-located in one of the buildings, which are the Heritage Council and the western Sydney regional office.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Could you take two more questions on notice? Who is responsible for what and what is the annual upkeep of the site? What amount is budgeted for any future plans for the site?

**Ms MILLS:** I will have to take those questions on notice.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** The National Art School receives government funding. What were the criteria for selecting the board members of the National Art School?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** From memory, the board members are Mark Tedeschi, Sandra Yates, two government appointees, and John Aquilina and Peter Watts. Each of those individuals has either made a longstanding contribution or has been directly involved in arts-related fields and brings managerial or other expertise to the role of board member. Earlier this year we completed a long-overdue and lengthy process of establishing independence of the Art School from the State Government. This had been a long-term issue. I

announced it at the graduation ceremony in April or May this year and it was well received by the school community, so much so that John Olsen gave me his beret, which now sits on my mantelpiece.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Will the National Art School still receive HECS status now that it is not overseen by the New South Wales Government?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** My understanding is that it continues to retain HECS status.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** How much has been spent upgrading facilities since 1 July last year?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Upgrading that facility? I would have to take that question on notice.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** In the 2008-09 budget the funding for the Art Gallery of New South Wales was cut by 2 per cent and I understand in the 2009-10 budget it has been cut by 5.6 per cent. Which projects or initiatives have been cut or will have to be cut as a result of the budget cuts?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** It appears the explanation for that is that during the 2008-09 period the Art Gallery acquired a significant painting by Cezanne that is now on display. I had a look at it the other day. That purchase attracted a major increase in donations from the previous year from the Art Gallery of New South Wales Foundation, the general public and so on, so we are not budgeting for those donations this year.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** So no projects or initiatives will be cut?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** That is my understanding.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** I refer to the Historic Houses Trust. In the 2008-09 budget its funding was cut by 1.4 per cent and I understand in the 2009-10 budget it has been cut by 1.9 per cent. What is the reason for the cut and which projects or initiatives have been affected or may be affected as a result?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I am advised that the balance of changes to budgets relates to income sourced from other than government funds. If you need more detail, I am happy to get that for you, but I would have to take that question on notice.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** Thank you. In regard to the Arts Funding programs, how much of the \$41.1 million for those programs will be spent on regional conservatoriums?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** A funding increase of \$2.1 million for regional conservatorium grants was announced in the budget, an extra \$2.1 million arising from the ministerial review of the regional conservatorium program, and that is in addition to the funding provided through the Department of Education and Training of some \$3½ million in the last financial year. There are 15 regional conservatoriums and 2 music centres in New South Wales that receive State Government funding, managed by the Department of Education and Training. The sum of \$1.4 million will be provided as a base increase, as recommended by the review, to increase salaries, with a number of teachers, students and schools benefiting from those regional conservatorium services. The balance of nearly \$700,000 will be allocated to a new program, managed by Arts NSW, to provide competitive grants to regional conservatoriums, to increase professional music performance and arts development in regional and rural areas. The conservatoriums have not previously been in the Arts Funding program, so this is additional funding for the program, long overdue, and I am delighted to be able to deliver it.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** How many new conservatoriums are expected to be finished within the next 18 months?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I think we are in the process of buttressing the work at the existing 15, rather than construction of any new conservatoriums.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** How much of the \$41.1 million for the Arts Funding programs comes from the Federal Government and how much comes from local government?

**Ms LEE RHIANNON:** I might ask Ms Mills to address that.

**Ms MILLS:** That component is entirely State funded. We leverage portion of that budget in partnerships with the Australia Council and other parts with the Federal Government, as well as with local government.

**The Hon. CHARLIE LYNN:** I have other questions, but those will be placed on notice.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Premier, in New South Wales, uniquely amongst all the States and Territories, funding for the local arts program is on an annual basis. In every other State, funding is based on a triennial basis. Why do we in New South Wales, when we fund local government for the arts program, do that on such a short-term basis?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** That is a good question. I do not know the background to that. Certainly, if I were an arts organisation, I would prefer triennial funding rather than annual funding. Let me look at it.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** If you would get back to us that would be great.

**Ms MILLS:** Could I make an additional comment?

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Yes, please.

**Ms MILLS:** Although some portions of our program are annual, a significant portion of the overall budget is allocated on a triennial basis.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Specifically, the part that goes through local government arts programs is annual, is that correct?

**Ms MILLS:** The funding to the Local Government and Shires Associations is triennial, and then we have a range of small project-based funding which is annual. So there is a difference between our organisational support and individual projects.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** So you do provide ongoing organisational support on a three-yearly basis?

**Ms MILLS:** To a significant number of organisations, yes.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Including local government?

**Ms MILLS:** It varies across the State. If you want specifics, I will have to take that question on notice.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** If you could give us details on notice.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Have any councils raised an issue with you that warrants specific attention?

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** I must admit, I do not have that information here, but we will get to you which ones we are specifically concerned about. I move on, Premier, to ask a quite significant question. We note that at the University of Western Sydney the creative and performing arts field is undergoing a significant diminution in activity, with some fairly major cuts. Will that have the effect of concentrating visual arts in particular degrees into the inner city?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I would certainly hope not. Ultimately, it is a matter for the university. As it happens, my wife graduated from UWS with a visual arts degree. My passion and commitment for western Sydney is well documented. If that were the outcome of university decisions, I would be very concerned.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Is it possible for the State Government to talk to the University of Western Sydney and point out the importance of maintaining, in particular, visual arts in western Sydney?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Ultimately, it is a matter for the university, but I am happy to have that discussion with the appropriate person if it emerges.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** I move from western Sydney to the Central Coast, where I note you have a part share in a holiday home.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** One-third.

**The Hon. TREVOR KHAN:** I thought it was a quarter.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** It used to be.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** As you know, we have a particular concern about a concert hall and arts space for the Central Coast. There is no large performing arts space on the Central Coast. I understand that you have met with local councils and communities and discussed the proposal. Can you update the Committee on where that is up to, and what support the State Government will give to the creation of performing arts space for the Central Coast?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I do not recall having that discussion. That is not to say I did not, but I do not recall it. Recently we had a number of community cabinets and State Plan consultations on the Central Coast, the most recent being at Mingara. The central issues raised there were around local transport and health services and the need to cement the regional identity. Clearly, a performing arts and convention centre in a place like Gosford, if that is what you are referring to, would be a very positive element of confirming a local identity. I am advised that we are partnering with Gosford City Council in the master planning and redevelopment at Gosford. Should the community decide that it wants a performing arts and convention centre within the city centre, it will be the task of the design team to provide options. There is still some way to go before the master plan is completed. I understand a performing arts and convention centre group has been established in the area.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** That is a non-government group, is it not?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** As I understand from these notes, yes. Its proposal plans to accommodate around 1,600 people for a variety of musical and theatrical performances. A feasibility assessment is underway and a recommended model has been developed, but it will need a 1,000-seat capacity and studios to serve arts, dance and so on. There has been ongoing conjecture around the most suitable site. The preferred site apparently is Gosford Primary School. My point is that the locals are still in the process of planning this, and we have not yet received any formal application for funding. It strikes me that that if council wants to take advantage of the \$35 million Community Partnerships funds, that is probably an appropriate place to start.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** My next question relates to a report in yesterday's *Sydney Morning Herald* that is casting doubt on whether the film *Green Lantern* will still be produced in New South Wales. Are you aware of reports that raise those doubts?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I think you were out of the room about a quarter of an hour ago when I talked about the impact of the fluctuations in the Australian dollar. That does have a very real impact on investment decisions. I am aware of reports that the production may be relocated overseas, but this has not been confirmed by Warner Bros at this time.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Will you be taking specific steps to secure that film in New South Wales?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** We have already offered a significant incentive package for them to locate here. Ultimately, it would require boosting that. Warner Bros will need to make a decision. There is a limited amount of assistance that you can provide to international investors in filmmaking. As yet, we have not been approached by Warner Bros to revise the existing offer.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Are you convinced that the way that investments are made through Screen NSW is the most cost-effective way of making investments in securing film production in Sydney or in New South Wales in general?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** That is a good question. I asked that question of the director general when I took on this job. I am satisfied that there is no clear and obvious alternative approach that would be superior, put it that way.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Are you actively looking for alternative approaches?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** The department has an ongoing eye for doing things differently to improve outcomes. If there is a superior option that has been put to you, we would be happy to consider it.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Arts NSW has only one biennial indigenous history fellowship, one indigenous arts fellowship and no targeted indigenous grants program. Should this program be expanded? Can it be expanded?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I will ask the director general to answer that question.

**Ms MILLS:** Although we have certain categories, we also have a large number of opportunities for indigenous people to apply through specific programs. For example, the Arts Strategy for Western Sydney has dedicated funds for indigenous people. We target our assistance to indigenous people also in a number of other areas. Presently, we are in the process of developing an indigenous arts strategy in consultation with Aboriginal artists across the State. In the last year I can report that 33 different Aboriginal arts and cultural projects and programs received direct financial assistance from my department, including \$1.2 million from the Arts Funding Program. Over the next four years our focus, as I said, is to commence and implement an Aboriginal arts and cultural strategy, which will provide a planned approach to strengthen our support for Aboriginal arts and culture, looking at more appropriate infrastructure, professional development and arts funding programs.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** Could I ask you to take this question on notice and to give the Committee a list of the entire arts funding for Aboriginal people in New South Wales?

**Ms MILLS:** We can certainly provide a list of all the programs and projects that were funded in the last financial year.

**CHAIR:** Ms Mills, your title is Director General, Communities NSW. What is the reason for using the term "communities" and not Arts NSW?

**Ms MILLS:** Arts NSW is one division within my department. In addition to arts the department also contains the division of sport and recreation, the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing, the Office of Volunteering, the Office of Western Sydney, Centennial Parklands and a range of other places that are probably too long to quote today.

**CHAIR:** You are the director general for all of those?

**Ms MILLS:** That is correct.

**CHAIR:** If I want to ask a question about reducing poker machine numbers in New South Wales—

**Ms MILLS:** I would be happy to answer that question with my Minister for gaming on Friday.

**CHAIR:** You will be attending that estimates hearing with him?

**Ms MILLS:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** The budget papers refer to maintenance of property managed by Arts NSW. I assume you cover that?

**Ms MILLS:** Yes, that is correct.

**CHAIR:** Is there a property register?

**Ms MILLS:** Each of our divisions currently has a property register. We are looking, as part of the creation of Communities, at being able to consolidate that with contemporary software to ensure we have the best possible database.

**CHAIR:** Is it possible to access that, or are you still preparing it?

**Ms MILLS:** No. If you are interested in the number of properties for which Arts NSW is directly responsible, I can certainly provide that to you.



**CHAIR:** The budget papers refer to the Aboriginal Birth Certificate Project. Are you responsible for that?

**Ms MILLS:** Yes I am, under my sports portfolio.

**CHAIR:** So it comes under the sport portfolio and not arts?

**Ms MILLS:** No. Again, I am happy to answer that question on Friday.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I am happy for her to answer that on Friday too, Chair.

**CHAIR:** The budget papers refer to a new arts funding program. What is new about it? What is different from the past?

**Ms MILLS:** In late 2007 Minister Sartor, who was then the arts Minister, commissioned an independent review by Sandra Yates and Mike Collins into the performance of the Arts Funding Program. They made approximately 28 recommendations about ways in which we could streamline the process and provide greater speed and service to arts organisations. As a result, about 12 months ago we introduced the first round of a new program. We reduced the number of categories of grants from 23 to approximately 4. We have increased the percentage of triennial funding. We have changed the methodology for negotiating grants with large long-term organisations with whom we have extensive partnerships. We have focused a greater amount of effort on project funding in regional New South Wales and we have significantly decreased the turnaround time between application and announcement of funding. Previously, it was in excess of six months. For the 2009 funding year we turned that around to six weeks.

**CHAIR:** Premier, following your earlier reply about your support for promoting the production of films in New South Wales, in the past red tape has created problems for local councils, which has discouraged some film companies. Are you able to resolve those problems or override council so that the State Government can approve film productions?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** The short answer is yes.

**CHAIR:** Not using part 3A or something like that?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I did not say that. The short answer is yes. The local government filming protocol is a new approach. It makes it easier for filmmakers to get access to prime locations by giving all councils one set of rules for processing approvals. Councils must now approve all filming applications unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any charges to the filmmakers must reflect the cost to council of the approval and of the services provided. So, councils are not to seek to make a profit out of filmmaking, but they are entitled to cost recovery. State agencies and authorities also have adopted new film friendly principles as outlined in my 2008 memorandum, making New South Wales film friendly. We have also established a code of conduct for the screen industry to ensure that filming is sensitive to community needs. I am advised that both the protocol and the code of conduct were welcomed by the Screen Producers Association of Australia and the Local Government and Shires Associations. We have improved things. In due course, if necessary, we will review it and further improve it.

**CHAIR:** You mentioned councils not using film companies to make a profit. Do you have a procedure for reviewing what councils charge?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** I will ask the director general to answer that.

**Ms MILLS:** We have established a set of guidelines for council to give indicative assistance for them in setting fees and also for filmmaking companies to understand what the fees are likely to be. We have what basically we are calling a one-stop shop within Screen NSW, a former television office, for any issues to be raised if there are concerns about any matter to do with film friendly, whether that be accessing a location, fees charged or the type of services people might require while filming.

**CHAIR:** That is a very good idea. Obviously, you have advised all the film companies about the one-stop shop?

**Ms MILLS:** That is right.

**CHAIR:** Both local and overseas?

**Ms MILLS:** Very extensive assistance to local filmmakers. We also work through the major companies—Warner Bros and others—to inform them that the service is available. We also work very closely with organisations such as Fox Studios, which obviously is pivotal in the infrastructure it provides. We have a large number of examples where the new policy has been successful even within my own sport portfolio. For example, in the Centennial Parklands we have significantly changed the fee structure and made it much easier for people to utilise that space.

**The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN:** Premier, I refer to page 2-85 of Budget Paper No. 3. What is the Government doing to encourage children in New South Wales to visit and enjoy our cultural facilities?

**Mr NATHAN REES:** Thank you for the question. The recent budget provided significant funding to the State's cultural institutions. Last night I was at the Australian Museum opening the Pharaohs exhibition. I understand that at the State Library this morning a speed reader read the latest Dan Brown novel in two hours, the quickest in the world. The *Da Vinci Code* did not pass my 30-page test. I have not read it. The Historic Houses Trust, the Art Gallery, the Opera House and the Powerhouse Museum, along with more than 70 counterparts in suburban and regional New South Wales, form a very significant nucleus of arts activity. We want to see our children and young people use those institutions more widely by ensuring that the arts are open and accessible to all.

There is an extensive body of research which demonstrates that positive academic and social benefits arise because of learning the arts. Exposure to art, ideas and high-level creativity helps developing minds to reach their full potential.

In July we unveiled what we call the Adventure Challenge to complement the popular Reading Challenge for primary schoolchildren. This little booklet is the *Adventure Passport*. The Opposition may laugh, but I get more correspondence on this than on any other matter. The Premier's Adventure Challenge encourages primary schoolchildren and their families to visit cultural venues.

**Dr JOHN KAYE:** "Adventure challenge" sounds like a caucus meeting.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** No—they are much calmer! The Adventure Challenge utilises an incentive scheme called the Kids' Adventure Passport. It gives each child free entry to participating venues on weekends, public holidays and school holidays. Children who collect three passport stamps from the museums and galleries receive a colourful Adventure Challenge certificate. The State's six great cultural institutions have taken the lead—the Australian Museum, the State Library, the Historic Houses Trust, the Art Gallery, the Opera House and the Powerhouse Museum—but they are being fully supported by 76 museums and galleries across the State, of which, I am pleased to say, 18 are in western Sydney including the Campbelltown City Gallery and Lewers bequest gallery.

We have more than 620,000 primary schoolchildren who are eligible for this program. By early September we had more than 700 children who had completed the challenge. We get correspondence on this issue every day, so it is a winner—the kids and their families love it. John of South Penrith writes:

Dear Mr Premier I want to thank you for a great idea: The adventure challenge!

Dad, my brother Michael and I had such a great time together.

We are going to try and fill our passports and get to some more museums.

A mum from Beecroft writes:

During the July School Holidays my children (3 girls) and I went to 5 museums in total. It was great it made it affordable something that I was not in a position to do previous.

The mother of Dylan and Joseph wrote:

Thank you for developing and promoting this new challenge. They found the three places they have visited so far very interesting and fun. Because they have the passports, they also plan to visit a few more museums and galleries this year.

Dylan, who is seven, even made a Power Point presentation of photos from our day out and showed them to his class for news, to encourage them to join the challenge.

And, finally, Martin's mother wrote:

Thanks you gave the chance for kids to learn more special knowledge and Australian history.

"Premier's Adventure Challenge" is very good action. It is to let my son discovered many different things from museums and galleries. He enjoys and has fun in these.

I brought him to visit Australian Museum; Museum of Sydney; Art Gallery of NSW; Australian National Maritime Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art; State Library of NSW; Susannah Place Museum; Sydney Opera House; Sydney Observatory ... during school holidays and on weekends. We both like and are interested to see anything happens in museums. Although I help him send the claim form, I will still bring him to visit again and other museums.

Thanks again! And wish another plan coming soon.

So this has been well received. Of course that is why we invest more than \$200 million each year in the arts—not as an elite playground to secure the Cézannes, but because it makes a real difference to kids' lives.

**The Hon. MICHAEL VEITCH:** Chair, I had an outstanding question about a regional conservatorium, but the Hon. Charlie Lynn stole it, so I will forgo my questions at this time.

**Mr NATHAN REES:** These locations are not always peaceful places. I wandered over to the Art Gallery on Friday for a quiet moment, and there was a school from Wentworthville there.

**CHAIR:** Premier, as there are no further questions, I thank you for your attendance. You have had a long afternoon. We appreciate your attendance at the estimates committee hearing. We also thank Ms Mills and her staff for attendance.

**(The witnesses withdrew)**

**The Committee proceeded to deliberate.**