

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 5 – LEGAL AFFAIRS

Thursday 12 September 2019

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

SPORT, MULTICULTURALISM, SENIORS AND VETERANS

CORRECTED

The Committee met at 9:30

MEMBERS

The Hon. Robert Borsak (Chair)
The Hon. Niall Blair
The Hon. Rose Jackson
The Hon. Taylor Martin
The Hon. Shaoquett Moselmane
The Hon. Walt Secord
The Hon. Penny Sharpe
Mr David Shoebridge (Deputy Chair)
The Hon. Natalie Ward

PRESENT

The Hon. John Sidoti, *Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans*

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**

The CHAIR: Welcome to the public hearing for the inquiry into budget estimates 2019-2020. Before I commence I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people, who are the traditional custodians of this land. I would also like to pay respect to elders past and present of the Eora nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginals present. I welcome Minister John Sidoti and accompanying officials to this hearing. Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

Today's hearing is open to the public and is being broadcast live via the Parliament's website. In accordance with the broadcasting guidelines, while members of the media may film or record Committee members and witnesses, people in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photography. I would also remind media representatives that they must take responsibility for what they publish about the Committee's proceedings. The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available from the Secretariat.

All witnesses in budget estimates have the right to procedural fairness according to the procedural fairness resolution adopted by the House in 2018. There may be some questions that a witness could answer if only they had more time or with certain documents to hand. In those circumstances witnesses are advised that they can take a question on notice and provide an answer within 21 days. Any messages from advisers or members of staff seated in the public gallery should be delivered through the Committee secretariat. Minister, I remind you and the officers accompanying you that you are free to pass notes and to refer directly to your advisers seated at the table behind you.

Transcripts of this hearing will be available on the web from tomorrow morning. Finally, would everyone please turn their mobile phones to silent for the duration of the hearing. All witnesses from departments, statutory bodies or corporations will be sworn prior to giving evidence. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn your oath of office as a member of Parliament.

MICHAEL COUTTS-TROTTER, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, on former oath
KAREN JONES, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Office of Sport, affirmed and examined
JOSEPH LA POSTA, Chief Executive Officer, Multicultural NSW, sworn and examined
CAROLINE MACKANESS, Director, Office for Veterans Affairs, sworn and examined
KERRIE MATHER, Chief Executive Officer, Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust, sworn and examined
SIMON DRAPER, Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure NSW, affirmed and examined
PAUL DOORN, Chief Executive Officer, Venues NSW, sworn and examined

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans open for examination.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Is this your first budget estimates?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is my first budget estimates.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: When did you become Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: After being elected this year in March, after the elections.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: In around April?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Since becoming a Minister and assuming responsibility for the various portfolios that you are being examined on today, did you fill out the appropriate declarations to the Premier and Cabinet, Parliament and any other body that you should file them with, involving your responsibilities as a Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I did. I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Are you aware of a Ministerial Code of Conduct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am aware of a Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Who does it apply to?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with that Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The word "Minister" also expands to parliamentary secretaries. Are you aware of that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: When did you become a parliamentary secretary?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

The CHAIR: What is your point of order?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: My point of order is that this budget estimates is to ask about the Minister's role as a Minister, not about parliamentary secretaries. If the Hon. Walt Secord wants to talk about parliamentary secretaries then he can ask them to come along. This is about the member's role as a Minister. I therefore ask that questions do not relate to anything other than his time as a Minister be ruled out of order.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: To the point of order: The Ministerial Code of Conduct, which the Minister is obliged to follow, not only requires him to disclose material now but also has a continuous disclosure obligation if there is any material in the past that he has failed to disclose, including in his time as a parliamentary secretary. He is bound by that Ministerial Code of Conduct by dint of being a Minister and clearly these questions are in order.

The CHAIR: There is no point of order. Keep questioning.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The Hon. Niall Blair mentioned three times in his point of order the role of a Minister. My question goes directly to that. Niall, you said three times that questions have to relate to the Minister's role as a Minister.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Can I answer the questions now? Are you asking me questions?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order—

The CHAIR: Order! I will place members on calls to order. I will hear the line questioning before I hear the point of order. The member has not even got the words out of his mouth yet.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: There is no breach. He has not asked a question yet.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is not in relation to the question.

The CHAIR: What is it in relation to?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I ask that members treat each other with courtesy as we are obliged to do in the Chamber. That members address each other with courtesy and not direct comments to "Niall".

The CHAIR: I did not hear that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I said "the Hon. Niall Blair".

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, you did not. You said "Niall". I ask for courtesy in our dealings with each other as is expected.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: As referred to three times by the Hon. Niall Blair, questions should relate to the role of a Minister. Minister, I give you this opportunity: How do you reconcile your role as a Minister in the Government with being a property developer?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. I have met all my obligations, Mr Secord.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Your obligations involve—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When you relate to property disclosures, I comply with my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Is this the answer we are going to be getting all day long: "I have complied with my obligations."?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am telling the truth and I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you think that accepting a donation from a property developer is acceptable behaviour?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: As you would be aware, Mr Secord, political donations are a matter for the NSW Liberal Party.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you not know that this man was a property developer when you were in business with this man?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you to my previous answer: Political donations are a matter for the Liberal Party.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It was a fundraiser, hosted by you. I have seen footage of you performing, singing at the fundraiser. You say that you did not know that the man involved in this was a property developer when you had business interests with him?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Property developer interests.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What I am saying to you, Mr Secord, is that political donations are a matter for the NSW Liberal Party.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So you just invite anyone to your fundraiser, take the money and say that it is a matter for head office?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, you have done quite well in the past few years. You have gone from being a fruit merchant to Parliament, to having a 10 per cent share in a \$70 million project. You have done quite well in your property—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order: This is nowhere near his portfolio. This is now a question about the Minister before he was even in Parliament.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It relates to his conduct as a Minister.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It relates to his conduct in relation to the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I am allowed to take a point of order to the Chair. If you want to invite debate, I am happy to do so. I have raised a point of order; it is with the Chair.

The CHAIR: A response to the point of order?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: This is a preliminary question leading into the issues directly to deal with the NSW Ministerial Code of Conduct. The Minister has claimed that he has made disclosures, as he is required to do, and we are trying to get to the point where we can ask him questions that directly relate to that, because it is clear that he has not.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Further to the point of order: Saying to the Minister that he has done quite well and relating him as a fruit merchant has nothing to do with his current portfolio.

The CHAIR: Continue questioning.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, when you were Parliamentary Secretary did you disclose the 10 per cent share in the property that everyone in this room knows I am referring to?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have always disclosed and complied with my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you give donations to the Liberal Party?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, when you say that you complied with the declaration, how did you declare in relation to the Ministerial Code of Conduct to do with Cudgegong Road?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have always complied with my obligations when it comes to property disclosure.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Take me through what you had to do. It is fairly well set out in the Ministerial Code of Conduct. I am very happy to take you through it but I would like you to explain to me how you declared this interest and to whom.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is all public knowledge. A property disclosure—I have complied with my—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Only until recently—*The Daily Telegraph* has done a pretty good job in making it very public knowledge. Tell me how you actually declared it. Tell me the process in which you declared this.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: My property disclosures are there for everybody to see and I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Okay, all right. We are going to have to take you through this then. The Ministerial Code of Conduct says the following:

A Minister, in the exercise or performance of their official functions, must not act dishonestly, must act only in what they consider to be in the public interest, and must not act improperly for their private benefit or for the private benefit of any other person.

Do you agree with that, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I do.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: In relation to conflicts of interest:

A Minister must not knowingly conceal a conflict of interest from the Premier.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is correct. It goes on:

A Minister must not, without the written approval of the Premier, make or participate in the making of any decision or take any other action in relation to a matter in which the Minister is aware they have a conflict of interest.

Is that correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, have you got a ruling from the Premier that says that you do not have a conflict of interest in relation to the land that you have an interest in around Cudgegong Road?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Do you have a ruling from the Premier?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Why can't you tell us whether you have a ruling from the Premier? This is very important—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: —because it goes to the heart of the Ministerial Code of Conduct, which says that if you do have a conflict—which you seem to do given that you own property in that area that has gone from \$4 million to being worth \$70 million while you were the Parliamentary Secretary and while you are currently a Minister, participating at the table in Cabinet deliberations. Do you have a ruling from the Premier in relation to your participation in those decisions?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What I will say is that you are absolutely wrong. I have always met my obligations. I conduct myself with the highest level of integrity.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, let's get serious here. You did not declare land that you owned since 2007 until 2016 after there were stories in the paper about it. Let's move aside from your hiding behind "I always comply with my disclosures". You have been shown not to do that already.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, I put to you that you have only revealed—the only reason we know about this property—is because *The Daily Telegraph* frogmarched you into confessing.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is wrong. I have always conducted myself with the highest level of standards and I am a man of integrity. I refer you back to my previous answer that I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you conceal your conflict of interest from the Premier of the State?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You are wrong. I have always conducted myself—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Is there or is there not a written ruling from the Premier that allows you to participate in Cabinet meetings when anything is to do with the metro?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations and I make—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: How are you able to be a Parliamentary Secretary for Transport without having a ruling from the Premier?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The Parliamentary Secretary does not sit in Cabinet.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, but the parliamentary—so you do understand that the Ministerial Code of Conduct applies to Parliamentary Secretaries.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I do. I have already answered that question.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You were the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, were you not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Are you saying to me that you were not required to make all these declarations when you were the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What I am saying to you is I have made all my declarations and I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Why can't you tell us whether you have got a ruling from the Premier that allows you to participate in this decision-making?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am answering your question: I have met all my—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Are you trying to cover up for the Premier? Have you not told the Premier?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, what I am saying to you is that I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Tell us how you have done that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am telling you: I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: But you clearly have not. If we want to go through your pecuniary interests from 2012, I am happy to do it. I have got them here. I am happy to take you through it.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is a public document.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes, and there are large omissions from it: There is land that you bought and have owned since 2007 that has never been declared, there are rental properties that you have that you clearly own in Five Dock that have not been declared in terms of income. You cannot sit here and expect this Committee to accept that you have declared everything when you have not, and when you can't even explain whether you have got a proper ruling. If all of your conflicts of interest are in order, you have a ruling from the Premier. Just tell us that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am telling you: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I take you to schedule 1 part 1 of the NSW Ministerial Code of Conduct. It says:

Part 1 Prohibited interests

1 Shareholdings

(1) A Minister must not hold or acquire, whether legally or beneficially, any security or other interest in any public or private company or business except:

...

(b) where the Premier, being satisfied that the interest is unlikely to raise any conflict of interest or that any potential conflict of interest can be appropriately managed, has issued a ruling that the particular interest may be held or acquired.

Do you have a ruling or not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Well, there is something wrong with the obligations then.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: There is something fairly seriously wrong. You do understand where this code of conduct came from? You understand where this all came from—about the need to show integrity in public. Surely, Minister, you do not think that being splashed across the paper, being shown to have interests that are undeclared, has meant that you have met with your disclosures and you are upholding the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I say to you again that I have always acted and conducted myself with the highest level of integrity, and I will continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, how can you say that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I will continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You have got property that you have not declared, you have got rental income that you have not declared, you have a property deal that you have a 10 per cent stake in that has gone from \$4.1 million to be worth \$70 million when you were the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and yet you cannot tell us whether you got special permission from the Premier to participate in this? All you are hiding behind is that you have made the right disclosures when it is clear that you have not been able to meet that basic requirement.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Ms Sharpe, what I say to you, as the Parliamentary Secretary at the time, it is ludicrous to even suggest that I had any involvement in any decision-making processes.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Did you make a declaration, as you are required to under the Ministerial Code of Conduct, when you became Parliamentary Secretary for Transport in relation to your landownings in these areas?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That does not answer the question. Yes or no: Did you declare as required?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have made all my declarations and I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, I ask you a simple yes-or-no question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have just actually given you the answer.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you conceal your conflict of interest from the Premier of the State—yes or no?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You are happy to throw the Premier under the bus here. The Premier has very clear obligations in relation to the Ministerial Code of Conduct; she is responsible for administering it. Your colleague yesterday was thinking about referring you to ICAC as a result of these stories. Let's understand here. Can you get the Premier off the hook at least? Did she or did she not give you a ruling in relation to your conflict of interest in these matters?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It is not an answer.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is. I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, did you rehearse these answers in front of a mirror this morning?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order—

The CHAIR: What was that question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I said did he rehearse—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: —these answers in front of the mirror this morning.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I have a point of order, Mr Chair.

The CHAIR: The question is out of order.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, we want to go on. If you are not going to answer around disclosures, we will come back to that. I point to part 2 of the schedule in relation to the Ministerial Code of Conduct under the Independent Commission Against Corruption Amendment Regulation, which says:

A Minister must divest any such interest before or, if that is not practicable, as soon as practicable after appointment.

What have you divested, as a Minister, in relation to your property holdings?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have provided all my disclosures and I comply—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It is not about disclosures; it is about divestment.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: —with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, you do understand what "divestment" means.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Yes. And what I am saying to you is that I have met all the requirements.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: How can you meet the requirements when you have got a 10 per cent ownership in a land that is now worth \$70 million? You are set to make—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That is just the development application [DA] cost; it is probably worth a great deal more than that.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is right, but even on the base level you are set to make \$7 million out of this deal, are you not, Minister?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: A short walk from the train station. That property that your Government approved is a short walk from the train station. Are you going to sit here and tell us that you had no knowledge whatsoever? Yes or no. Did you have knowledge or not? Yes or no.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Let him answer the question. You have asked a question. Let him answer it before you cut him off.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: The answers are pathetic and he is not answering the question at all.

The CHAIR: Order! Let the Minister answer the question.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you have inside information? Yes or no.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have always complied with my obligations. Can I put to you that it is insulting that you would even suggest that I had any involvement in the decision-making process. You are wrong.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We are not saying that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You are wrong.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We are not saying that. We are saying that you are insulting the people of New South Wales for your failure to adhere to the Ministerial Code of Conduct. The code of conduct makes it very clear, its first premises are very basic: Ministers must be seen to work in the public interest and not for private benefit. How do you explain your landholdings, your lack of disclosure and your lack of permission from the Premier in relation to a ruling that allows you to sit at the Cabinet table, and how do you think your dealings are bringing trust to the people of New South Wales when they think that this Government is working on their behalf?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have done absolutely nothing wrong. I work extremely hard for the people of New South Wales as a member of Parliament. It is a position I honour and respect and I have always, always fulfilled my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You have not done that. Minister, do you not even accept that your pecuniary interest form did not declare land that you had owned for many years and is yet to declare rental income?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: No, you don't.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you don't.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I do.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: That is why you are here. That is why everyone is looking at you today. You do not comply.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Saying that you comply does not change it. You do not comply.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The CHAIR: Are you taking a point of order?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: While the Hon. Walt Secord may wish to make a statement, I ask that he direct questions to the witnesses in lieu of statements.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: All I want to know is how do you fully comply? Saying that you comply does not comply.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations, Mr Secord.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: When was the last time you spoke to the Premier?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I speak to the Premier on many occasions.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you speak to the Premier before you gave evidence today?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. I am saying to you that any discussions I have with the Premier—and not that I have or have not—are matters for the Premier and I. What I am saying to you—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I don't think you are telling the truth here today.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I always tell the truth and I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You have not complied.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, how do you explain your failure to declare property that you have owned on your pecuniary interest register since 2012?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, your answer actually makes no sense. This Committee is serious business. We are here to hold the Government to account and to inquire into whether the probity of New South Wales is being upheld by Ministers such as yourself. It is a cop-out and it is unacceptable for you to simply hide

behind an answer that is not an answer. These are very simple questions. If you have complied, you should be able to provide us with information about it. I refer you again to the duty to disclose:

A Minister must promptly give notice to the Premier of any conflict ... that arises in relation to any matter.

What information have you provided to the Premier in relation to your land ownings?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Ms Sharpe, I refer you back to my previous answer.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, you swore an oath when you assumed responsibility as Minister of the Crown. You have a responsibility to tell the truth today at this inquiry. Referring us repeatedly to your declaration is not enough. We have given you a yes or no question. Did you conceal your conflict of interest from the Premier?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. To suggest that I have had any involvement in this is—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not what we are suggesting. You are required to disclose conflicts of interest.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Let him answer the question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: To suggest I have used my—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: All right, we will let him but we know where this is going.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Show some courtesy.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We will let him do it. Let's see.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: All witnesses should be treated with courtesy.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The floor is yours, Minister.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: He can clean this up right now.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Tell the truth.

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you, Mr Secord.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, the floor is yours. Tell the truth.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I always tell the truth, Mr Secord, and can I say to you that to suggest that I have had any involvement in decision-making is ludicrous.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It is not what we are suggesting.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is exactly what you are suggesting.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, we are suggesting that you need to follow the code of conduct and we want you to tell us how you have.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have followed the code of conduct and I will continue to do so, and I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I think you have just thrown the Premier under a bus.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, thank you for coming today.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning you had close access to ministerial staff and to the Minister for Planning. Is that right?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The Parliamentary Secretary would talk to staff within the Minister's office, correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And you would have found out about information well before it was publicly known. That is correct, is it not?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

The CHAIR: What is the point of order?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I will go back to my earlier point of order. I acknowledge that questioning around disclosures is fine—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is going straight to that.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: —but questions around his actions and access to people as Parliamentary Secretary are out of the remit of this Committee's questioning today.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: To the point of order: We need to establish what information or knowledge this Minister had at the time in order to establish when the disclosure should have been made.

The CHAIR: There is no point of order.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, as Parliamentary Secretary for Planning you had access to confidential information that was not in the public domain about planning matters. Correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. As the Parliamentary Secretary for Planning I would make all my declarations and I comply with all those obligations—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That was not my question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, but I am getting to your question.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You will find that that is the only answer he has got.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, no. If you let me finish, that would be good.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Tell us something new, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: If you are suggesting that I had any involvement in the decision-making process, my answer is no. I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will ask the question again, Minister, because you did not answer it. As Parliamentary Secretary for Planning you had access to confidential information regarding the planning system that was not known to the public. Correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, that is not correct. Can I tell you that I met all my obligations and if you are suggesting that I have got some sort of inside knowledge into an issue—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You are making that suggestion now, Minister.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is right, none of us is suggesting that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, no. You have actually just made it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Let him answer. You have asked the question. Let him answer.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That is your suggestion.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, you are making that suggestion.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We are not making that suggestion.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And the answer to that is that I have had no involvement in any decision-making process.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You see, Minister, you are very carefully avoiding my question, aren't you? I am asking you about access to confidential information that was not known to the public and you are refusing to answer that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am not sure what you are referring to, to be honest with you. You might want to elaborate on that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Did you have access to confidential information regarding planning matters that was not known to the public when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning? Yes or no, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, relating to what?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Rezoning?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Decisions that were being considered by the Minister regarding key rezonings around metro sites?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning you were also a property developer. How did you square that with your obligations not to allow your private interests to conflict with your public duties?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosure, I complied with all my obligations there. I made my disclosures.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning by day and you were a property developer by night. There is such an obvious conflict of interest. How could you not understand that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I understand that, and that is why I have complied with all my obligations and made all my appropriate disclosures.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You were being paid a full-time wage as a member of Parliament [MP], plus an allowance in addition to that as Parliamentary Secretary. But that was not enough for you. You were also working, in conflict with your public duty, as a property developer. How do you explain that to the people of New South Wales who were paying your wage?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What I say to you, Mr Shoebridge, is that when it comes to property disclosures I have complied with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: We will get to some of your noncompliance later. When you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning you had a fundraiser where one of your business associates who was doing a property deal with you at the time, Mr Shang, made a donation of \$1,750 to the benefit of your campaign. Did you know at the time that he had made the donation?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, political donations, as you know, are a matter for the NSW Liberal Party.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you were at the function.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Did you not see him? Didn't recognise him?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Did you know that Mr Shang made a \$1,750 donation at the function you were at?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, there is an inescapable conclusion here, is there not? You were at a function when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning. Your business associate, who you were doing a property deal with at the time, made a \$1,750 donation to the Liberal Party. You were aware of that and you failed to disclose it. You acted grossly inappropriately, if not, in the definition of the ICAC Act, corruptly at the time. Correct?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In your opinion.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You are absolutely wrong. Political donations are a matter for the NSW Liberal Party, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Did you know in February 2015 that it was illegal for property developers to make donations to political parties in New South Wales because of the corrupting influence of property donations?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Political donations are a matter for the NSW Liberal Party.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order: We are now going to 2015, we are now going outside the remit of the responsibility of the Minister in his portfolio and we are talking about external matters. External matters like fundraisers have to be out of the remit of questioning this morning.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I have made a submission earlier about the need for continuous disclosure and I am now going to ask the Minister about his disclosure.

The CHAIR: Can we make sure that we stay within the remit?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Yes. Minister, have you now complied with your continuous disclosure obligations under the Ministerial Code of Conduct and disclosed the fact that your property developer associate made a donation to the Liberal Party that you are aware of? Have you disclosed that under the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you became Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Roads in April 2015; is that right?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I would check the exact date but, yes, that seems right.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And at that time you were a shareholder or had a financial interest in Southern Han Rouse Hill Pty Ltd, correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: At that time did you disclose your financial interest in Southern Han Pty Ltd?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I complied with those obligations. I did. As the Parliamentary Secretary, again, it is ludicrous to make any suggestions on where you are going with this because I have done nothing wrong and I have always met my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, while you were Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Roads key decisions were being made by the transport ministry regarding the metro station at Tallawong, were they not?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: That question is directed to the knowledge of the Minister at the time and not this witness. I ask that the question be disallowed.

The CHAIR: No.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is not within the Minister's remit. He does not know what is in the Minister's mind.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I was not asking about the knowledge of the Minister. My question was about what was happening within the portfolio, not what was in the mind of the Minister.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: To the point of order: Mr Shoebidge has just admitted he is now talking about Transport and other portfolios at that time, which are out of the remit—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Correct, which goes to the next failure to disclose, which I will get to.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Well, get to the disclosure.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Get to the point.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You do not get to choose how I do that, Niall, and defend this man.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: This question should be out of order because it is outside the scope of what he has been doing.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You do not get to defend this man because of what he has been doing.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: To the point of order: This is very important because of the issues in relation to the way that the Ministerial Code of Conduct works, the way that it applies to parliamentary secretaries and the need for disclosure. If the Minister can clean some of this up, we would not have to be going through this but the requirements around disclosure, which are very strict, require us to ask these questions.

The CHAIR: I think it is pretty clear, Minister, that you understand that under the sessional orders of the upper House you have to be directly relevant in the answering of your questions. To date you have been. But that is why you are getting the sort of questions you are getting and the directions that they are coming from, seeking to bring them into the area that you need to be questioned on. So if you can be more directly relevant in your answers, I think you will find there will be less questions.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: No, there will not.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, at that time key decisions were being made about metro station planning and the final design for metro stations for the Metro North West line, were there not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am not aware of what decisions were taking place when and where. What I can tell you is that I have always met my disclosure obligations and I have always conducted myself with a high standard of integrity. I have done nothing wrong.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you say you were not aware of what decisions or—sorry, I will start again.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is not what I said.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you say you were not aware of what was happening regarding the metro station but on 22 September 2015 Southern Han corporation put a development application [DA] in for a \$70 million development predicated on the fact that the metro station was about to open. That is true, is it not? Did you disclose at the time that Southern Han corporation had put that development application in? Did you disclose it then?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You have my disclosures there and you can check that I have complied with my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: We did it.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, you are wrong.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We do not have your disclosure to the Premier.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You did not disclose in September 2015 about the development application, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You are wrong. I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You did not disclose the development application being made in September 2015, Minister. Why not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, you are wrong. I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, is it not true that whilst you were Parliamentary Secretary there were negotiations on foot to get access to that site because you could not develop it without access and, indeed, access was finally granted on application by Northwest Rapid Transit on behalf of Transport for NSW in December 2017? Were you aware of that while you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met all my obligations. You are incorrect again. I have always complied with my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, the report from Blacktown City Council to the Sydney Central City Planning Panel says that on 19 December 2017 Northwest Rapid Transit, on behalf of Transport for NSW, provided the design and gave access to the road where your property development was, and it was because of that that your DA was approved. Were you aware of that when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Planning?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Can I say to you again that I have met all my obligations. As the Parliamentary Secretary at the time, it is ludicrous to suggest that I have had any input or involvement in any decision-making process whatsoever.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, but you had access to confidential information as Parliamentary Secretary for Planning. Or what were you being paid for? To sit in a dark room and turn all the lights off?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: If it is dark, aren't the lights already off?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The lights are off here, that is for sure. But I will move on. Minister, were you aware of the negotiations on foot to get access to the property development site that was being advanced by Southern Han corporation? Were you aware of the negotiations to get access?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have always conducted myself, Mr Shoebridge, with the highest standards of integrity. To suggest that I have used my position in any shape or form for my own benefit is false, it is wrong—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, this would be much quicker if you answered the questions.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: —and it is disingenuous.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, were you aware of the need to get separate access to the development site for your \$70 million development? Were you aware of that need?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, I refer you back to my previous answer.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Which you did not answer.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: He did answer it.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am answering the question. I have done nothing wrong. I have done nothing wrong and I have met all of my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you were Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Roads while your business was seeking to negotiate with Transport for NSW access to your development site. How can you say you have not done anything wrong? The conflict between your public duty and your private duty was so obvious.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied with all my obligations, I have done nothing wrong and I am an extremely hardworking MP—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You are very hardworking!

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: — who works for the people of New South Wales in their best interests. It is a position I respect and honour.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you have purchased a number of pieces of property around proposed metro stations, haven't you, not just in north-west but in your own electorate?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Haven't you?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: This has got nothing to do with declarations, this has got nothing to do with the Minister's portfolio and they are now asking what he is doing.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It has everything to do with declarations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, it is exactly 100 per cent to do with it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It has nothing to do with the budget.

The CHAIR: Order! I will let the question develop.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Where is it in the budget?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is absolutely 100 per cent related to the failure to declare.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Well, get there then.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Where is it?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you have bought property not just around proposed metro stations in north-west Sydney, you have bought property around proposed metro stations in your own electorate, haven't you?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosure, Mr Shoebridge, I comply with all my obligations. All records are publicly available.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, indeed the records are publicly available. In December 2017 you purchased property at 122-124 Great North Road.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, Mr Shoebridge, can you say that again?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: In December 2017 you purchased property at 122-124 Great North Road, Five Dock, did you not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: My declarations reflect I comply with my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you bought the property in December 2017 and you did not disclose it until September 2018. How is that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, your answer was false. You said that you complied with your disclosure obligation. You bought it in September 2017, you did not disclose it for a year. Your answer was false.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In your opinion.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No. The facts do not lie on this one. This is not opinion.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: He has laid it out pretty clearly.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am giving you the opportunity now to correct your answer and apologise.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with my obligations, Mr Shoebridge.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you do not.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you have an obligation to disclose it as it happens, not a year later. Why did you not disclose your financial interest in a property at 122-124 Great North Road, Five Dock for a year, between September 2017 and September 2018?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Property disclosures, Mr Shoebridge, I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, I will show you a document. This is the Metro Authority's map of the potential, the most likely sites for metro stations on the Sydney West Metro line. It is current as at least February of this year. Are you aware of this map?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have made all my disclosures relevant.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You would be aware of that map, come on.

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: As a local member I do not go anywhere near anything that pertains to any of my responsibilities, and I have always met my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you will see that there is a blue "M" to the right of that and above it is a small black dot. Do you see that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The blue "M" is the proposed metro station for Five Dock and the small black dot, less than 500 metres away from it, is the properties you purchased in September 2017. Can you not see—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry. Mr Shoebridge, are you referring to the dot being next to the property at 120 Great North Road that we purchased years ago?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, the property at 122-124 Great North Road that you did not declare for a year.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That you did not declare for about 10 years. This is your other declarations. If you want to talk about 120—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, in September 2017 you bought an additional property within a stone's throw of the proposed metro station for Five Dock and you did not declare it for a year. Why not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosure, Mr Shoebridge, I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, at the time you were the Cabinet secretary. You had access to decisions and to information about where the metro line was going and you bought this property knowing you would make a killing on it, didn't you?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosures I have always been upfront and I comply with all my obligations. And again, to suggest that I have had any involvement in decision-making is just inappropriate and wrong.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, Minister. I am suggesting you knew there was a metro station coming, you bought the property, you sat on it silently for 12 months and you did it in breach of your duty to the public.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is wrong. I have always met my obligations and I conduct myself, Mr Shoebridge, with the highest level of integrity.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, your answers have been woefully inadequate. Can you give us a reason why we should not refer this transcript and this material to ICAC for investigation?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, I say to you that I have been honest, upfront, transparent, as I have always been, and I have met my obligations. I conduct myself with the highest level of integrity and I will continue to do that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you bought property near the metro station in the north-west and made a killing off it. You bought the property when you had a public duty to not benefit from insider knowledge. You then repeated your conduct when you bought property in your own electorate near a metro station. How can you possibly defend these actions, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, can I draw you back. You are insinuating again that I have used information to benefit. I have complied with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am saying outright that this is corrupt conduct under section 8 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act and you should be referred for investigation.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It's wrong, it's false and I have always met my obligations. To even insinuate that I would use my position is disgraceful.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you know that you failed to disclose your property, your recent purchase right next to the Five Dock metro station, you failed to disclose it for a year. Why did you fail to disclose it for a year?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met my obligations and, again, it is ludicrous to suggest that I have used my position to benefit. It's wrong. I have met my obligations—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is ludicrous to defend your conduct, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: —and I conduct myself with the highest level of integrity. I am one of the hardest working MPs in the Parliament and I will continue.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No-one is denying you are hard-working, Minister. No-one is denying that; it is just who you are working for.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It is who you are working for.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is who you are working for that is the question.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Who are you working for, Minister.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I will continue to work in the interest of the people of New South Wales, Mr Shoebridge.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The procedural fairness resolution, to which all these members agreed in 2018, requires that witnesses be treated with courtesy at all times. I ask that you draw members attention to the resolution.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, we have heard you say that you have met all your obligations on more than 20 separate occasions this morning. If you are so confident that you have met all your disclosures, will you refer yourself to ICAC for examination?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you, Mr Secord. I comply with my obligations. I have done nothing wrong and I have always conducted myself in the right way.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: If that is the case, then the answer would be yes, you would have no objection to referring yourself to ICAC. If you have met every obligation that you have insisted repeatedly today then I would expect the answer to my question to be yes, you would refer yourself to ICAC for an examination.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, I have always done the right thing. I have done nothing wrong and I will continue to uphold my position to the highest standards of integrity.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: This is just extraordinary today what we have seen: You facing the weight of evidence that you have done the wrong thing and you repeatedly say that you have met all obligations. This is extraordinary. You took an oath as a Minister and today you are not telling the truth.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, I refer you back to the Ministerial Code of Conduct. Section 11 in the preamble says:

... Ministers have a responsibility to avoid or otherwise manage appropriately conflicts of interest to ensure the maintenance of both the actuality and appearance of Ministerial integrity.

Do you believe you have done that, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have always upheld the highest levels of integrity and I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am hearing that, but do you believe that the way in which this matter has been brought to public attention, and the attention that it is gathering, has meant that you have done everything that you possibly could to avoid bringing yourself and the Government into disrepute?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I do not accept that. I have complied with all my obligations. I have met all my obligations and I will continue to do that. I have always conducted myself in the highest standards available there and my integrity should never be questioned.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, are you aware that other Ministers have an obligation to refer to ICAC if they believe that members of Parliament are receiving private benefit? Sorry, they have a requirement to disclose to the Premier. Are you aware of that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not the question I am asking. I am asking: Are you aware that other Ministers have a requirement to declare or raise concerns that they have in relation to Ministers or other members of Parliament who may receive private benefit from government decision-making.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have received no private benefits and I have always complied with my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not the question. The question is: Are you aware that other Ministers have obligations in relation to this disclosure?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I know that my obligations—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am not asking about your obligations, I am asking about your understanding of the Ministerial Code of Conduct and that other Ministers have a duty to disclose if they believe there is a problem?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What I am saying to you is, I have complied with all of my obligations. I have met all of my disclosure obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Okay and what do you—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You cannot speak for the actions of other Ministers. You can ask him about the code—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am asking him whether he understands the code of conduct—clearly not, but I am happy to keep trying. Are you aware that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces yesterday did not rule out referring you to ICAC in relation to these matters?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is an issue you should direct towards—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, are you aware? Were you not paying attention to what was going on? You featured heavily yesterday. Are you saying you were not watching what was happening with the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, what I am saying is I have always met my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not my question. My question is: Are you aware? This has nothing to do with your disclosure or your obligations.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I don't control the actions of others.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No. I am asking you about whether you are aware that your colleague, the Minister for planning, did not rule out referring you to ICAC over these matters?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not watched all the past estimates hearings.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: But you aware that of this issue?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is in the newspapers.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, I want to correct the record. Earlier I said that you said that you had met all your obligations more than 20 times. As of now, you have said that on 50 separate occasions today. Are you aware of that? Are you going to continue to say to every answer, to everything that is uncomfortable, "I have met all my obligations"? You are up to 50 so far. Fifty times.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You will probably get more if you ask the same question. I have met all my obligations. If you ask a different question you may get a different answer.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How about this: Have you offered your resignation to the Premier?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Let's go back to Rouse Hill. The 10 per cent in the \$70 million property, what was the structure around that? Was that a gift, a purchase or a share, that 10 per cent of the \$70 million property in Rouse Hill? You have three options here: a gift, a share or a purchase. Which one did you get?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: This is not a multiple choice game. He gets to answer the question how he wants to.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: He needs to answer either question.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: He refuses to answer the questions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: He can answer however he wants. He can answer in any way he wants.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: He has said 50 times that he has met all obligations. I believe that is a falsehood.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: He can answer however he wants to.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Let's give him a red hot go. How did you come to have a 10 per cent share or ownership of the land that was worth \$4 million and is now worth \$70 million at Rouse Hill?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you get it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: First of all you are wrong. When it come to property disclosures I have made that disclosure.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: How are we wrong?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Fifty-one.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Are you saying you do not own 10 per cent of that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Can I finish?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, the floor is yours.

The CHAIR: Let the Minister answer the question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Fantastic. When it comes to property disclosures of the particular property you refer to, from day one it has been disclosed. That is how you know about it because it is open and transparent and it is there for everybody to see. I have met that obligation. Where you pull your figures out of the air with regard to values I have got no idea but I can tell you I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Is it worth more? Do you dispute these valuations? Are they worth more?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Did you or did you not buy it for \$4.1 million?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: How is that \$70 million?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It has become \$70 million because you have allowed a road to go through it and you can now put about 300 units on it.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Sorry, Ms Sharpe, 295 units.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Three hundred.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Let's just be accurate here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: We want to know his response.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We want to know whether it is a gift, whether he bought it, whether it was given to him by the people that bought it? How did he come to have 10 per cent ownership of that block of land?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did Southern Han Options give it to you as a gift? Did you buy it? How did you acquire it? A simple question: How did you get it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosures, Mr Secord, I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Fifty-one times now you have used that excuse.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Are you now going to say the dog ate my homework?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: The procedural fairness resolution 19 requires that witnesses will be treated with courtesy at all times. I ask that you direct Mr Secord—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: How about those asking the questions get answers to the questions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: —and that members be allowed to speak without interruption.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I accept but I just have to say that I am very, very frustrated. We asked a very simple question: How did Mr Sidoti get a 10 per cent share from Southern Han Options for a piece of land in Rouse Hill, 38 Cudgegong Road? You must have been there and you must know. I would know if I got a piece of property how I paid for it, how I acquired it. It does not pass the pub test. Just tell us yes or no or how it occurred. How did you get 10 per cent in a property that is now worth \$70 million?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Again, can I refer you back to my property disclosure, and my property disclosure clearly reflects that I have complied with all my obligations and I have met those obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Who would know how you acquired the 10 per cent share in this property in Rouse Hill that is now worth \$70 million? Who could inform this Committee how you got that 10 per cent? Who could help us because you are clearly not answering the question? Who could assist this inquiry?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, I am complying. I am answering your question and I am saying to you I have done nothing wrong.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Clearly you have.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, that is not correct.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You have to tell us.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with my obligations and I will continue to give that answer when you ask the same question.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I will continue to ask because this is just getting murkier and murkier. You have a simple question before you: How did you get a 10 per cent share in a piece of property that is worth \$70 million?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I do not take your question but what I will tell you is that with regards to my property disclosure I have complied with my obligation and that is how you know about it. It is a public document. The particular property you reference has always been declared and it continues to be declared. I have complied with that obligation.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Could Mr Shang inform us and explain how you acquired the 10 per cent?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Ming Shang, vice president of Southern Han Options. Could he advise or inform the inquiry how you came to receive 10 per cent of that building?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosure I have met my obligations, Mr Secord. They are there for everybody to see. They are open and transparent and I think it is important that you realise that and I have met that obligation. If you want to ask me that question again I am happy to give you the same answer.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I have a different question for you, Minister. Minister, have you sought advice about referring yourself to ICAC?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I have done nothing wrong. With regards to property disclosures—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Has anyone in your office or others sought advice in relation to this?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Why would you refer yourself if you have done nothing wrong? I have met all my obligations. I have always conducted myself with the highest standards and continue to do so. If you have done nothing wrong you would not refer yourself. I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, there is clearly a conflict of interest when it comes to the land that you own next to the proposed station at Five Dock, do you agree?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The proposed station?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: The proposed metro station at Five Dock which is next to some land that you have owned for quite a long time and not declared and some land that you have owned for a while and have declared. There is a large block of land near Great North Road at Five Dock that you own that is situated right next to one of the proposed western metro stations. Do you agree there is a conflict of interest that you have to manage in relation to your ownership of this land and development of the site next door?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have never got involved with anything associated or proposed anywhere near any of my disclosures.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So you did not know that right next—

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: The Minister is answering the question.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Not very well.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: There has been no announcement with regards to what you are talking about.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Suddenly you know about the project.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You know whether it has been announced or not.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Suddenly you know about it.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I think you need to let him answer this.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not what I am asking you. I am asking you about whether there is a perceived conflict of interest. You own land right next door to a metro station, which we have subsequently found can add tens of millions of dollars to the worth of the block of land next door. Do you believe there is a conflict of interest in relation to this?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: With what—his current role?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes. As a Minister sitting at the table making decisions and getting briefings in relation to the metro project. He does sit in Cabinet. I want to understand how that conflict of interest is managed.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Just checking.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am on it.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to conflicts of interest there is a process to manage conflicts of interest.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Do you want to tell us what you think "conflict of interest" means?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: The Minister is answering the question.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Let him answer.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: All right.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to conflicts of interest, it is not unusual that you manage conflicts of interest and you declare conflicts of interest and I can say to you I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: When it comes before Cabinet do you—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: He's not going to talk about Cabinet. We don't talk about Cabinet here.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I want to understand how the conflict of interest is managed.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You can fish all you want. He is not going to talk about Cabinet.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I have not finished my question.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I am just saving you some time.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, how do you manage the conflict of interest when decisions are being taken around the Cabinet table in relation to the western metro project?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to conflicts of interest, they are managed in the appropriate way and I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: What do you do?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not been part of any decisions and can I say to you anything that takes place in Cabinet is Cabinet-in-confidence.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, so when this comes up in Cabinet do you say, "I own property here, therefore I should leave the room" or "I should not participate in discussions"? What do you do when your property holdings come up? We have two rail lines now where you just happen to have property in very key strategic locations. What do you do when those matters came up?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: If a matter came up that involves property that had an interest to me, you would declare an interest and leave the room.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So what have you done?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not been involved in any decisions or any processes or any discussions revolving around anything I have declared.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You had better be confident of that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am very confident.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You better be damned confident.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: One hundred and one per cent.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So Minister, in relation to the conflict of interest issue you are saying—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Or the lack of conflict of interest.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Oh, so you are saying that you do not think there is a conflict of interest between you owning land at a potential site right next to—that there is actually not a conflict of interest to be managed?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Twice!

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: There is no conflict of interest because conflicts of interests are managed. They are normal processes.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, what is JAFS Investment Trust?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is a trust.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Oh, it's a trust. Is that where the 10 per cent of the share in the Rouse Hill property sits? Is that the name of that 10 per cent holding in Rouse Hill?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, when it comes to those property disclosures, I again refer you back to: I comply with my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: My question was very simple. The 10 per cent that you do not know how you acquired—it was a gift, a share or a purchase—is tucked away in something called JAFS Investment Trust. What is that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, I comply with all my obligations and I am offended that you would even suggest—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You are offended now?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am offended that you would even suggest that a member of Parliament would be gifted something. I say to you that I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: If you were not gifted that 10 per cent of a \$70 million property, tell us how you acquired it. Here is your opportunity to correct the record and to tell the truth. How did you get that 10 per cent of a property worth \$70 million?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, I have told you it was not gifted. You are not a fruit merchant, you are very smart. I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you get it then? Tell us, if you are sitting there so smugly bashing the ball away. How did you get 10 per cent in a property in Rouse Hill, on a train line, in a key location, which will now have 295 apartments?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you get it? If it was not a gift, did you buy it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, when it comes to property disclosures, you have them in front of you. I meet my obligations, I continue to do so—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you do not.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: —and I am quite offended by your suggestions.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: We are offended that you keep telling mistruths in relation to the way that you do your declarations.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes. We want to understand whether it was a gift and how you acquired 10 per cent of land that went from \$4 million to \$70 million. It is a fairly basic question that goes to the heart of the Ministerial Code of Conduct. Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, is that a question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes. How did you come to own 10 per cent of the holdings of the land at Rouse Hill?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Again, when it comes to property disclosures I have met all my obligations, so I am not sure where you are going with this.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You have not. We have all of your disclosures. You have a history of not declaring land that you own—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is wrong.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: —that you then go on to make a lot of money in relation to. Why have you not declared it? Are you admitting that you have land that you have not declared?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations, Ms Sharpe.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you do not.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, you have one more opportunity. You acquired 10 per cent in a property that is worth \$70 million. You would have discussed this at the household table. You would have really impacted on the family budget to make a purchase like this. This is something that you would discuss. How did you acquire that 10 per cent share? Did the company Southern Han Options give it to you for mates rates? How did you get it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations, Mr Secord. Property disclosures are there for everybody to see.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: That is clearly not the case.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: They are open and transparent and I refer you back to my previous answer.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Okay. I am going to talk about secondary employment. I refer you again to the Ministerial Code of Conduct. Under "Secondary employment" it states:

- (2) A minister must not participate in the management of any business.
- (3) A minister must not act as a contractor, consultant or adviser, whether paid or unpaid, to any business, other than to the extent that consultation or advice occurs in the context of the proper exercise of the Minister's functions as a Minister or Member of Parliament.

Have you provided any advice to businesses or otherwise in relation to land that you own either at Five Dock or at Rouse Hill?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I meet all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not the question, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What was the question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: The question is: Have you provided any advice to businesses or trusts or organisations or individuals in relation to the land that you own around Tallawong Station on Cudgegong Road?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I have met all my obligations and my disclosures.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am not asking about disclosure. I am asking about whether you have provided—you are saying that you have not provided advice to anyone?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I would never provide advice to anybody.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You have not acted as a consultant or an adviser?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. I am a member of Parliament, I am not a consultant.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, I will put this proposition to you as plainly as possible: When you acquired the 10 per cent interest in the property at 38 Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill, did you obtain it at full value?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to all my property disclosures, they are there for everybody to see. I have made the full declarations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You haven't not.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I am and I continue to do that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, now is a really good chance for you to tell the millions of people who pay your wage that there is nothing to see here. So I am going to give you a second opportunity to answer this question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thanks, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: When you acquired the 10 per cent interest in the property at 38 Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill, did you obtain it at full value?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I can tell you, Mr Shoebridge, that I have met all my obligations and I will continue to do so. The people of New South Wales can have full faith that they have a hardworking member who works for them, in their interest. I have always met my disclosures

The CHAIR: Mr Sidoti, I remind you that you must be directly relevant in answering the question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And I am. I am, Mr Chair, with the greatest respect.

The CHAIR: You are not being directly relevant in answering the question. Mr Shoebridge, ask the question again, please.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With respect, Mr Chair, he is asking me—and correct me if I am wrong—did I get something obtained in the wrong way or at mates rates or—

The CHAIR: No, he did not ask you that.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: He asked you how you got it. Tell us.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: He did.

The CHAIR: He did not ask you that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am going to ask you again in the clearest and boldest terms: Minister, when you acquired a 10 per cent interest in the property at 38 Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill, did you obtain it at full value?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I can say that I have complied with all my obligations and the purchase of that property would have been purchased at the market rate.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Right.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: There has been no favourable treatment, Mr Shoebridge, if that is where you are going.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, are we just to assume it is a coincidence that whilst you are a member of this Government—a government that is making long-term decisions about the planning of metro lines—that you have bought property within a couple of hundred metres of the planned stations on those metro lines?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, where are you referring to now, Mr Shoebridge?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The property you purchased in 2017 at Five Dock and the property that you have a 10 per cent interest in—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: At 120 to 122 Great North Road, Minister.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: —which is a stone's throw away from Tallawong Station on the metro line.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sure. I am happy to explain that, Mr Shoebridge. When you refer to Five Dock, after I was a fruit merchant I ran a function centre at that property—at 120 Great North Road—with my family, for 15 years. Now you are talking about something 15 years later?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, Minister.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Well you didn't declare it until 2016.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, I am talking about the property you bought—maybe you have forgotten—in December 2017 at 122 to 124 Great North Road, Five Dock. I am talking about that property, when you were Parliamentary Secretary, while there was advance planning for a metro station right next to it. I am talking about that property.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, I have made all my disclosures. They are there for everybody to see.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you did not disclose the purchase of that for 12 months. Simply telling us that you made all your disclosures when you did not disclose it for 12 months—you are compounding your problems by continuing to give false evidence to this inquiry.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, Mr Shoebridge, can I just correct you there. Can you just refer to the properties when you—you are confusing me now.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is not hard. You bought a property at 122 to 124 Great North Road, Five Dock.

The CHAIR: Order! Keep it down.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Just for the record, 122 and 124 Great North Road I have no interest in.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Well, what is the Deveme Pty Ltd family trust?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: His parents do.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Great. And I comply with my obligations and I have nothing to do with 122 and 124 Great North Road.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is the Deveme Pty Ltd family trust?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The family trust refers to 120 Great North Road.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Do you have any interest at all in the property at 122 to 124, beneficial or otherwise?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have no interest today and I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Did you have an interest when you bought it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I worked there for 15 years in the family business.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: At 122-124 Great North Road?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: At 122-124, I have no interest.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Who owns it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I worked at 120 Great North Road for 15 years prior to entering Parliament as a functions manager there.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Who owns 122-124 Great North Road, Five Dock?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is there on my declarations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It would not happen to be your parents, would it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It's there on my—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It would not be your parents is it?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Sidoti, it is your parents who own 122-124 Great North Road, is it not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you are playing games with this Committee. You know that your obligations to disclose apply every bit as much to property owned by your parents as they do to you. You know that your family has a direct financial interest in this property and you are playing games with this Committee, are you not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, I never play games. I am honest and transparent—always have been. I am very well respected in this place and in the community, and I respect this Committee. I will always uphold honesty and integrity. This is a wild goose chase and I comply—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, why was that purchase of the property not disclosed for 12 months at a critical time?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, can you—?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Why was the purchase of that property by your parents—?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, which purchase?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: At 122-124 Great North Road. Why was that not disclosed for 12 months during a critical time of planning for the metro?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regard to disclosures, I make all the relevant disclosures. In fact, I over disclose because I am open and transparent. But, Mr Secord, if you are proposing any legislative changes to include anything other than spouses and dependent children, I am all ears. But I will continue to over—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It includes parents too, Minister, in case you missed it.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And I will always comply with my obligations, as I have in the past and as I will in the future.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, are you aware of any proposals or considerations that your family has, including your parents and yourself, for property development on the two properties, being 120 and 122-124 Great North Road, on both or either of those properties?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, my property disclosures are there for everybody to see. I comply with all my obligations and I will refer you back to that previous answer.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, is your family or yourself, or your family and yourself acting together, considering property development on those sites at Great North Road, a stone's throw away from the proposed metro stations?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer. I have always complied with my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you have an obligation as a Minister not to have your private interests in any way conflict with your public duties. There is such an obvious conflict of interest if your family is considering property development on the sites next to the proposed metro stations. I am giving you the opportunity now to clear it for the record.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you, Mr Shoebridge, and I will continue to always comply with my obligations. I take them very, very seriously. I make sure I always comply with them, and I will continue to do that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, I asked before if we are just to assume that it is a coincidence that you and your family have now twice bought property within a stone's throw of proposed metro stations in circumstances where you obviously make a substantial profit. Is that what you are saying to us, it is just a coincidence? It had nothing to do with your knowledge about the metro planning. It had nothing to do with your duties as a Parliamentary Secretary or others. It is just a coincidence, is that what you are telling us?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. Mr Shoebridge, what I am telling you is that I comply with all my obligations. The property in question, I worked there for 15 years prior to entering Parliament, and I have always upheld the highest level of integrity and honesty, and that is why I am respected in my community and in this place because I do the right thing.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, when you bought those properties, or when your family bought those properties—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: —you were aware of confidential information about the proposed metro stations, were you not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, I am not aware of confidential information. I would never, never put myself in a position of conflict where it is a benefit to an individual over the community. I would never do that. I am a man of intense integrity, high integrity, and I would never jeopardise my position in this place.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you know that once the final decision is made on the Five Dock metro station that the property your family purchased as recently as December 2017 is going to massively increase in value. You know that, do you not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, with regard to potential and future, what I can say to you is that I comply with all my obligations. I have, I will and will continue to do so. Again, I would never put myself in a position, or my family, or anybody I know—the thing every member of Parliament has is their integrity and I would never—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There are plenty of members of Parliament who have gone to the ICAC, some of them are sitting in jail, Mr Sidoti.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sure.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That is not a defence that you are a member of Parliament to integrity issues.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sure. I cannot talk for them, but I can talk for myself. I would never put myself in a position, or my Government, where I would compromise them. I have the highest level of integrity, and will continue to do so.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What property does the Devine Pty Ltd Family Trust own?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You would have to look at the disclosure there. It is there for everybody to see. My property disclosures are open, it is an open book and I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you have declared an interest in Devine Pty Ltd Family Trust, but you have not disclosed the full extent of the property ownership or other ownership of Devine Pty Ltd Family Trust. I am again giving you the opportunity to do that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, with the greatest respect it is actually there for everybody to see. That is what disclosures are about. And you and anybody else—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What property does it own?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You have the disclosure in front of you. You can see everything that is owned and that is disclosed, and over disclosed. I have complied with and met all my obligations, and beyond those obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, how many times have you removed yourself from Cabinet because there is a conflict of interest because a metro proposal was being discussed? How many times have you removed yourself from Cabinet because of a conflict of interest?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I would remove myself if there was any conflict of interest, and to date there have been no conflicts of interests where I have had to remove myself.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: There have been no discussions since you have been a Minister of the western metro?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, with regard to conflicts of interest there is a way they are managed. I would remove myself if put in that position. I can tell you that I have not been in a position where that has affected what we are talking about.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, if the issue of the Sydney Metro West was ever discussed in Cabinet do you agree that you would have an obvious conflict of interest because of your property ownership?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Most definitely.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: How have you allowed that situation to develop where you, as a Minister, have such an obvious conflict of interest?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The property that you refer to was there before any proposal for metros.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Your family bought it in December 2017.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No they have owned 120—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: They bought 122-124, they bought it in December 2017. How have you got yourself into a situation where your private interests are so at odds with your public interests as a Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, with the greatest respect, I do not summate what you have just said in that way. I have always met my obligations and I will continue to do so. I am not in a position of conflict. Positions of conflict are managed on a daily basis in local government, in State and Federal politics. I have always met my disclosure obligations, and I will continue to do so.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, as the local member you would have been on notice quite a significant time ago that there was a proposed metro station at Five Dock. When were you first on notice that there was a proposed metro station in Five Dock?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: His role as the local member is not part of his remit in this ministry and about which this Committee is inquiring. I ask that you direct the member to direct his questions to the portfolio.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: To the point of order: This again goes to the disclosure, and the obligation to disclose and manage conflicts of interest under the code of conduct, which is a continuous obligation.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which I accept, but your question was premised on the basis of his capacity as a local member.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is therefore not within the portfolio.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Correct, but if there was a past conflict of interest that has not been disclosed he has a current duty as a Minister to disclose it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I ask that you direct the question in that manner as opposed to—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Which is why I am trying to investigate that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, to save you, in the interest of time, whether I was a Parliamentary Secretary, whether I was a Minister or whether I was a local member I would never put myself in a position of conflict. I would treat it all the same way. I would not endeavour to benefit from information that I ever came across for a personal benefit. It is not me. I am a person of immense integrity, always have been, always will be and I have done absolutely nothing wrong.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, when were you first aware of the proposal to build a metro station in Five Dock in the middle of your electorate?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Exactly, I could not tell you other than what I have read in the local paper.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It was before December 2017, was it not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I could not tell you that. There have been proposals for metros going everywhere. I could not tell you, to be honest with you.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you are a local member; you would take a live interest in this.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, when it comes to local issues, if there is a potential conflict you would deal with it in the same way as you would as a parliamentary secretary or a member of Parliament. I have made my staff aware in my office. I have made it aware to other councillors that I do not want to, when it comes to any issues of metros in the area, be put in a position of conflict.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Did you put any money up for the purchase of the property at 122-124 or did you accept any financial liability in relation to that purchase?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Did any corporation or trust associated with you put any money up or accept any financial liability in relation to the purchase of the property at 122-124 Great North Road, Five Dock?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, did you say to your parents when they purchased it, "That's a bloody good purchase. We're going to get a metro site there pretty soon. That's going to bring the family lots of money"?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. Mr Shoebridge, again, my parents have owned 120 Great North Road for a long time. We ran a function centre prior to coming into this place. My community know that; every voter in my electorate knows that because I have held functions in that function centre for many years. It is no surprise to the community when they read things in the paper because they know my family are a longstanding family honoured in the community. And we always do the right thing.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You see, Minister, the advantage of buying the adjoining block is it gives you a large development site upon which you can build a large apartment block, just like you did in north-west Sydney. That is the plan, isn't it: You buy the two sites, you consolidate the lot and we have another multimillion-dollar apartment development courtesy of the local member this time?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, Mr Shoebridge, I am not sure what you are alluding to.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: He is not alluding; he is spelling it.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am making it very clear. The benefit that your family and you have in purchasing the adjoining block is to get a large development site so as you can whack yet another apartment complex right near a metro station built by your Government. That is the reason you did it and your family did it, isn't it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, if you look at my declarations, I comply with all my obligations. If you look at them—have a close look; they are there for the public to see—I meet all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There is a year delay in disclosing the purchase of the property at 122-124 Great North Road. How do you explain that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I explained to you that I comply with all my obligations and I will repeat it again: I conduct myself with the highest level of integrity. My community know that, my family know that and I know that. I would never do anything in the interest of my reputation. My reputation is everything.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, are you saying that there has been no investigation by your family about the development potential of either 120 or 122-124 Great North Road as a result of the proposed metro station? Is it your evidence: There has never been that discussion about the development potential on those sites as a result of the metro station? Is that your evidence?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, my evidence is that I have complied with all disclosure obligations, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Here is a chance to give that evidence, if it is true. Has your family or yourself, to the best of your knowledge, discussed the potential development yield now that you have the two adjoining lots within a stone's throw of the proposed Five Dock metro station?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: What I say to you, Mr Shoebridge, with regard to the parcels you refer to is when it comes to property disclosure I have been up-front, I have been honest, I have been transparent and that is how you have the information—because it is there in front of you; it is there for the public to see. I have met all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You see, Minister, it all comes back to this, doesn't it: The people of New South Wales are so sick of seeing politicians being property developers and making money at their expense that being anywhere near this stinks of corruption? You have made a serious misjudgement in having any involvement in this. Isn't that the case?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Shoebridge, with regard to that, the people of New South Wales want to see people and members of Parliament that have integrity, like I have, and that do things for the right reason and are building infrastructure right across New South Wales and delivering hospitals and schools—that is what this Government continues to do. The whole reason behind disclosures is to be open and transparent, and I have done that. With regard to any insinuations of involvement in the decision-making process, I can say you are wrong, wrong, wrong, and that I comply with all my obligations.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, you say you do things for the right interest and I assume by that you mean you do things solely in the public interest. Is that what you are telling us?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct. I am the member for Drummoyne and I represent my community with honesty and integrity, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, your 10 per cent interest in a \$70 million development a stone's throw away from the Sydney Metro Northwest station was not for the public interest; it was for your private wealth.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regard to property disclosures, they are there for everybody to see. I have done nothing wrong.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Minister, do you accept how it is so wrong for you to sit there and say all your decisions are in the public interest when you have gone out of your way to have a 10 per cent interest in a \$70 million property deal a stone's throw away from a metro station being built by your Government? Do you accept how wrong it is for you to try to defend that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. Mr Shoebridge, what I see is that there are clear lines between private and then government, and that clear line is there. When it comes to property disclosures, they are made in an open and transparent fashion, and I have always done that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Sidoti, in response to a question from our colleague David Shoebridge, you confirmed that your parents owned 122-124 Great North Road. You confirmed that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: As per the declarations.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Yes. Your parents own that; they purchased it in December 2017. Are your parents elderly?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Where is this?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Where is this possibly relevant?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: This is going somewhere.

The CHAIR: Order! Let's see how the question develops. Keep it civil, Mr Secord.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You are about 49 or 50. That would make your parents probably about 75, almost 80. Is that right?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Yes.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It will make them about 80, right? Your parents would be about 80 and you are on 50.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Get to the point.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I am getting to it. Did you assist with the purchase of 122-124 for your parents?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thanks, Mr Secord, for that question. I can say to you that I have met all my obligations when it comes to property disclosures.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you help an elderly couple purchase 122-124, who were your family, so that you in fact—

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: You are insinuating they are not able to make decisions.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: —could have a whole block.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Someone in their seventies cannot do that on their own?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Eighties.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Ageist.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: That is the line.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: That is not ageist; it is the fact that he is refusing to say whether he assisted his parents to purchase a key piece of—

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: You are saying they need assistance.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, we are after the question. If he would give us the answer, that would be good.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How disrespectful, how rude.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: This is about the Sidoti family trying to purchase—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: —an entire block next to a train station.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: This is what this is about.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, would you like me to answer?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Yes, I would love you to answer a question today. I would love you to answer a question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you, Mr Secord.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: He has been answering it for an hour and a half. Why don't you ask about Sport or Veterans Affairs?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You should not have given up your questions.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regard to my parents' ability, they are very successful. They are a wonderful multicultural story. It is a shame we have not had any questions with regard to multiculturalism.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You could have got the Government to ask questions, Minister. Don't whinge now.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did they purchase the property or did you?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That is rude.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Let him answer the question.

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: My parents are a wonderful example. They came here with nothing and have worked hard. They would probably be insulted to hear some of the things that have gone on today when it comes to assertions of insider trading or insider knowledge because it is absolutely wrong. My parents—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: None of us has made that, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You have.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You are the one who has taken offence; we have just simply been asking questions about how you do your disclosures.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: My disclosures are there for everybody to see.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. WALT SECORD: My question was very simple: Did you assist and help your elderly parents purchase that key block of land, which gave you the whole block?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you assist?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: My disclosures are there for everyone to see. My parents do not need assisting in any shape or form.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Did you have conversations with them to say "Did you purchase this"?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I do not get involved. As I said to you early on, when it comes to positions of conflict, I would never put myself in that position. I am very cautious. As a local member, I am very cognisant of the way people think, particularly in the community and particularly when you are a successful family that acquires assets there is always a sense of tall poppy syndrome. I would never put myself in that position. I have been cautious since the day I was elected to Parliament because my commitment is to my electorate and the people of my electorate. I do things for the right reason, Mr Secord, and I would never put myself—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I think it is your bank balance. Today's evidence shows very clearly what motivates you, Mr Sidoti—property deals and fattening your own bottom line.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Is this a question?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question? This is out of order.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It is clear what motivates you. So don't mislead this Committee or the community and portray yourself to be something you are not. You are a property developer at the centre of this Government who arranged two pieces of land next to a train station so that you could profit. That spells out quite clearly what you have done today—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is this a question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: —and you have almost a hundred times—

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: There is no question here.

The CHAIR: Order! What is the question?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thanks, Mr Chair. I was about to ask the same thing.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Have you made any representations on the location of a train station in Five Dock?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: To who?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: To anybody, no.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: None whatsoever?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: If we put a freedom of information request in, we would find that there is not a single representation made by you?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, you are free to do as you wish. I have always met my obligations. You can do whatever you like because I know, at the end of the day, what will come back will be zero, because I have always met my obligations. I take my job extremely seriously and I will continue to work hard for the people of New South Wales for the right reasons, Mr Secord.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Who is Charlie Tannous?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You do not know him?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You don't know him at all?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Charlie Tannous? No. That is a very—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Joe?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: "Tannous" is a very—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Joe Tannous?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Joe Tannous? Look, there are many Tannouses.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Are there many Tannouses?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: There are.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Okay, thank you.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, I want to go back to your declarations. You have said now about 84 times that all of your declarations have been in order—I think it is probably more than that now—but my question relates to why there have been omissions in relation to your declarations.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I understand—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Do you believe there have been omissions in relation to your pecuniary interest declarations?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I have met all my obligations when it comes to disclosures.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I understand that, but what I am saying is do you believe there have been omissions?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I believe that I have done the best to comply with all my obligations and I have done that.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, were you not the chair of the ethics and privileges committee in the last Parliament?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I think you might have to check that, it might be 2011.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes, and you were the chair?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That was the Parliament before.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Thank you, I understand that. So you have some experience in relation to pecuniary interest declarations.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Yes.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Why then did you not declare the 2007 purchase of the land until 2016?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Look, with regard to the property disclosures, I have done my best and I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Now you are saying you have done your best.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I do, I comply.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Do you accept that you failed to declare land that you owned, that you had owned since 2007, until 2016—120 Great North Road, Five Dock?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, the question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: My question is why it was not declared?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is declared. It is there—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It was declared in 2016. You owned it since 2007, I believe. Is that correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And worked there—since 15 years ago.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Why, from the moment you come into Parliament, did it take you six years to declare that you had an interest in this property? It is pretty clear in relation to what we have to declare as members of Parliament—real property ownership. Why did it take you six years to declare that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The property disclosure is there. I comply with my obligations and it is there—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you don't.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Well, I do. If you have a look, it is there.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: In 2011 did you have ownership or part-ownership in 120 Great North Road?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I had my super, because I worked there for 15 years, invested there and as a result I met my obligations. They are there for everybody to see.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So you did not declare it in 2011, you did not declare it in 2012, you did not declare it in 2013, you did not declare it in 2014, you did not declare it in 2015, but then in 2016 you decided to declare it. Why did it take you that long, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Back to property disclosure again, I continue to meet my obligation and I always will.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, I am happy to provide you with the documents, which are your pecuniary interests that you keep pointing us to, but for five years you did not declare that property. Is that correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: It is there for everybody to see—it is a public document—and I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You did not comply. There was a reason why I asked you the question about being the chair of the parliamentary privileges and ethics committee—that is, the sole role of that committee is to oversee privilege and matters in relation to interests, management of conflicts of interest, gifts and receipts, and bribery in relation to MPs. Surely you would understand the need to properly declare pecuniary interests given that it is the one public document that MPs have and that the public has access to. You accept that that is an important role?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: A very important role. Everybody should make the proper declarations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Well, why didn't you?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: When it comes to property disclosures, they are there for everybody to see.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: They were not there for everybody to see for five years.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my obligations, Ms Sharpe.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: But you didn't comply, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: But I do comply.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: But you did not comply for five years. Do you accept that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I accept that I am complying with all my obligations, and with regard to property disclosures I will continue to do that.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, how can we trust you given that you did not declare property for five years, and you took an extra year to declare the property that your parents have a direct interest in next to the proposed metro station at Five Dock? How can you expect this Committee to believe you, given that you have provided no detail or information in relation to your declarations other than asserting that they are correct when the paperwork in front of us shows that it is incorrect?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, that is a question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes. If you could listen to the question, that would be good.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Okay, so back to property disclosure again: I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, in relation to conflicts of interest and duty to disclose, the ministerial code says you must promptly give notice to the Premier and that it must be given in writing. Did you do this?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to the ministerial code, I have complied with all ministerial codes and requirements.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Can you confirm whether you gave a notice in writing signed by you to the Premier in relation to your property holdings?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regard to my property holdings, I can say to you that I comply with all ministerial codes of conduct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not the question. The question is—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, you just asked—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: He has answered it three times.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Did you write a letter or not?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Through you, Mr Chair. I am asked whether I have complied with the Ministerial Code of Conduct—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am asking whether you wrote a letter; I am asking how you complied.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The Ministerial Code of Conduct is specific and I have complied with it.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: It says that "a notice under clause 10 must be in writing, signed by the Minister". Did you do that? Yes or no.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied with the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Did you provide a notice in writing, signed by the Minister—by yourself?

The CHAIR: Minister, the question is very simple.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You can continue to answer it badly or you can actually answer the question.

The CHAIR: It is either yes or no.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: So the Ministerial Code of Conduct, which you have just read out, I comply with.

The CHAIR: So that is a yes.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The answer is: I comply with the ministerial code.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: In relation to the enforcement of the ministerial code, we need to understand here that the Premier is the one who is on the block in relation to enforcement. Section 26 says:

The enforcement of the requirements of [the code], including any sanctions for a breach, is a matter for the Premier.

Are you aware of that, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Yes, and I comply. I have read that ministerial code many times and I comply with it.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You have read it?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is very interesting.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I chaired the committee.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes, but you still did not get your declarations right.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with all my codes.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you didn't. The rulings say:

... when applying for a ruling from the Premier, include with the application an accurate statement of all material information that is relevant to the decision whether to give the ruling.

Do you have a ruling from the Premier in relation to your participation in Cabinet as a result of your property interests?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thanks, Ms Sharpe. I comply with the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not what I am asking, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with the property disclosure, I comply with everything I have said to you today, and repeat to say today. I have done nothing wrong. I will continue to comply because that is what good members of Parliament do.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So when we go and ask the Premier about whether she has a ruling in relation to your property interests, what is she going to say, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is up to you. What I can tell you here today is that I have complied with all ministerial codes and will continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Given that we do not have access to the ministerial register of interests, what you keep relying on through your entire evidence today is that it is all public. The only thing we have got that is public is your pecuniary interests, which we have been able to show, clearly, that you have actually failed to properly disclose the entire time you have been in the Parliament. This is why I am asking these very specific questions in relation to the ministerial register of interests. Is there a ruling made on your behalf that helps manage your conflict of interest both in relation to the north-west metro and the potential western metro when it comes to your dealings in Cabinet?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thanks, Ms Sharpe. Can I say that I have met all the ministerial code requirements. I have met all the property disclosure requirements. I have met all the requirements and I will continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, when you were a parliamentary secretary you were also required to make all of these disclosures. Can you confirm to the Committee that you made all of the disclosures in writing and that they were appropriately recorded?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I can make to you a pledge here today that I have met all my parliamentary secretary requirements, I have made all my ministerial code requirements and I have made all my property disclosure requirements.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, you are actually lying to the Committee, given that you did not make your pecuniary interests in the way that you were supposed to do that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In your opinion.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, not in my opinion.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: No, the evidence before us.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In your opinion.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: If you really want us to go through it, I am happy to table each of the pecuniary interests. I have got them here. In fact, I am very happy to do so.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is an assertion.

The CHAIR: Why don't you table them?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I seek leave to table all of the pecuniary interests that are provided by the Minister.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Why don't you ask a question about sport?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You could ask questions about sport, Ms Ward, if you were asking questions. The Minister has made this. We have a serious matter.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I am interested in the budget. I actually would quite like to hear about the budget.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You gave up your questions.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Natalie, we are helping you out here. We are creating a vacancy for you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: I ask that the member withdraw his comment.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is offensive and he knows it and he should not be addressing members by their first names in this way.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Sorry. The Hon. Natalie Ward, you should be happy. We are creating a ministerial vacancy here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I ask that he withdraw. He is being inappropriate and he is—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Chair, the documents do not need to be tabled. They are public documents.

The CHAIR: It is up to the member to table them if she wants to or not.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: To the point of order—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I seek leave to table the documents.

The CHAIR: Yes.

Documents tabled.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: They will be tabled and they will be circulated. I am happy to take you through them, Minister, if you would like to do that. I am happy to argue the toss with you but it is pretty clear these are the documents that we have got. It took you five years to declare property that you had owned since 2007, from being a member of Parliament and while you were the chair of the privileges and ethics committee. I am trying to understand what other omissions there may be in relation to either your public pecuniary interests or what is on the ministerial register. It is a very serious matter. It is a matter that could actually go to the ICAC. We have already got the planning Minister saying that he will consider referring you, as he is obligated to do. Minister, can you tell us what form your declaration takes in relation to the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply with the Ministerial Code of Conduct, I comply with the property disclosures and there are no omissions.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I want to take you back to the time when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Transport. Did you receive any briefings on how the State Government determines station locations?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. I manage any conflicts of interest. I was never involved in anything associated with regards to my ministerial or parliamentary secretary responsibilities in regards to any of the locations of property interests.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So what were you responsible for when you were Parliamentary Secretary for Transport?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Representing the Minister at functions, some signing of letters, correspondence.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Ooh, signing of letters?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Yes.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Would you ever ask questions about "What am I signing"?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I read questions that I am signing. When you have 93 members, they often make representations to the transport Minister. One of my roles would be to sign general correspondence.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Do you recall signing letters about station locations?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I would not sign anything on that regard because that would then result in a conflict.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, when was the last time you spoke to Mr Ming Shang of Southern Han Options?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Is this a multicultural question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: No.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Or sport?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: You should not be like that. That is very disrespectful.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Hello, kettle. I'm pot.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: This is pot.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I asked a very simple question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, I did not want to interject. Sorry. What was the question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: When was the last time you spoke to Mr Ming Shang, vice president of Southern Han Options?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to the question you just asked there, my diary is actually publicly available.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: We could wait for the disclosure in six months but it would be very easy for you—have you spoken to him in the last 72 hours? You would remember that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, I have not spoken to him in the last 72 hours and my diary—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How about the last two—since the appearance of the media speculation about the property in Rouse Hill?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. My diary is publicly available, Mr Secord. It is there for everyone to see.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So you will say hand on heart, under oath, that you have not spoken to him, or an intermediary from your office or a third person on your behalf, in the last two weeks relating to the appearance in the public arena of your 10 per cent involvement in the Rouse Hill property?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not spoken to Mr Ming Shang.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Or a third party acting on your behalf?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Or a third party.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, are you aware that Ministers who are taking decisions are required to disclose if there is an issue with members of Parliament? I take you to section 16 of the Ministerial Code of Conduct, which says:

A Minister who is aware that a particular decision to be made or other action to be taken by that Minister could reasonably be expected to confer a private benefit on another Member of Parliament belonging to the governing political party or coalition of parties or any of their family members must give notice to the Premier of the matter before making the decision or taking the action.

Are you aware whether Minister Constance has had to make such a declaration in relation to your matters?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to the ministerial code, I have met all my requirements.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: That is not what I am asking, Minister.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Isn't that part of the Ministerial Code of Conduct, the question you are asking.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: I am asking you a direct question.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order: The Hon. Penny Sharpe is asking if he knows what another Minister has done.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: He cannot answer that. You have to ask that other Minister.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: He can answer it. He either knows or he does not know. It is actually quite straightforward.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You should ask the Minister. You have to ask the other Minister.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: He cannot answer that.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, he can. It is actually important in relation to the ministerial code and the way in which the code of conduct is—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: My point of order is we are here to ask this witness and these witnesses about portfolio matters and matters that relate to them. They cannot answer on behalf of someone else.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Okay.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You have every Minister coming before the committees. You can ask them but you cannot ask this Minister what other Ministers have or have not done.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Okay. How about this then. Has your—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Hang on.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. WALT SECORD: I am sorry, I thought you were just riffing.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I started with the point of order and I directed it to the Chair.

The CHAIR: I have upheld the point of order. Unless you have got another one, we will continue.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: There you go. You got one. We are prepared to give you one.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Even a broken clock is right twice.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Sidoti, have you or office spoken to Minister Stokes since he gave his less than heartwarming endorsement yesterday?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not spoken to Minister Stokes at all.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: About the possible referral of you to ICAC?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I have not seen Minister Stokes in that time.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: After the two hours of evidence we have had, have you reconsidered your position on referring yourself to ICAC?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regards to the two hours, I am happy to reiterate what I have said that I am a member of Parliament who continues to work in the interests of his community. I am a person of immense integrity. I comply with all my obligations, I comply with the Ministerial Code of Conduct and I will continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, are you aware that the train station at Five Dock was considered a tier two station and it is now being considered a tier one station?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I am not aware of any details about tier one and tier two.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: What is tier one and tier two, Ms Sharpe? Can you explain, please?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Just to make sure that you understand what it is. So tier two, there are obviously the key stations in relation to the metro—Sydney Olympic Park, the larger stations coming in. And then there is discussion around whether there will be stations in between. There is obviously a discussion between, I think it is, North Burwood or North Strathfield versus Five Dock. Are you aware of that discussion?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I am not aware of the discussion other than what I have read in the paper. I think a metro, wherever it goes through the inner west, would be a great win for the people of the inner west. We all appreciate the value of public transport. I think that is a great project wherever the stops are.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So you concede that, when you say it will be a "great win"?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: For the people of the inner west, most definitely. No-one wants to be in traffic jams, and metros like the Metro North West, have brought great benefits to the people of that area. I think we should be investing in public transport that has great benefits for the people of New South Wales.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Have you heard of something called uplift?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have, yes.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: So people or property owners near a tier one or tier two station could be set to get a lot of financial uplift on their properties if they held them. I understand that there is a push for a tier two station at Five Dock.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, and tier two?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Sorry, Ms Sharpe will correct me.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: The tier two are the smaller stations in between the larger anchor points along the metro.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Are they? Five Dock would be a perfect tier two.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And the question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The question is if someone had property at a tier two station, there would be significant financial uplift in the value of their properties.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: That is a statement.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Would you agree with that statement? Question mark put at the end of the statement.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order: This is now well and truly out of the remit of the portfolio that we are looking at and it is bordering on hypotheticals as well.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: It comes back to the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Chair, I ask that—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: He became a Minister in April and this goes back to his conduct as a Minister. The 2½ hours that we have had this morning show in fact that this is a very shady situation here—10 per cent of a \$70 million property.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Chair, we are now moving onto property valuations.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Point of order: A point of order is being heard.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: We are now moving into property valuation theories, Chair. I believe that is straying outside the remit.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: It is out of the disclosure section and it is now moving into property valuation theories and technical detail around transport projects.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: To the point of order: This goes entirely to ministerial conduct and the conduct of this Minister and his failure to disclose that he has financial interests and property interests in two key locations that involve new rail lines in Sydney.

The CHAIR: Please keep the questioning within the terms of reference.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, have you declared all of the income that you receive as required through your pecuniary interests?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met all my disclosure obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So there is no income that you are receiving through trusts or otherwise that is undeclared?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. I have complied with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: At no point have you declared any rental income through any of your pecuniary interests, is that accurate?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You do not get rent if you do not receive anything. I have got no income and I comply with all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: The only income that you receive is as a result of you being a member of Parliament?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Correct.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: And what is the requirement? How do you declare any income that you receive as a result of the property deal at Tallawong?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have not received any income. My disclosures are there for everyone to see.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Are you set to do so?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: They are there for everybody to see, Ms Sharpe. I have made my declarations with regard to property disclosure and associate disclosures, and I have met all the requirements,

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you have not, Minister. We have had a very long time here this morning; it has been trying on all of us. I think we have now had you answer the question, I think, over 100 times in relation to having declared everything as required. Are you concerned that answers like that do not give confidence to the public of New South Wales that the way in which conflicts of interest and your personal landownings are being managed is in the public interest?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. What I am actually concerned is that you have four ministerial responsibilities and we have opportunities to talk about Active Kids and some really good programs we are doing in New South Wales but you have actually opted to ask questions that has been out there for years, in the paper, speculated about. I have met all my requirements and you have failed to actually talk about the things that matter to people—cost-of-living pressures—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You do not think that trust in government and integrity matters to people, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Most definitely, and I have complied with all of that. I am the first person, as a member of Parliament, that recognises and obeys by that. Where the problem—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, you were the chair of the privileges and ethics committee and you could not even get your pecuniary interests right.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sure. Thanks, Ms Sharpe. I am happy to answer the question if you will allow me to finish. I am concerned that you have not actually addressed issues under my portfolio responsibility that actually mean something to people and the good things—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You think no-one cares about this, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I do not think you care about it. I think with regard to measures of integrity—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You think people do not care about corruption in politics?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, I think they do. I think they do and—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Then surely you would accept that it is reasonable for us to ask the question?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I think the witness is attempting to answer the question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: —there is no suggestion of that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Yes, there is the suggestion. It has been spelt out very clearly today. You have done the wrong thing, you have not declared it and you are only talking about it now because you have been caught.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Why don't you let him answer the question?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Two properties, \$7 million and you are only talking about it because you have been caught.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: If you would allow me to finish, Mr Secord. I am happy to answer that question and I will continue to comply. You are making assertions that I am using my position to benefit and I would welcome—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: We are not making assertions; we are saying that.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, you are a man of integrity—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

The CHAIR: I will uphold that point of order.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: And if you would like, you should make those comments outside in Macquarie Street.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, I want to return back to your pecuniary interest declaration, including 122-124 Great North Road. In earlier evidence to myself and to Mr Shoebridge you said that those properties were owned by your parents, Richard and Catherine Sidoti. Is that correct?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: As per my declarations.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you asking about seniors?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: There is a third one! I am sorry, there a third one under their names too: Second Avenue, Five Dock. Three properties under their names. Why are they on your declaration? I am not speaking that they should not be. Are you acting on their behalf? Why would you put your parents' property declarations on there? Are you acting on their behalf?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No, they are there for a reason.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: What is the reason?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: The reason is because I am open and transparent, and I am putting properties there that I have not got an interest in to be open and transparent.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, you do realise you are required to put those on there?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met all my obligations—and beyond.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: You were required to do that but you failed. This is the first time that these appear. You have been in Parliament since 2011.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Ms Sharpe, with regard to property disclosures, as I have said to the point of exhaustion today, I have met all my obligations.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes, we are all exhausted.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have complied with all my obligations. I continue to comply with my obligations, and there is not a single person in my electorate that would not know that 120 Great North Road was in our family for many years.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: But you did not declare it until 2016. That is correct isn't it, Minister?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Ms Sharpe, what is correct is that I have always acted with honesty and integrity, and that is why my community respect me.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, do you understand our concern around this? This is not about what you think the people in your community think about this. This is about how government manages conflict of interest and multimillion-dollar property decisions that can lead to private benefit.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is that a question?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, why did you fail to declare these until 2016-2017? Is that only because there was media interest?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Ms Sharpe, with regard to property disclosure, it is publicly available. It is there for everybody.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Yes, it is publicly available if you declare it; you did not declare it for five years.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Have you finished?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: What was the light-bulb moment?

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: What made you declare it when you had not declared it previously?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: In 2016, what was the light-bulb moment?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: You might want to indicate when you want me to answer. Can I answer?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The floor is yours.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Fantastic. With regard to property disclosures, you have a copy in front of you as do the people of New South Wales and I have met my requirements. I comply with all my obligations and I have met all my disclosures.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Mr Sidoti, you had a light-bulb moment in 2016. You said that this property had been in your family for a generation. What happened in 2016 to make you scramble and put it on your declaration when it had not appeared in the five previous ones?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Are you finished yet? Thanks, Mr Secord. I have answered that already.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: No, you have not.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: No, you have not.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I refer you back to my previous answer; it is there.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: What was the light-bulb moment? Was it Channel 7? Was it *The Daily Telegraph*? What was the light-bulb moment? What made you scramble and put that on your pecuniary interest

after ignoring it for five years and being in your family for a generation? Is it because you had a plan to buy up the block next to the train station that you knew was coming your way?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I can assure you, Mr Secord, that I comply with all my obligations. There are no light-bulb moments.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So the Premier did not—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I will continue to obey by my obligations and my Ministerial Code of Conduct. I will work hard for the people of my electorate and the people of New South Wales. Again, I am just a bit disappointed that you have not taken the opportunity to talk about some of the wonderful projects that are going on right across New South Wales, but that is your choice.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The public servants will be able to answer those questions because you have been very distracted with your property transactions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a question?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Sorry, and your question, Mr Secord?

The Hon. WALT SECORD: The question is: Have you been distracted from your ministerial duties because of your property holdings?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Mr Secord, when it comes to my ministerial responsibility, I work night and day for my electorate and for the people of New South Wales. I love what I do. I am most fortunate Minister in government. I have the most wonderful portfolios and I live the dream every day.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Minister, did the Premier require you to update your pecuniary interests after she was asked questions in relation to your property holdings in the Parliament in 2017?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Ms Sharpe, with regard to my property disclosures—just so we end up on an even number—my property disclosures are there for everybody to see and I comply with all my obligations. I have met the Ministerial Code of Conduct, and I will continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Has the Premier ever spoken to you about your pecuniary interests?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regard to pecuniary interest, I follow all the pecuniary interests—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Has the Premier ever spoken to you directly about that?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: With regard to all my disclosures—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: She has never spoken to you about your pecuniary interests?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: —my disclosures have all been made.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So the Premier has never spoken to you. Just be clear, you have just said the Premier has never spoken to you in relation to your pecuniary interests.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: That is not what he said.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: He has answered the question.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: No. That is exactly what I did not say. What I said is I have met all the Ministerial Code of Conduct. I have met the property disclosures. I comply with all my obligations. I continue to do that and I work for the best interests of the people of New South Wales.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: So when you decided to finally declare a bunch of property that you had owned, that you are actually required to declare that you failed to declare for five years—

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is not correct what you just said—a bunch.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: There are five properties here, I would consider that a bunch. If you want to just say five, we can call it even. That is fine if it is not a bunch.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: That is not correct. I have met all my property disclosures. I comply with my obligations, and I continue to do so.

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: But you did not do so for five years. Did the Premier direct you to update your pecuniary interests? It is a direct question; it has nothing to do with the way in which you have met them or not. Did the Premier direct you to update your pecuniary interests and get them in order?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I have met and complied with all my obligations. It is a member of Parliament's responsibility to make sure he complies with all his obligations and I have done that.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Minister, one last question. JAFS Investment Trust, the 10 per cent that holds 38 Cudgegong Road, Rouse Hill, how did you get that property? Just one last question, time is running out. Search deeply into your mind. How did you get that property?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thanks, Mr Secord, for that question. I draw you back to my property disclosure because that is how you know about it. It is an open document for everybody to see and I comply and meet—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you get that property?

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: I comply and meet—

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you get that property? It is worth \$7 million. Who does not know how they obtained a \$7 million piece of real estate in Sydney, New South Wales?

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: The Minister answered this exact question earlier in the day.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: Yelling the question is not going to make it any better.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: Anyone in this State would know how they got a \$7 million piece of property. How did you get that property?

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Calm down, Walt. You are bunging it on for the camera now.

Mr JOHN SIDOTI: Thank you, Mr Secord.

The Hon. WALT SECORD: How did you get that property? It is a \$7 million piece of property and you are refusing to tell us. How did you get it?

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Point of order: I ask that the Chair bring the member to order. The Minister has answered the question.

The CHAIR: I bring the member to order. At this point I close the morning session. Thank you, Minister, for attending this hearing. The Committee will now break for lunch and return at 2.00 p.m. for further questioning of government officers.

(The Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans withdrew.)

(Luncheon adjournment)

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: As Deputy Chair, welcome back to the afternoon session of budget estimates. Before we start, Mr Draper, I think you have to leave at 4.50 p.m.?

Mr DRAPER: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: The Committee notes that commitment. We will start this afternoon's budget estimates hearing with questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Mr Draper, yesterday we talked a little about the construction of the new stadiums in Sydney and I wanted to ask more about that. The date of commencement for operations for the new Sydney Football Stadium is slated as March 2022. Is that still the accurate date?

Mr DRAPER: That is the construction completion date we are aiming for.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What is the commencement of operations date?

Mr DRAPER: Depending on when we finish and how we hand it over, it can take a month or so to hand over. In the case of Western Sydney Stadium, it might have even taken a little bit longer than that. We call it an operational readiness phase where testing goes on and crews get bumped in and all those sorts of things. That gets determined a little bit closer to the time. As I said—I think at the other hearing yesterday—the final timetable for completion will be determined as part of the tender process that we are going through at the moment with those two tenderers.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: So that date, March 2022, is not actually the confirmed date? You are not able to confirm a date for completion until the new contracts are finalised, is that accurate?

Mr DRAPER: That is the case with all projects really. Until you have a tender with a program that goes into the contract and a tenderer signs that contract—and even then, during the course of the construction process, there are adjustments that need to be made along the way depending on what we find during construction. But at

the beginning we develop an estimate of when we think it can be completed and we allow some contingency. That is the date we are using at the moment.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: So that is still the best guess? Your best estimate is still March 2022?

Mr DRAPER: That is still our best estimate, yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: If you do not have a contract in place, you do not have a contractor who has a workforce ready to go, you have not undertaken procurement, what confidence can we have that that date—best guess as it is—is even at all realistic? We are almost at the end of 2019 and none of those things has happened.

Mr DRAPER: I guess the confidence you take is that we go and engage and hire professional, experienced advisers to help us develop those cost plans and programs—people who work with the construction industry all the time. They stage it out, including the actual tender process itself. So the tender is not the end of a procurement process. Naturally there is an evaluation and a contract award period that comes after that. And then the builder who is selected also has to have time to mobilise onsite. In the case of the Sydney Football Stadium, we talked yesterday at the other hearing about the fact that we have a two-stage works underway. We have the advantage that Lendlease is already onsite doing the stage one works. That will continue, I think, through to the new year. We think there will be a fairly smooth handover in the process.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The funding envelope for the project was \$689 million. Is that still the funding envelope?

Mr DRAPER: No, that was a journalist who reported that number. The total budget for the project is \$729 million.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is \$729 million.

Mr DRAPER: At the Premier's hearing the other day I mentioned that the stage one works was around \$40 million. That was published on our website in any case but someone has deducted the \$40 million and come up with \$689 million.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Right.

Mr DRAPER: The project is not only the construction contract. There are all the design consultants, other consultants who work on the project, our own costs are direct costs. So you cannot just deduct the stage one works off and come up with that \$689 million.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: But based on the expenditure that has occurred so far, because, as you say, money is being spent on the project, is that still a realistic envelope? You have a little bit of line of sight now on how the costs are going.

Mr DRAPER: Yes, the \$729 million is still the budget we are working to and we still have a high degree of confidence around that. That is why we have gone back to the market. Our assessment was that that budget is achievable. We went back to the market because we believed we can get best value for money by going down that re-tender path.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How much over that budget was the Lendlease proposal? They came to you with a proposal for how much they thought it would cost them to complete the project. As you indicated publicly and yesterday, you were not happy with that and you wanted to go back to market. What did they think it was going to cost?

Mr DRAPER: I have been asked this in another hearing—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I recall this line of questioning.

Mr DRAPER: I will be brief.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I do not follow every hearing, I apologise, Mr Draper.

Mr DRAPER: I don't think you are reading all the transcripts of everything I say. I do not really want to comment on that, the reason being that we have a live tender process going on and if we throw that information into the mix with the tender we might do ourselves a disservice in that process. If you do not mind, I would rather not nominate a figure.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Fair enough. Could you indicate whether as part of that proposal from Lendlease the March 2022 time frames were realistic? Were the time frames you indicated as your best guess as to the project completion and handover dates reflected in what Lendlease thought that they would be able to complete?

Mr DRAPER: Their programs were also not acceptable to us.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I am going to assume from that that they thought that it would take them longer.

Mr DRAPER: Yes, but they were probably prepared to be more flexible on the program than on the price. In our experience, price and program go hand-in-hand—the longer a builder stays on a project, the more expensive it gets, for the obvious reasons: they have got resources deployed there. Usually when you get a project that is over budget, often the program runs too long as well.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you able to give us any more information as to how much longer Lendlease thought it would take them to complete the project? Appreciating that it was not acceptable to you, how long did they think it was going to take?

Mr DRAPER: I am not trying to be evasive but for the same reasons I mentioned a moment ago I would rather not cruel our existing tender process. I do not want to put any lines in the sand with the tenderers who are currently participating. Clearly both their price and their program was higher and longer than we wanted.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: If there is a cost overrun on a project, for whatever reason, who, during the phase we are in now but particularly during the construction phase, is financially responsible for that? Is it the New South Wales Government? Is it the Sydney Cricket Ground trust?

Mr DRAPER: The way this is set up is that Infrastructure NSW has received what is called a project authorisation order. So effectively the Premier has asked us to step in as the client of the project. We also have the land vested to us for the period of construction so we can manage that. The way we regard it is that Infrastructure NSW is responsible for delivering the project to time and budget.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: If that cannot happen for whatever reason, that is on Infrastructure NSW, the cost of that?

Mr DRAPER: Yes, we are responsible.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Again, I think we discussed this briefly yesterday but I just want to revisit. It was announced on 30 July 2019 by the Premier that "it wouldn't take long" to issue a new contract for the completion of the Sydney Football Stadium. That was over a month ago. How long is it going to take for the new contract to be issued?

Mr DRAPER: I do not have the Premier's comments in front of me. But in terms of how long it takes, usually a tender process can run for a period of up to two to three months, especially something as financially significant and complex as building a new stadium. There is a period of evaluation, a contract award—so it can take a number of months. We would expect to be towards the end of year before we finalise the arrangements.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: So you are planning in 2019 but towards the end of 2019?

Mr DRAPER: That is our intention.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has the Sydney Cricket Ground trust added to the construction brief since the announcement by the Minister for Sport in December last year that the stadium would be demolished and rebuilt?

Mr DRAPER: Has the Sydney Cricket Ground trust added to the construction brief?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes.

Mr DRAPER: Maybe I can answer it this way. The Sydney Cricket Ground trust is a member—we have a steering committee that oversees the project. The Sydney Cricket Ground trust had input. From the very beginning there was a project brief and an initial design that the Sydney Cricket Ground trust was able to provide to Infrastructure NSW. I think Mr Betts has given evidence about that previously in the parliamentary inquiry into stadia. They were a solid base for Infrastructure NSW to start its work. We reviewed that work. We did our own reviews and incorporated that information from the Sydney Cricket Ground trust. The Sydney Cricket Ground trust does sit on the steering committee that oversees the project, which I chair. We do seek its input routinely as an experienced operator of stadia.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is it also not the site owner?

Mr DRAPER: No, for the period of the construction the ownership of the land has transferred to Infrastructure NSW.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is not the case that potentially one of the reasons why there was a mismatch in expectations between Lendlease and Infrastructure NSW—as you indicated to me yesterday, it was your expectation that there would not be a change of contract, that this turn of events is something that was not initially in your mind or in Infrastructure NSW's mind. It is not the case that one of the reasons that that has occurred is because the Sydney Cricket Ground trust was amending, adding to and changing the brief around the project—

Mr DRAPER: No.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: —between December last year and the middle of this year in a way that changed the parameters of the project in any way?

Mr DRAPER: No. We work very cooperatively with the Sydney Cricket Ground trust and other agencies. We have other agencies which participate in overseeing a project as well. But what we did between appointing Lendlease at the end of 2018 and the date on which it submitted, as I described yesterday, a guaranteed maximum price on 30 May, the work was principally with Lendlease to take what was a reference design that had come out of the design competition, which had been conducted in 2018, with Cox Architecture coming out on top of that. Lendlease worked with us to develop the design further to the point where it could price it. The Sydney Cricket Ground trust played a very productive role in that alongside Infrastructure NSW.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you saying there was no change or amendment in that period but subsequent to that period Lendlease submitted its proposal, which was unacceptable for price and time frame reasons and potentially others as well?

Mr DRAPER: Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Have there have been any changes subsequent to that? Has the Sydney Cricket Ground trust or any other body used this re-tender process as an opportunity to make any changes?

Mr DRAPER: We have thoroughly reviewed everything we are going to put to the market before we put it back to the market. But it was really based on the design that we developed with Lendlease. As part of that we certainly invited input from the Sydney Cricket Ground trust and from others, including all of our consultants, on what went into the specification and the drawings that were provided to the tenderers. The project that we are tendering at the moment is substantially the same as that we tendered with Lendlease.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Substantially is not exactly—

Mr DRAPER: That is because there are thousands—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: One person's definition of "substantial" and "insubstantial" can change. I suspect there is some subjectivity in those terms. What are we talking about, Mr Draper? What are those changes?

Mr DRAPER: Design just keeps developing in these projects. It becomes more and more developed as time goes on. The more time we have, the more we can pin things down. I would hate to bore you with it but there are thousands of drawings that go into this. The architects and the engineers just keep constantly updating them, refining them and making sure that they are more and more accurate and a higher degree of design. You go from maybe a 20 per cent or 30 per cent level design early in the concept stage and, ultimately, by the time you get to award a contract you want those designs to be getting much closer to 100 per cent design resolution. So it is constantly happening.

The second thing that has been going on over that period, of course, is the stage two development application. As part of that we got substantial feedback—I think we got 84 submissions on the environmental impact statement—and that has led to some amendments by themselves. In particular, the height and scale of the roof was one of the things that people made submissions on. So we have made some changes to that as well. There are lots of reasons why it changes. But I would describe that as a pretty normal process.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In the various iterations of the stages and the designs, who is ultimately responsible for the parameters of the stadium when it is built, the project that we are going to get delivered? Is it the committee that you described? Is it the Sydney Cricket Ground trust as the ultimate owners, even though they have transferred ownership for the period of construction and presumably it will transfer back to the Sydney Cricket Ground trust at the end? Is it the Minister? Is it Infrastructure NSW?

Mr DRAPER: I think the project authorisation order process makes it pretty clear that Infrastructure NSW is responsible and has the decision-making authority in that situation. I do not want to downplay the role of the steering committee, which is vitally important to us. We do try to take decisions of the steering committee wherever we can. If there was any disagreement at that level, it would ultimately come down

to myself and a couple of my colleagues within Infrastructure NSW to make a call on what the design we adopt would be that we put to the market.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In relation to Stadium Australia—you may have already provided some of this information yesterday—have expressions of interest been opened for a contractor for the Stadium Australia rebuild?

Mr DRAPER: For Stadium Australia we have not yet commenced the expression of interest process. We have only just lodged—and I do not think it has been exhibited yet—the development application for Stadium Australia. We have commenced the more detailed design process as well, so that is underway. But we will be starting over the next month or so an expression of interest process or, at least, a market-sounding process to speak to builders to get their feedback on, firstly, their willingness and interest and, secondly, any comments they have about the way we approach procurement, which is fairly normal for all the projects we do in New South Wales. Then we would have a formal expressions of interest process where we ask people to express their interest. We will evaluate that. From that we will select a short list and from the short list we will issue a request for a tender document.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In the next month or so?

Mr DRAPER: We would be expecting to start the expressions of interest process over the next month or so, yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Will it be an open tendering process?

Mr DRAPER: Yes. An expression of interest is completely open. Anyone can express their interest. We then select from those that put in a submission a short list. So that is completely open.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Will that expression of interest process include the functionality to add a roof later, if required? Is that going to be part of what is going out to market for expressions of interest?

Mr DRAPER: An expression of interest document, we do not really issue any designs as part of that. It is too early in that process because a lot of those documents are fairly commercial-in-confidence anyway. The expression of interest process does not include designs of any nature.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Does it include "We would like you to think about including a functionality to add a roof?"

Mr DRAPER: No, we would not do that at the expressions of interest stage. If we were going to do that—and I am happy to be clear that our intention is not to include a retractable roof at Stadium Australia—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is not your intention?

Mr DRAPER: That is not our intention but in any case that would be something that would be issued as part of the request for tender documents, part of the brief and the designs that went into those documents.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You talked about the continuous reiterations of designs and specification changes, albeit not substantial, but this process is constantly ongoing. Given the fact that changes occur and will continue to occur, how confident can we be about the funding envelope? Changes to design and changes to construction of what is being built there presumably change the cost of the project. How do you align giving the public the confidence in relation to the cost of project with the fact that you are constantly changing the project?

Mr DRAPER: The concept itself does not change much in those reiterations. We know the parameters that we are building to at Sydney Football Stadium and Stadium Australia, the scale of the project, the basic dimensions, the types of constructions that are going to be required—we know all of those things. When I talked about the design evolving, it is getting from, at the very early stages of concept schematic-type design down to a set of drawings that a builder can know that this bolt goes into this element. It is very precise. When it gets down to the point when you have a tradesperson on the ground at the stadium site in the future, they know exactly what they are meant to do. It is an evolution in detail; it is not an evolution in scope.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Draper, you said the DA has been submitted but it is not on public exhibition yet for Homebush. Is that right?

Mr DRAPER: That is my understanding at the moment, yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: How many seats are there in that DA stadium for Stadium Australia?

Mr DRAPER: It is 70,000 seats.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: How many seats are there in the Sydney Football Stadium at Moore Park?

Mr DRAPER: We always said it is going to be between 40,000 and 45,000. I think we are at around 42,500 at the moment. I can double-check that for you and let you know later on.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: It is right in the middle.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is the time frame for having those two stadiums completed?

Mr DRAPER: They are at different stages. The Sydney Football Stadium, as we have discussed before, is at what I would call early-work stage—demolition, relocating utilities and doing civil works—with construction of the main building commencing next year and completing in the first quarter of 2022. That is our current expectation, as I described to Ms Jackson a little earlier. We would expect to commence construction at Stadium Australia around the middle of next year and have that completed in the first few months of 2023.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There will be a significant period where neither of those stadiums are in operation. Is that right?

Mr DRAPER: Yes. We would expect the last game before the redevelopment at Stadium Australia in mid next year—in June next year. That might be a State of Origin match or it might be a major club match—one last big match there before the stadium gets rebuilt. That would be from mid-2020 and then an opening of the new Sydney Football Stadium in 2022. It is that period.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: This may be a question to Ms Jones rather than yourself—I am not sure. What is the strategy for dealing with the absence of both of those stadiums in Sydney for major sporting fixtures for two years?

Ms JONES: Thank you for your question.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You have been waiting a while.

Ms JONES: I have been. The Office of Sport works very closely with its sporting partners, including the large codes and clubs around where they actually play their games and their content, particularly during the disruption period of both Stadium Australia and Sydney Football Stadium. Ultimately, it is up to them to decide where they want to play their games. However, we do make our other stadiums available to them, including Western Sydney Stadium and our facilities in Newcastle and Wollongong.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Apart from the new stadium at Parramatta, it is basically "go to Wollongong and Newcastle". Are those the options that you are offering?

Ms JONES: Those are the stadiums within our network, absolutely. But, as I said before, we do actually work quite closely with the key codes and clubs, particularly the National Rugby League [NRL], Australian Rugby Union and the Football Federation Australia about where they might take their other games. Instances like this are a good opportunity for those codes and clubs to look at taking games to regional centres.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Hear, hear!

Ms JONES: I know the NRL actually takes a game to Bathurst every year. We work quite closely with them to make sure that those things can happen.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: "Opportunity" is a nice description of it. They will not have any option other than to go to Wollongong or Newcastle for the better part of two years.

Ms JONES: That is only within the stadia network. There are many other grounds within Sydney that they can go on and play the games.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If they want to get a decent crowd of more than 20,000, they are going to be going to Wollongong or Newcastle for the better part of the two years.

Ms JONES: I also confirm—sorry, it slipped my mind—there is also the Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG]. I should have been aware of that, given Kerrie Mather is sitting right next to me. The Sydney Cricket Ground is also available. It is being used at the moment as an alternative location for the Sydney Football Stadium.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: By the middle of 2022 you will have Western Sydney Stadium, Homebush, Newcastle and Wollongong controlled by your agency. Is that right?

Ms JONES: Repeat that again, sorry?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: By the middle of 2022 you will have Western Sydney, Homebush, Newcastle and Wollongong under the control of your agency?

Ms JONES: Those are under the control of Venues NSW, which is through—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Sorry, under the control of Venues NSW—

Ms JONES: That is correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Then you will have the SCG and the Sydney Football Stadium under the control of the trust. Is that correct?

Ms JONES: That is correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is the rationale for having competing stadium authorities? We have one city and one media market. Why do we have two of them with the antiquated trust and the rest of them with Venues NSW?

Ms JONES: Ultimately, that is a question for government. However, the Office of Sport has a commerciality framework that has been in place now for a number of years, which talks about the terms of which we allocate content throughout our stadium network. It also talks about the mechanisms within which Venues NSW and the Trust operate.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Does that bind the trust in its decisions? Did you say "commerciality"?

Ms JONES: It is commerciality framework. It is just a framework.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It does not bind the trust.

Ms JONES: It is not a binding document.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Does it bind Venues NSW?

Ms JONES: No, it does not bind Venues NSW.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What is its aim?

Ms JONES: I can read it to you.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Not all of it, I hope.

Ms JONES: No, I will not read it cover to cover for you. It says that the stadia commerciality framework is in place "for the stadia facilities operated by the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust and Venues NSW. It allows the stadia facilities to operate both individually and as part of a network in an efficient, coordinated and consistently commercial manner".

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But it is not binding.

Ms JONES: It is not binding.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Has it been adopted by the SCG trust?

Ms JONES: It is definitely on the Office of Sport website and my understanding is that, at the time of its development, the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust and Venues NSW were heavily involved.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That was not my question. Has it been adopted by the SCG trust?

Ms JONES: I would have to take that on notice to see if there was any formal adoption process.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Has it been adopted by Venues NSW?

Mr DOORN: I am happy to answer that. Yes, most definitely.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Is this arrangement needed because otherwise you have two competing, separate authorities dealing with stadiums in Sydney?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am listening.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You are asking about an opinion on whether a policy decision made by government is needed. They cannot answer that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, I am asking about the purpose of the commerciality arrangement.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Which is a decision of the Government to run them how they are running.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am not asking whether it is smart or not; I am asking about what the purpose of it is. I have heard your point of order—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: That is a different question to "is it needed?"

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That is exactly what I asked.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: No, you said, "Is it needed?"

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am not going to argue with you, Niall. I have heard your point of order.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Are you going to accept it?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, I will rephrase the question—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Thank you; everyone is happy.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: —despite there being no point of order.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: No, I did make a ruling on it; I have ruled on it.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I actually made a point of order.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: And I have said there is the point of order. I have ruled on it.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: No, you said—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I have ruled on there being no point of order and I said I will rephrase the question. If you want to challenge the Chair, we will go into confidential session and you can move a ruling of dissent, if you want.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: If you are going to—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If you want to challenge the Chair like this, that is how we do it. I have made a ruling: There is no point of order. Do you want to take anything else?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: No, it was how you phrased it—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Do you want to continue to challenge the Chair?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you going to hear from him or just cut him off?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I have heard from him. Do you want to go into confidential session to challenge the ruling?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You kept talking over him.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It is within your rights.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I said ask your question.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Ms Jones, what is the purpose of the commerciality document? Is it required because you have got to manage the fact that you have two entities, which otherwise would be competing with each other?

Ms JONES: I would say that the purpose of the commerciality framework document is in recognition that the stadia network is run by two separate entities and that they need to work together because they both ultimately report back to government. Both of them need to achieve the government objectives so it is about how they can run those entities and achieve government objectives at the same time.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What are the Government objectives that are challenged by having the two separate authorities? How do those two separate authorities, left to their own devices, potentially compromise the Government objectives?

Ms JONES: I will take that on notice.

Mr DRAPER: Chair, if it is okay to say now. I just got some advice from my team and the 42,500 is the best estimate for the capacity of SFS at the moment.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: In between the two.

Mr DRAPER: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Coutts-Trotter, is it true that approximately 70 per cent of religious hate crimes in New South Wales are targeted towards people of Muslim faith?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I cannot confirm that figure, Mr Shoebridge.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Does your department keep a track of hate crimes?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sorry, can you answer that?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes, thanks for your question. With regard to keeping a track of hate crimes, no, we do not. That sits with a different agency.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Which agency?

Mr LA POSTA: The anti-discrimination agency of New South Wales.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: There would be several sources of information. There would be the Anti-Discrimination Board and there would be the police, particularly the Bias Crime Unit. I am happy to take that on notice to give you a clear answer about what government agencies are collecting what data.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But the department of communities, which has the multiculturalism portfolio, does not keep a track of hate crimes?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I would like to respond on notice, if I could?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: All right. In circumstances where Muslim Australians feel like they are specifically targeted—and I have given you one assessment that was 70 per cent of hate crimes in New South Wales are targeted towards Muslim Australians—is there a specific strategy that your department has, Mr Coutts-Trotter, to address Islamophobia? Have you identified that as something that you require a specific strategy to address?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: The short answer is yes. I am happy for my colleague Joseph La Posta to provide some detail.

Mr LA POSTA: Mr Shoebridge, the statistic around the 70 per cent—could I just get some clarification around that? That is the first time we have heard that statistic quoted.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: This was reported in an SBS article on 1 April of this year. It was a study done by Professor Gail Mason from the Sydney Institute of Criminology, on my understanding, looking at NSW Police Force databases for the research.

Mr LA POSTA: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am happy to give you a copy of the article, if that assists?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sure.

Mr LA POSTA: Yes, thank you. With regard to matters such as Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, any of these religious- or hate-based motives to discriminate against people, we acknowledge that our agency takes them incredibly seriously, first and foremost, and they are an ongoing concern for our agency, Mr Shoebridge. We have specific programs, which I will touch on in a moment, that seek to address some of those things. I am proud of the fact that a number of our representatives within our community resilience team maintain strong proactive relations with our Muslim leaders on exactly the issues that you are trying to talk about and addressing those issues. We provide ongoing support to our Muslim leaders across various different topics such as matters around cemeteries and burials, chaplaincy in school and development applications where required.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: It sounds like there is a number of individual programs. Is there an overall program? Is there an overall strategy to deal with Islamophobia?

Mr LA POSTA: Within Multicultural NSW at the moment?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: There is a collaborative approach that is undertaken by ourselves and the police.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Is there a policy document? Is there a framework? Is there something specific that you can point to—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Is there a guideline?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That says, "Here is our policy to make Muslim Australians feel safe." To address the very real targeting that they have, sadly, sometimes in their daily life?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes, and again we acknowledge the negative sentiment that is out there. The agency at the moment is going through its strategic review 2019 to 2023. We have undertaken engagement sessions across

16 different locations in eight different regions. This has been an issue that has been raised through those strategic planning forums, and it will be part of the agency's response going forward in terms of our strategic plan.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr La Posta, it is good that it is on the radar for the next strategic plan, but my initial question was about current strategies and a current framework. It sounds to me like there is a series of consultations but no strategy. Would that be fair to say?

Mr LA POSTA: With regard to—

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: No. The objective is social cohesion. The question is: At any given point in time, what are the developments within the community or globally that most threaten that social cohesion? I think the recipients of grants are published on our website. So if you looked at the major grants program—the COMPACT Program—you will see where many of those grants are directed. They are directed to trying to strengthen the ties between Muslim Australians and the broader Australian communities. It is something you have to keep calibrating and adjusting because different issues will emerge. The issue of Islamophobia is an issue that has been recognised. It is an issue that is recognised across government services, particularly by the police. I would argue that if you look at the way decisions have been made within the COMPACT Program, there has been a strategy to respond to that particular source of division in the community.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Coutts-Trotter, that is on notice, so could you advise the Committee what the dollar figure is and also what the proportion of the COMPACT Program has gone to address Islamophobia?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sure.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: What about anti-Semitism or are you just going to finish up there?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You are not asking questions.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Coutts-Trotter, or perhaps Mr La Posta might be the best person to answer. Whereabouts have you done those surveys or had those stakeholder meetings you were talking about to inform your 2019 to 2023 strategy?

Mr LA POSTA: There has been a number of locations throughout Sydney; Parramatta was one of the most recent hubs. We undertook a session with our religious leaders as well.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Apart from Parramatta, if we are talking about a multiculturalism strategy for New South Wales, surely there would be a variety of communities in western Sydney that you would be consulting with, not just Parramatta?

Mr LA POSTA: That is correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Where, other than Parramatta, are you going to be doing that?

Mr LA POSTA: I am happy to take the exact locations on notice. I refer you back to Mr Coutts-Trotter's point before around the COMPACT Program funding—\$9.2 million, which now engages 60 different partners across 24 different programs. We can come back to you on the exact specific number in terms of those who are targeting the message that you were speaking of before.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: That was a four-year program, was it not—COMPACT Program funding?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: That is right.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: So that has concluded now?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: No, it is still running this financial year, subject to the evaluation being considered. The results of that evaluation will be considered before the end of the calendar year I think.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Was it \$9.2 million over four years?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Four years, yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: So less than \$2.5 million a year and only a proportion of that going to address Islamophobia. On the face of it, that does not seem adequate to address the scale of the concern from Muslim Australians.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Except that is just one small, but important, part of the broad response. If you speak to leaders, for example, in the police force you will know that a lot of local leaders are acutely aware of this issue and a lot of their trust-building is directed at Islamic communities. They spend a lot of time doing it.

That is true of a range of leaders of government services, government public schools, health services, so this captures some but not all of it.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Rather than on-the-fly answer, do you want to take it on notice to identify what, if any, other programs there are in place, other spending initiatives, to address Islamophobia currently?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sure.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Ms Jones, I did ask you some questions about the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust and whether or not it had accepted your commerciality—that is the word, isn't it?

Ms JONES: "Commerciality framework".

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I think there are representatives from the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust in the room today.

Ms JONES: Correct.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Would you be able to seek some advice from them as to whether or not they have adopted the commerciality framework?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Why don't you ask the CEO?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, Ms Mather is here.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am sorry. Ms Mather, have you adopted the commerciality framework?

Ms MATHER: I believe we already operate commercially. So everything that I have just read in that framework there, looks as though that is the way that we are actually operating in practice. So we have the same commercial framework. We actually work very closely and collaboratively together. I think what happens there in a sense between the three stadia, in particular, in Sydney—you have got ANZ and you have got Bankwest that are in Paul's portfolio and the SCG and Sydney Football Stadium. Actually, they are complementary to each other in terms of their size. What generally happens is the clubs and codes decide where they want to play. It is not for us to actually make decisions about where they play.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Ms Mather, the question is not about general commerciality. The question is about whether or not the board has adopted the commerciality framework of the New South Wales Government. Has that been adopted by the SCG?

Ms MATHER: I would have to take that on notice because it is before my time.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Alright. But your current role—

Ms MATHER: In terms of the commercial framework, we have the same commercial framework, so I could not tell you exactly what the process was in adopting it. I would have to check that.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But you are the CEO. Surely you would know whether or not this State Government policy on commerciality is part of the day-to-day operations of the organisation you are the CEO of?

Ms MATHER: The day-to-day operations at the Sydney Cricket Ground trust are actually on a commercial footing.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Alright. I have follow-up questions, if I may, to Mr Joseph La Posta or Mr Coutts-Trotter—follow-up questions from Mr David Shoebridge about keeping a record on Islamophobia and hate crime. Do you keep records on anti-Semitism and hate crime?

Mr LA POSTA: Our agency does not. I refer to the previous answer around going to the New South Wales race discrimination commission.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: So you have no guidelines on hate crime for anti-Semitism, Islamophobia or other forms of that?

Mr LA POSTA: With regard to crimes, the important thing to note is that our responsibility is around proactive social cohesion. With regard to the reporting of offences, they go through to our colleagues at the department of police.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: So on all forms of hate crime?

Mr LA POSTA: With regard to crimes, yes.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: There is a racial complaints register note there that might be enlightening.

Mr LA POSTA: Yes. In June 2018 the Government introduced legislation to strengthen penalties against people who publicly threaten or incite violence based off race, religion or sexuality. The legislation introduces a new offence to the Crimes Act 1900 carrying a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment and a fine of \$11,000. This legislation replaced section 20D of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. The Crimes Amendment (Publicly Threatening and Inciting Violence) Act 2018, No. 32/2018, received assent on 26 June 2018 and commenced on 13 August 2018. Complaints under the new law are investigated by New South Wales police. Questions about the number of complaints need to be directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services or the NSW Police Force.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: So this is part of the new legislation. How are you addressing it as part of Multicultural NSW?

Mr LA POSTA: In terms of the complaints, they all go directly to the police. Then, as Mr Coutts-Trotter alluded to before, the police and Multicultural NSW work together to understand the nature of those complaints. There is a joint organisation called the Police Multicultural Advisory Council that then understands where there are key issues or themes based geographically, religiously or through some of the other different things that are happening, and then we formulate a response accordingly.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: There is an understanding in the community that when you have discrimination or abuse you call Multicultural NSW. You do not call the police. The police are for different types of crime. Do people call? And if they do call, what is the response of Multicultural NSW?

Mr LA POSTA: I thank you for your question. I think there are a couple of things in that. The first one is I am incredibly proud of the fact that our staff, particularly a number of our senior staff, have incredibly strong and robust relationships with our religious leaders, particularly those across our Islamic faith—our sheikhs, imams et cetera. There are instances where in both good and troubled times they will reach out to our agency in a show of trust and seek its counsel around a whole variety of different issues, one of which you have spoken about today. With regard to criminal acts, though, or where there has been an instance where a point of Australian law is being challenged, we always refer them on to the police for them to have those conversations directly with the police, not so much with our agency, because we are not equipped to do so.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you. I want to ask about the MOU with the Australian National Rugby League. Ms Jones, is that you? Or is it Mr Coutts-Trotter?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, it sort of sits between Ms Jones and Mr Doorn.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I might take the approach of just throwing it out there and we will see where we get to.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: We will leap on it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes. In that MOU there are obviously commitments that have been given both from the New South Wales Government and the Australian rugby league in relation to the availability of venues and where games will be played such as the grand final, State of Origin, other finals series et cetera. If the New South Wales Government is unable to meet its side of the bargain, as it were—the commitments that it has given in relation to what venues will be available under that MOU—is there compensation available to the Australian rugby league?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Before I throw to my well-informed colleagues, the point to make is that an MOU is not a contract; it is a high-level agreement. It does not carry contractual responsibilities. It is an understanding between parties, but the understanding between parties is being negotiated further at present, and Mr Doorn and Ms Jones are deeply involved in it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Accepting what your colleague Mr Coutts-Trotter has said—that there are not necessarily any specifications in relation to compensation but as part of the negotiations that are ongoing at present—is the question of whether compensation will be available if the understanding as it is reached is not able to be fulfilled, for example if the venues are not available that the New South Wales Government had indicated would be available by certain times, part of that negotiation?

Mr DOORN: I think it is very important to state that at the moment we are in commercial discussions with the NRL, so a lot of those are going to be sensitive in nature. You are 100 per cent right that the MOU does detail things like the Government's investment and it does detail things around what the NRL will bring to the table, including the 25 years of grand finals. It also has an element of commercial principles by which we will enter into the agreement. So at the moment, without going into detail around what needs to be updated, there are ongoing discussions with the NRL around the need to provide a bit of an update in that space. But it would be inappropriate for me to comment at the moment about any of the discussions inside those negotiations.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: As part of the understanding that has been reached so far, it is only the 2020 State of Origin and grand final and 2021 State of Origin will be played at the Sydney Cricket Ground, assuming the SFS is unavailable? Is that correct? At present those are the only games that have been committed to be played at the SCG if the SFS is unavailable. Is that right?

Mr DOORN: I may have missed the dates you were talking about.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The 2020 State of Origin and grand final, and the 2021 State of Origin.

Mr DOORN: Just to be clear, the 2020 grand final, as Mr Draper mentioned before, and the State of Origin will be played at ANZ Stadium.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: ANZ Stadium. Okay. So the 2021 and 2022 NRL grand finals. What is the status of any commitments that we have from the NRL that those games will be played in Sydney—2021 and 2022?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: 2020, I think you will find.

Mr DOORN: 2020? Halfway through next year ANZ will be out of action.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes. I get the commitments we have made, but I am keen to talk about 2021 and 2022.

Mr DOORN: And that is part of the discussions we are having at the moment. Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Alright. And the instructions that you have received from the Government are that you are to be doing everything that you can at the negotiating table to secure them for Sydney?

Mr DOORN: To be honest, I would not like to disclose the Government's instructions, in the fear that it would disadvantage my negotiation skills.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I would not want to do that.

Mr DOORN: To get the best for New South Wales.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You are talking about 2020 and 2021, not the 2021 and 2022 grand finals.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: No, I am not. I am talking about 2021 and 2022. I know that—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Grand finals?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes, grand finals. We do not have a commitment, is my understanding. So my understanding is that we do not have a commitment at present that the 2021 and 2022 grand finals will be played in Sydney. And Mr Doorn has said that the discussion is right now. And I am just seeking any sense you can give me about what we are doing to secure—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Do not blow it for us. Do not make them say something that blows it for New South Wales.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I think we are all on the same side here.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You will never be forgiven.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: We will go into a confidential session.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: We want those games in Sydney.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Hear, hear!

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is right.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Well, stop questioning him. Let him get on with the negotiations.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Anything else you want to add on that, Mr Doorn? I will move on.

Mr DOORN: I take the sentiment that we want to maximise the value for New South Wales, and that is exactly what we are trying to do.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But the same applies for 2020. There will be no stadium for the final in 2020 as well.

Mr DOORN: Correct. For the second—for the grand final of 2020.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Where is that happening?

Mr DOORN: The SCG is available.

Ms MATHER: And we will be hosting it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I will ask a few more questions. I appreciate the feedback that you are giving in relation to the ongoing negotiations but this is a matter of some importance to sports fans in Sydney.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: State significance.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has the Australian Rugby League [ARL] asked for any financial compensation to host grand finals in Sydney in those years?

Mr DOORN: Just to be super clear, these have been very confidential discussions that I would not like to be played out in the media to disadvantage the State. At the moment it is very difficult for me to comment about the conversations we have been having.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Okay.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: You might take that on notice about whether or not a compensation request has been made for the 2020 final.

Mr DOORN: I would be more than happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you. Again, the commitments that have been given publicly by the Minister, by the Government—sorry, back on 2020 and 2021—characterise these understandings as rock solid guarantees. That is not language that you or your agencies have used, this is language the Government has used in relation to these games being played in Sydney. But the MOU, as Mr Coutts-Trotter has just clarified, is not a binding contract, it is an understanding between parties. How do we reconcile that description of this understanding we have reached with the ARL, in relation to where these games will be played, with the public description of them as rock solid commitments.

Mr DOORN: I guess the best language I would use for you is that at the moment both parties have a commitment to delivering on what was articulated in the MOU. At the moment, again, very difficult for me to comment about media speculation and commentary except that we have gone into this with an understanding that the Government is spending a considerable amount of money updating the Sydney stadia network and in return the NRL is still very keen to maintain their high level of content in Sydney.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Okay. We may come back to that. We have jumped around a bit this afternoon, apologies everyone. After this morning's session I think we are all getting back on top of it. Mr Draper, was Infrastructure NSW responsible for the Anzac Memorial redevelopment?

Mr DRAPER: Infrastructure NSW undertook that work on behalf of the trustee, yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: And was that project delivered on budget?

Mr DRAPER: Yes, I believe that was delivered on budget. I am just looking at my notes. It was before my time.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Apologies, Mr Draper.

Mr DRAPER: I have paid less attention to that project than the ones that we are currently trying to deliver. I believe that was delivered on budget, but if that is incorrect I will come back and rectify it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes, if you could take that on notice. My understanding, but I am keen for you to take it on notice, is that there was a cost overrun, perhaps not a very—we are back on substantial and insubstantial now.

Mr DRAPER: Sure.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: There was, perhaps not a very substantial one, but a cost overrun and that Infrastructure NSW picked up the tab for that. I would like you to take on notice: Was there a cost overrun and who picked up the tab? This is another project that was delivered by Infrastructure NSW for a Government trust so I am keen to—

Mr DRAPER: I will take that on notice. I will get the facts right for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you. Are you aware of an unsolicited approach regarding the potential construction of a hotel on the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust land? Perhaps Ms Mather may also have something to add on that.

Mr DRAPER: No, I am not aware of any unsolicited proposals. The process in Government is that unsolicited proposals are submitted to the Department of Premier and Cabinet. We would only become aware of them should they go through an assessment that would suggest that it should be progressed further. I am not aware of any such proposal.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Mather, are you aware of any proposal?

Ms MATHER: I am aware, I think it was back in 2016 or of that sort of order, maybe a little bit more recent than that, an application was received in relation to an unsolicited proposal to the Department of Premier and Cabinet [DPC] but it did not make it into the first stages of the process.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you able to tell us through that approach was from?

Ms MATHER: I could not.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Just to clarify, when the Government was approached, when the discussions were commenced in relation to the demolition and rebuild at the site of the Sydney Football Stadium, a hotel was not ever part of that conversation—even initially?

Ms MATHER: No, there are no plans for a hotel. Our focus is 100 per cent on the delivery of the new stadium over the next few years.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: This may have been before your time, but as CEO did you discuss with the Minister or anyone else from the Government the proposal to have a hotel as a part of the redevelopment?

Ms MATHER: No.

Mr DRAPER: I should perhaps say that, given the evidence Ms Mather has given about an unsolicited proposal in 2016, I was actually in DPC at that time. So perhaps I had heard of it but I certainly cannot recall having anything to do with it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What are the relocation costs from the demolition and construction of the Sydney Football Stadium?

Mr DRAPER: Sorry, could you say that again?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The relocation costs?

Ms MATHER: The redevelopment is disrupting match schedules and a number of tenancies in the precinct; we have sought to minimise those wherever we could. The related disruption costs are actually outside of the stadium budget and they will be managed by the SCG directly. What we have done is, we have entered into agreements with all of our home-based partners and our tenants—our sports, commercial, medical partner tenants—to document how we will manage disruption through this period. We had a large number of content agreements in place with our sports partners. We have relocated as many of the games as we could to the SCG and we had the flexibility to be able to do that. We are working very closely with our sports partners to drive attendance and minimise the impact for them during this period.

We have also had a large number of buildings that were adjacent to the SFS that had to be demolished as the stadium was being re-sited away from Moore Park Road. These included the Roosters building, Sydney FC's premises, the AFL, Waratahs, the Indoor Cricket Centre, Cricket NSW's office, all the medical and physio facilities, x-ray facilities and so on. This has involved renting and fitting out premises for them to operate in over the 3½ year period or so until the new stadium is delivered. We have largely been able to secure premises next door in the Entertainment Quarter, which is obviously very convenient and close to the SCG.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is a substantial body of work. I am interested in the cost of that.

Ms MATHER: The total cost of the disruption—or this is the forecast cost—the cost of demolishing those facilities, creating temporary facilities and also reinstating those facilities, the total funding envelope that has been allowed is \$170 million over the 3½ years.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The trust received a loan from Treasury in relation to that, is that correct?

Ms MATHER: That is correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That entire funding envelope is within that Treasury loan? Is that correct?

Ms MATHER: That is right, yes. That is our contribution to the project, if you like.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes. I might just ask a few questions in relation to aged care, perhaps of you Mr Coutts Trotter?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Thank you, Ms Jackson.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Mr Coutts-Trotter, what planning is underway within your department, and potentially collaborating with other departments, for the potential crisis that is facing the Bupa Aged Care facilities in New South Wales?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I am advised by my colleagues in Health that if we saw a situation akin to the situation that recently emerged in Queensland, Health would be leading planning and work with the Commonwealth. I am not aware of any planning work inside my own department, but that is not to say it is not happening now inside Health. That said, I should take it on notice because I do not want to get it wrong and suggest a degree of certainty to the scenario you are alluding to that does not exist.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That would be useful. I appreciate that Health would likely be the lead agency in that many of the residents, if the worse were to happen, would end up in public hospitals. However, there would absolutely be the potential for paramedics and others in emergency services to be deployed very quickly and, I understand, some temporary accommodation was also utilised in Queensland. You can take it on notice but there are elements within Communities and Justice that would be impacted.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I am happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: My understanding is that the next reassessment point is specifically related to the Seaforth facility next month. If that does not go well, this is something that the Government is going to have to be facing quite quickly.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Possibly. Although another possible scenario is that the Commonwealth agencies facilitate the introduction of a new operator. That is another possibility of course.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr La Posta, there were some questions earlier about the programs targeting Islamophobia. Between you and Mr Coutts-Trotter, you identified the specific programs in COMPACT. Those programs would be addressed to the Muslim community? They would be spending money within the Muslim community within Australia.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Not solely. When we were asked questions about this by Mr Moselmane in an earlier estimates hearing we identified the community action for preventing extremism, which is a program to promote resilience and respond to far-right extremism. We made the point that this is a constantly shifting local and global environment and the responses that are then deployed will reflect that fluid sometimes very volatile nature of extremism and hate. It is something that is constantly being calibrated and recalibrated both by our agencies and by partner agencies, particularly the police and Commonwealth agencies.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Mr Coutts-Trotter, Islamophobia covers a wide spectrum. On the one end you have hate and extremism, which may directly incite violence.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There is a broader issue about community attitudes of bias and disrespect.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Survey figures would suggest that there is a broader problem there of bias and disrespect against Muslim Australians. Surely we have a collective obligation to address and as far as possible remove that. What are the programs at that broader level and where is the funding to do it?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: You invited me not to shoot from the hip and to respond on notice because you think about the work that is delivered through public schools, you think about the work being done by the police, and you think about the work being done by agencies in this cluster. To provide a comprehensive response we should take it on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I am happy if that is picked up in that earlier question. Do you understand what I am saying here? It is not just money going to a mosque, it is the broader community.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: It is a spectrum of attitude, I appreciate that.

Mr LA POSTA: Just to add to Mr Coutts-Trotter's point, our programs are not targeted at one subset of society. Our programs are responsible in terms of themes around social cohesion. The whole premise about COMPACT is not about dividing people into little boxes to put them into different subsets, it is about uniting people around the common causes, around the specifics of resilience, leadership and community cohesion in terms of actually caring and nurturing each other's relationships and embracing the similarities as opposed to the

differences. I acknowledge that Islamophobia is an issue and it is certainly on the radar of our agency. The whole premise of our programs is fundamentally about social cohesion across all those different spheres.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I ask this because I do not pretend to be a great consumer of commercial media but I have not seen the bus stop ads, the pop-up ads on my phone or any broader community engagement to address it, which would require funding and consistent funding well above \$9.2 million. Is this something that has been looked at in the upcoming strategy?

Mr LA POSTA: It is considered in the upcoming strategy but I do not want to make light of the programs. COMPACT at the moment has reached 22,000 young people in New South Wales across 130 schools and it is picking up on exactly the themes you are talking about.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: But there are a quarter of a million students in our school system. That is what I am talking about.

Mr LA POSTA: I cannot speak to the number of kids in our school system. What I can talk about is the impact and the reach of our programs and those programs have delivered. We commissioned an evaluation of those programs through Urbis, which demonstrated that 66 per cent of the participants in those programs had higher sentiments around leadership, resilience and also more proactive attitudes in terms of working with their communities. The program is making a difference.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I accept your point about the broader objectives of Multicultural NSW. When a particular community has been targeted because it is a broad spectrum community—you have Indonesians, Malaysian and others from Islamic background—it is not a cohesive community.

Mr LA POSTA: Yes.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: They are facing so much in terms of abuse out there that many of them, because of their lack of language skills, cannot and do not know how to report and articulate their issues. There is an obvious problem there that needs to be addressed. You can spend money on resilience and deradicalisation in COMPACT programs but obviously what Mr Shoebridge is talking about is a problem that needs to be addressed. I am wondering how do you address it? Where is it in your program that addresses that particular issue?

Mr LA POSTA: I refer to my previous answer. I acknowledge the sentiment, I acknowledge the challenges that exist with Islamophobia, just as I do with anti-Semitism and racism more broadly, and beyond racism even hate. We have recently launched an online campaign called "Remove hate from the debate" to equip young people with the skills and tips and tools to combat some of the very hateful and negative sentiment online. I am not shying away from your question. The premise of why our agency exists in our Act is to undertake initiatives which are about promoting social cohesion. We are looking at it in that context in terms of a broader context rather than trying to drill down on specific issues with specific initiatives and policies.

It is more around trying to understand the different needs. And, as you alluded to before, our Islamic brothers and sisters come from incredibly diverse backgrounds across all different parts of the globe all with, at times, very unique needs. Even the way they present is incredibly different. We did not have a specific target in Islamophobia that addresses one part of that. We have to be thinking about the broader premise around combating hate and racism and promoting things like resilience, social cohesion and leadership. With regards to the specifics in the program, as Mr Coutts-Trotter alluded to, I am happy to take that on notice in terms of the specific programs and provide a number figure around those. But beyond that, hopefully that answers your question.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How many Arabic speakers are at Multicultural NSW?

Mr LA POSTA: I am incredibly proud of the fact that Multicultural NSW's language services division, who are all casual employees of ours, cover over 100 different languages. A number of our staff are Muslim and a number of our staff are also Arabic speakers. With regards to the specifics, I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What about the board? Do you have Arabic-speaking Islamic members on the board of Multicultural NSW?

Mr LA POSTA: I am also happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: You do not know whether you have a member of the Arabic community, an Arabic speaker?

Mr LA POSTA: I am reasonably certain but I am not 100 per cent sure. On that basis, just to be factually correct, I would rather take it on notice. I also know that we are going through a recruitment process at the moment for three new advisory board members, so our board is operating at less than ideal capacity.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: If there were no members, how do you address it? Has there been a situation where there were no members? Given that the growth in the Arabic community and particularly recent migrants—Syrians, Iraqis and others—

Mr LA POSTA: Yes. Mr Moselmane you raise a very good point. The premise of Multicultural NSW is to represent as many of our diverse communities as we can. We come from 307 different ancestries, we speak 215 different languages—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: But particularly the newly arrived migrants?

Mr LA POSTA: —and practise 146 different religions. So it is incumbent on us to represent as many of those different subsets as possible. We have only 15 members on our advisory board so it would be impossible for us to have representatives from every community. It is certainly something I am happy to take on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Do you have subcommittees?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes, we are establishing subcommittees of our board.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You could have asked the Minister.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I was not here.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Exactly. I am sure he appoints the board.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Do not talk to us about that.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Could I just ask—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You are not happy being subbed out?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: We are happy; I am happy.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: There is no time for Government questions.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: There is no-one in the Chair. Oh, there he is.

The CHAIR: Want to shut it down, do you? Should have done that this morning.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Can I just ask a couple of questions that may interest the Government? There were a number of promises made, of course, and many not delivered. I want to ask about the upgrade of Leeton Swimming Pool. Where is that at?

Ms JONES: Leeton Swimming Pool?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Ms JONES: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I will answer it. I used to manage it.

The CHAIR: You are not here to answer questions.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: At the last election the Government promised \$3 million. Have there been any plans, any progress, any discussions?

Ms JONES: Are you talking about the election that has just gone?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Ms JONES: Yes. There are a series of election commitments that were made in relation to sports facilities. At the moment, we are getting in touch with each one of the recipients of those commitments.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Is Leeton one of them?

Ms JONES: If you give me a bit of time I can have a look at that for you. The process is that we are talking to each one of those recipients about their project readiness, to understand if they have development approval, if they have plans and what have you so that we can then start to prioritise the funding accordingly.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I will text the manager.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What is interesting about this is that it is not in the budget—\$3 million has been promised but it is not in the budget.

Ms JONES: I think you will find that within the budget papers there was talk about sports facilities and the allocation of funding and that was all in relation to election commitments. Individual projects around election commitments were not separate line items.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: They were not separate?

Ms JONES: No.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Okay. What about the Braidwood pool upgrade?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Braidwood? I lived near there.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I have a farm near Braidwood, I love Braidwood.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes, it is Southern Tablelands.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is too cold to swim in Braidwood.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: If we cannot find it soon I will take it on notice.

The CHAIR: What is happening with the new Parramatta pool?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: The agreement has been made and Ms Jones might want to provide a bit more detail. I think it was announced yesterday or the day before?

Ms JONES: That is correct. I can go to the Parramatta pool if you like. The original announcement was for a \$30 million government contribution towards council.

The CHAIR: Sorry, how much?

Ms JONES: Thirty million dollars. But, as the Government announced a couple of days ago now, that has been increased to \$38.5 million. We are working in close partnership with City of Parramatta Council to ensure the delivery of an aquatics facility for the residents of Parramatta.

The CHAIR: Have you turned a sod on it yet?

Ms JONES: No, Parramatta council has taken control of the project.

The CHAIR: Do you know the total value of the project?

Ms JONES: It is \$70-odd million.

Mr DRAPER: Seventy-seven million dollars.

The CHAIR: Seventy-seven million dollars?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Point of order—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: He wants to be thrown out

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: I am having trouble making out the question.

The CHAIR: I do not get that.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Because you are eating, he is having trouble.

The CHAIR: I beg your pardon. I am having trouble hearing the answers. Are they going to have a separate water polo pool there, do you know?

Ms JONES: Let me just pull up the description for you. My understanding is that you are looking at a 50-metre pool, an outdoor diving pool, which could be used for water polo, yes.

The CHAIR: So you are not having a separate water polo pool?

Ms JONES: No, but it is a multipurpose pool that can be used for diving and for water polo.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Just going back to my questions about the Braidwood pool and Leeton. There were separate line items for election commitments, weren't there?

Ms JONES: For some election commitments, but for the Office of Sport we had a number of election commitments—I will just get those for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Jones, we are specifically referring to a document that was produced with the budget in relation to election commitments that specified how a number of specific election commitments were being met—

Ms JONES: Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: —and those were not in there—that is the end of story.

Ms JONES: Right, okay. In our initial review the Leeton pool does not seem to be allocated to the Office of Sport in terms of an election commitment, but I confirm that I will take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Thank you.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Meaning it is allocated somewhere else.

Ms JONES: Correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Mr Coutts-Trotter, back to aged care. It is good to hear your evidence in relation to the work that the Department of Health is leading about a worst-case scenario in relation to Bupa facilities. Obviously, as you mentioned, we are keen to avoid the worst-case scenario. I understand that the Federal Minister is meeting with Bupa weekly to ensure that they are able to properly accredit their facilities. What briefings are you or the department receiving in relation to those weekly briefings that your Federal counterparts are having?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Our function is to complement, rather than to duplicate, the roles and responsibilities of other government agencies. The Commonwealth has a regulatory funding oversight responsibility here. We are not generating a whole range of briefs or advice, given our coordinating aged function and support of the interests of seniors in New South Wales. It is a small function. Health may well be doing that type of briefing to its Minister—I simply do not know. I am happy to take it on notice. The expectation that we would be seeking to duplicate the roles and functions of the Commonwealth, I just want to make clear that we are not charged to do that; we are not funded to do that.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I appreciate that. I am not interested in you duplicating the role of the Commonwealth. I am interested in you ensuring that, to the best of your knowledge and ability, the Commonwealth is executing its duties and functions properly because there has been a suggestion that Bupa, being such a large provider—in fact, the largest provider in Australia—is "too big to fail". The Commonwealth management perhaps does not meet the most rigorous standards that we might like to see. I am interested in what you are doing, what the department is doing, to ensure that, to the extent that the Commonwealth is discharging its duties, it is doing it as properly and diligently as it could be.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: We are not regulating the Commonwealth. There is the Commonwealth Parliament, there are Commonwealth oversight mechanisms, there is the media acting in the fourth estate, there are aged-care regulators—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: But there is not the New South Wales Government?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: The major partner here would be NSW Health, thinking through the type of scenario we saw on the small scale in Queensland.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is there any role for the Ageing and Disability Commissioner to undertake investigations in relation to potential elder abuse in these facilities?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, well obviously the role of the Ageing and Disability Commissioner sits between a range of other regulators. The policy intent in increasing the commission's function was to close an identified gap between the regulatory roles and responsibilities of the NDIS Quality and Safeguard commission, the regulator of the aged care system. If a complaint came into the commission in New South Wales that referred to concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of someone in an aged care facility, if it did not meet a criminal threshold then that would be exchanged with the appropriate regulator at a Commonwealth level because it has the legislative capacity and the resourcing capacity to respond to it in an aged care context. It would depend on the nature of the complaint or concern. But if it was clearly something that is the responsibility of the Commonwealth regulator and needs to be acted on by the Commonwealth regulator, it would be immediately referred there.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In some of the initial discussions about the Ageing and Disability Commissioner—indeed Minister Ward in that instance in his second reading speech made broad references to the role of the commissioner in relation to elder abuse. Actually you are confirming now that the commissioner cannot

initiate investigations in relation to elder abuse at aged care facilities in New South Wales? All it can do is refer them to the Commonwealth regulator?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: No, I am not indicating that. I am indicating that Robert Fitzgerald is a person of long experience and he would look to the most appropriate regulatory response to the complaints his commission receives. If there is a regulatory framework established to ensure the safety and the wellbeing of people in the aged care system, then that would be the first port of call. If he felt as an independent regulator that there was something further he can and should be doing, I am sure he would.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I might come back to that. Are you familiar with this document that states "\$250 Regional Seniors Transport Card"?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: No, I am not.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is anyone familiar with the Regional Seniors Transport Card?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Point of order: This issue is a Transport issue that was canvassed extensively yesterday with the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, who has carriage of this item. Your colleagues raised it and it was discussed extensively because it is funded for and provided and administered by the Regional Transport portfolio.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: We are having a discussion about seniors. This card is for seniors and I am concerned about the interest of seniors in New South Wales.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I have taken a point of order to say that this is something that is administered by the Transport portfolio that was canvassed extensively yesterday. Go back and read the transcript. You will probably get all your answers.

The CHAIR: It relates to seniors and the question falls into both camps.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: It falls within this cluster.

The CHAIR: It falls within this cluster.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I will try to limit my questions to not include the logistical rollout of this card, as I suspect even if I did ask questions on that Mr Coutts Trotter would indicate that he is not responsible. Is that so?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: That is right.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In relation to seniors in New South Wales, have you heard concerns that elderly New South Wales residents, seniors, have been turning up to Service NSW facilities to try to redeem this card?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: No.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has anyone in any other department raised with you or potentially anyone in your department, although you may have to take the question on notice as you may not have spoken to them all—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I bet he has not spoken to them all. Probably a lot, but not all.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Have any concerns been raised with you directly or to anyone in your department about potential confusion or misunderstanding from seniors in regional New South Wales in relation to the Regional Seniors Transport Card?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Your question was in two parts. Have concerns been raised with me. No. Have concerns been raised with anyone in my department, that is, 22,500 people. I do not know. I will take it on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Ms Jones, will you take on notice and tell me where the budget for the Braidwood pool is? Which budget committee report is it in?

Ms JONES: Absolutely, I will take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I refer to the Sydney Indoor MX park. Where are the negotiations at with the current operator in terms of their lease?

Ms JONES: Will you please explain, elaborate in more detail on that proposal?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes, in relation to the Government's previous support of the \$5 million Sydney Indoor MX park development, verbal assurance was given to the operator that their lease will be extended. Are you aware of that?

Ms JONES: No, I am not aware of that project in particular. Can you tell me the location?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: He did not write the question.

Ms JONES: I think it is at Eastern Creek.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes, I did not write the question.

Ms JONES: It is part of the Sydney Motorsport Park, which is actually a matter for the Western Sydney Parklands Trust.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Is it outside the purview of this cluster?

Ms JONES: Correct. Sydney Motorsport Park is actually managed by the Western Sydney Parklands Trust and it is a question for them.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: It is probably Minister Stokes. That was yesterday.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I do not know. What is the completion date for construction of the roof on the Ken Rosewall Arena at the NSW Tennis Centre?

Ms JONES: As you might be aware, the Government made a decision for a \$50.5 million investment into the Ken Rosewall Arena for a roof canopy over the existing facility. Construction on that roof is currently underway. It is to be ready for the ATP Cup in January next year.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: That was my follow-up question. Is it for 2020, 2021, 2022?

Ms JONES: We have signed a three year commitment with Tennis NSW and Tennis Australia for the ATP Cup.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I refer to the relocation costs. I understand as part of the relocation reconstruction that Cricket NSW is getting a new building. Is that correct?

Ms MATHER: Not at the Sydney Cricket Ground [SCG].

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: None of the \$170 million that you outlined is for a new facility for Cricket NSW? Apologies, is this question for Ms Jones?

Ms MATHER: It is something that we would have done together actually.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Jones, are you able to say?

Ms JONES: The Government has committed or has made a \$30 million commitment to a cricket centre of excellence at Sydney Olympic Park.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is not from the \$170 million loan that Treasury has given to the Sydney Cricket Ground trust?

Ms JONES: That is correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: This is a separate commitment?

Ms JONES: That is correct. It is actually from the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Where does that funding come from? Is it from the Office of Sport?

Ms JONES: It is coming from the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Why? They had the facility at the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: It has been knocked down.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I appreciate that they have to move. A major reason that this is happening—that they are going out to Sydney Olympic Park—is because what is happening at the SFS, this facility. Why isn't the Sydney Cricket Ground trust paying when in fact it is their—

Ms JONES: I will hand that to over Ms Mather because my understanding is that the Sydney Cricket Ground trust is also making a contribution.

Ms MATHER: Within that amount—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Within the \$30 million?

Ms MATHER: Within our \$170 million, we actually made a \$15 million contribution to the relocation of their cricket facilities.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Jones, is that a \$45 million project altogether then or is it \$15 million from the Sydney Cricket Ground trust and \$15 million from the Sydney Olympic Park Authority?

Ms JONES: No, it is \$15 million from the Sydney Cricket Ground trust and \$30 million from the Sydney Olympic Park Authority. My understanding is that Cricket Australia and Cricket NSW are also contributing to the project.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Do you have those—

Ms JONES: I do not have them on hand but I can take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you, that would be useful. I might ask a few questions in relation to the Active Kids rebate. The Office of Sport has indicated that it is providing \$40.7 million to families, which equates to 407,000 vouchers. How does that figure line up with the number of children who are actually using the vouchers?

Ms JONES: Are you talking for this calendar year, can I confirm?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I am talking about the 2017-18 annual report so I suspect that is the 2017-18 financial year.

Ms JONES: The number of vouchers that have been created—

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Let's start with that.

Ms JONES: —is over one million. The number of vouchers redeemed is also about \$1.1 million and the total value of the vouchers redeemed is about \$115 million.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: There is a difference between vouchers generated and vouchers redeemed. That is correct, is it not, Ms Jones?

Ms JONES: That is right because not everybody redeems their vouchers as soon as they have downloaded it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I appreciate that they are not done that "as soon as" but what is the gap? What is either the number or percentage of vouchers generated that are not redeemed?

Ms JONES: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In the 2017-18 annual report you stated that 25.9 per cent of children participated in sport and that was an increase from 20.7 per cent in 2016.

Ms JONES: Can you repeat that?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The Office of Sport 2017-18 annual report, in relation to the Active Kids rebate, stated that 25.9 per cent of children participated in sport in 2017 and this was an increase from 20.7 per cent in 2016. The Active Kids program was promoted as the reason for this increased participation. Is that your view? Is that the understanding of the benefits of the program?

Ms JONES: The purpose of Active Kids is obviously to get school-age children physically active. We would hope that our \$100 contribution towards the payment of sport fees, for instance, would help reduce the barrier to entry for kids to participate in sport.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Obviously we would hope that that is the case but what evidence is there that that is what is actually happening? We are spending millions and millions of dollars on this program. You want to have some confidence that that is, in fact, the outcome.

Ms JONES: The Active Kids voucher program has run for over 12 months, actually over 18 months now. We are in the process of gathering all of that data so that we can start to analyse those trends and analyse our influence. What we have realised from the initial grab from that data is that there are areas that we can specifically target where the take-up has not been that great. We are in the process now of preparing media and marketing campaigns to try to attract better take-up in some of those areas.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I am keen to dig into that a little bit. Is that evidence gathering that is happening right now being done by the office or do have you external consultants to do that? Who is doing that analysis that you just described?

Ms JONES: It is actually a combination. Service NSW facilitates the program and the program is promoted through the Office of Sport. We work in conjunction with Service NSW to extract that data.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What is the time frame for that?

Ms JONES: It is ongoing now. If you go onto the Office of Sport website, you will see some of the initial data results that are being produced. We have a dashboard available. It is very high level at this stage but it is something that is ongoing.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: When do you hope that it will be completed?

Ms JONES: In this world of data and the importance of data, as we become more sophisticated in that space it is something that we keep on developing. It is an ongoing project.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How much is the budget for the media and marketing campaign to target—

Ms JONES: I am happy to take that on notice but it is something that falls within the Active Kids budget. It is not something in addition to it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you able to tell us now where that will be targeted? Where will you be rolling out that campaign?

Ms JONES: At the moment we are looking at particularly our ethnically diverse areas, particularly around the south-west Sydney region where the take-up was not necessarily as great as what we originally anticipated. What we realised was that part of those issues were around the configuration and targeting of our campaign. We have worked very closely with the assistance of Multicultural NSW to try to help get the message of Active Kids out there more broadly.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Can you talk a little bit more about what were some of those issues in the configuration of your campaign?

Ms JONES: It was just that our campaign was very high level and very generic. We are realising now that perhaps if we were a bit more targeted and responsive to the different make-up of our community that we could be a bit more targeted.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you familiar with AusPlay April 2018 figures that show that across Australia there were 25 per cent of children participating in sport outside school, an increase from 20 per cent in 2016, and that this figure almost identically replicates the figures in the New South Wales Office of Sport annual report?

Ms JONES: I am aware of the AusPlay figures but in terms of the actual correlation I will take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The figures in New South Wales from the New South Wales Office of Sport are consistent with those for the rest of the nation.

Ms JONES: That is your statement. As I said, I will take that on notice in terms of the correlation between the AusPlay data and the Active Kids data.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: This goes partly to the issue that you have raised. Do you have any figures in relation to how many vouchers were redeemed in areas such as Fairfield, Macquarie Fields, Bankstown and Lakemba?

Ms JONES: I do not have those figures on hand now but again it is something I can take on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It would be useful to have if you could take on notice and provide for the Committee that information for every electorate in New South Wales.

Ms JONES: That is something I am happy to look into for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: On the current uptake figures, how do they correlate with areas that have higher proportions of children who are at risk of being overweight or obese. What is the current correlation?

Ms JONES: Again we are still collating that data, particularly in terms of childhood obesity, which is what you are referring to. As part of the Active Kids program we ask—and it is voluntary—people to provide some high-level information on children who participate. Again, we have only 12 months worth of that data. The impact of the Active Kids program on that is unknown at this stage.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is it true that there is a correlation between areas of low socio-economic status and low participation in Active Kids?

Ms JONES: I cannot comment on that matter.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The Minister has released information that shows that some spread across different electorates. It did not list every one but it listed some. Based pretty directly on that, there was a pretty big difference between areas of higher income and areas of lower income in relation to where the vouchers were being redeemed. That is information that is presumably provided by the Office of Sport to the Minister and he has put it out and that is the very obvious conclusion that you can draw from that data.

Ms JONES: There are many barriers to the participation in sport—cost is one and socio-economic status is potentially another. So in terms of that comment that you are referring to from the Minister, I am happy to look into that and take that on notice for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The annual report states that there were 571,000 vouchers issued, and the gap between those and those actually redeemed is 164,000. That is quite a substantial gap between vouchers issued and vouchers redeemed—is it not?

Ms JONES: If that is the gap that you have calculated and you have identified, then it is what it is.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The \$40.7 million in the annual report is the entire cost of the program. It is not just the cost of the vouchers; it includes things like advertising and administration costs?

Ms JONES: Correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you able to give us a breakdown?

Ms JONES: I do not have those figures with me, no.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you able to provide any information about the types of sport that the rebate was used for?

Ms JONES: Yes. Again all of that information is available on our website but you will find that the high-level, high-participation sports—and I do not think it would come as a surprise to anybody—like football, netball, cricket, AFL and swimming were the high-participation sports where the program was redeemed or the vouchers were redeemed.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you able to provide us with any information as to the number of boys and girls in each sport, and ages?

Ms JONES: Again that information is publicly available on our website, using the high-level data that I referred to previously.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In some ways it is true that there is data available on the website. The data that is not available, that was not provided, is how many vouchers have actually been used. Why wasn't that information provided?

Ms JONES: I do have access to that information, just not here in front of me today. I am happy to take that on notice for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is there any work being done, other than the media and marketing campaign you have outlined which seemed to, as you suggested, target areas of ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds, to target more broadly, specifically people of low socio-economic background?

Ms JONES: As I answered earlier, the data that we are getting is not just around the ethnically and linguistically diverse; it is also around those areas where there is a lower level of take-up than we originally anticipated, and we are working to target those areas.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How is that being done? You mentioned working with Multicultural NSW. What is that going to—

Ms JONES: There are also other partnerships that the Office of Sport is working towards. We are working with sporting organisations that have programs within those areas and how they can actually roll out those programs using the Active Kids vouchers more successfully. We are also looking at working with schools in those areas to see if we can, through the school system, provide some sort of information around Active Kids and also the availability of sport programs in those areas.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I guess what I am getting at is ensuring that the program is being directed towards engaging new young people who are not already engaged in sport, as opposed to paying parents whose children are already participating in sport for them to continue doing that?

Ms JONES: Absolutely. Active Kids is all about getting school-aged children physically active, not just those ones who already participate in weekend sport or after-school sport, but also those who are sedentary in nature. Part of the challenge is to access those children, access the parents of those children and encourage them to use the Active Kids voucher so that they can then become physically active, and instil really good exercise and sport behaviours.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has any consideration been given to providing better multilingual capacity on the online interfaces for Active Kids?

Ms JONES: I would have to take that on notice in terms of online interfaces, but definitely that is part of our media marketing campaign.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes, because—full disclosure, Ms Jones—I have used an Active Kids voucher. I do not know whether I have to put that on the record.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: It is a bit late.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You have applied?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: And redeemed as a parent whose child was already in sport. The online interfaces—not that the Office of Sport is necessarily fully responsible for these, I imagine you are working with Services NSW?

Ms JONES: Correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It can be a little bit wordy and clunky. If English is not your first language, for a parent who is a migrant and not necessarily fully literate, particularly online literate in English, it is a particular challenge.

Ms JONES: Okay, I am happy to take that feedback.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I have a couple of questions on the Active Kids vouchers. Does the New South Wales Government require any accreditation or minimum standards of a swimming school for them to be eligible to use Active Kids vouchers?

Ms JONES: The eligibility criteria of Active Kids providers, which is what we call them, is available on our website and on Service NSW's website. The general criteria is that it has to be an eight-week program. The reason for that duration is because ideally we want to instil good healthy habits in our children, not just have a one-off experience but hopefully an experience that goes over a duration. The other criteria is that they have to be able to demonstrate that they can participate in medium to intense levels of exercise and physical activity, so again it is about actually getting out there and being more physically active rather than being sedentary in nature.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What sort of checks are done by the Office of Sport to ensure swimming lessons are taught by accredited people?

Ms JONES: That is outside of the Active Kids program.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: This is when using Active Kids vouchers.

Ms JONES: When using Active Kids vouchers they do have to go through a quite extensive checking process—all Active Kids providers do—to make sure that they meet all the minimum requirements, not only in terms of the eight weeks and the level of intensity of the exercise but also that they actually are legitimate providers, of sport.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What about the accreditation of swimming teachers? What is the requirement around them?

Ms JONES: The Office of Sport does not really get involved in terms of accreditation of swim schools. That is something that would be dealt with by the national sporting organisation or the State sporting organisation. Quite active in this space is also Royal Life Saving, if you run swim and survive programs across the State.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Can I ask you some questions on the Wollongong entertainment centre? When was the contract to undertake the concept plan for Wollongong entertainment centre signed?

Ms JONES: I will hand that over to Paul Doorn.

Mr DOORN: In terms of developing some initial stakeholder engagement, it was signed with KPMG earlier this year.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How long is the concept plan expected to take to develop?

Mr DOORN: It is very difficult to tell at the moment because we are just out engaging with as many people as we possibly can to get people's initial feedback.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Has any particular party or group or company been chosen?

Mr DOORN: To develop the concept plans?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr DOORN: No, we are not at that point yet.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I saw *Shrek on Ice* there.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Who are you actually consulting with on this project?

Mr DOORN: A range of stakeholders. Probably the top ones from our perspective, if you like, have been local businesses, including the Illawarra Business Chamber, Wollongong City Council, the university, and other people along those lines, as well as our key neighbours, including the Illawarra Steelers club.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Is there a timeline as to when the concepts would be released?

Mr DOORN: No, we have not set a time frame yet because effectively we do not really know what we are developing. We are just in the marketplace having a conversation with as many people as possible.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Okay. I want to move on to a bit of multiculturalism, specifically the Multicultural Policies and Services Program [MPSP], under which agencies must centre their planning on four areas, including service delivery, planning, leadership and engagement, and also all departments, statutory bodies and State-owned corporations are required to provide those in their annual reports. Can you tell me if every department has implemented a multicultural plan?

Mr LA POSTA: You are quite right. You have done your homework.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I just read it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: We wish it was us, Mr La Posta.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: He did not do the homework; it is someone else's homework. He is just reading it.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: That is correct.

Mr LA POSTA: All government agencies are required to maintain a multicultural plan and account for it in their annual reports. The Multicultural Policies and Services Program, led by Multicultural NSW, assists New South Wales Government agencies to implement multicultural principles as part of their core business. The MPSP framework directs agencies to centre their planning on four focus areas. As you said: service delivery, planning, leadership and engagement. Multicultural NSW assesses the effectiveness of government agencies in offering services to all customers regardless of language or cultural background. This assessment is incorporated into our community relations report, which is prepared by our agency each year and tabled in Parliament. It was tabled earlier this year.

A number of agencies with strong customer-facing responsibilities—such as my colleague Mr Coutts-Trotter's agency—have identified areas and opportunities where we can do additional planning in supporting responsibilities. That said, it gives me great pleasure in acknowledging the work of FACS in terms of best practice last year.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Thank you.

Mr LA POSTA: I was delighted to see that on the intranet earlier in the week. The 2019 designated MPSP agencies are Service NSW, the Department of Justice, the NSW Police Force, the NSW Department of Industry, Fire and Rescue NSW, and the NSW Rural Fire Service. Multicultural NSW is also developing a toolkit to provide practical assistance to agencies in planning multicultural activities and reporting on those initiatives, and that is in flight at the moment. The toolkit is scheduled to be completed in the latter half of this year, and we are getting close to piloting some of those initiatives now. This is to facilitate and obviously boost the capacity of

all of our government colleagues in terms of their planning and implementation for multicultural plans and to assist our legislation and our objective to make sure that New South Wales government agencies continue to collaborate and coordinate on multicultural initiatives.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: You say you assess agencies. What elements do you assess as to the success of the agencies? What is it? What things do you assess about those agencies?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes. Again, you sort of touched on the four key areas before: service delivery, their planning, their leadership—the diversity of their leadership—and also their engagement. And that was Ms Jackson's question before to one of my colleagues: How are the initiatives actually implemented and engaging with multicultural communities?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Thank you. An excerpt from the Transport for NSW annual report says:

Transport provides mainstream transport services for all people of NSW and we are committed to delivering these services within a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse society. We have worked extensively with Multicultural NSW on the development of a new Multicultural Plan.

Can you tell me whether Transport for NSW has fulfilled its requirements?

Mr LA POSTA: I will need to take that question on notice, just given the specifics.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: So in these two specific sentences, what specific progress have they done?

Mr LA POSTA: Again, I will need to take that question on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Do you believe that this statement has provided sufficient information regarding the services that Transport for NSW ought to meet when dealing with Multicultural NSW?

Mr LA POSTA: It is a fair question and I have no reason to question that statement, but I will need to take it on notice just in terms of giving you a factual and specifically correct answer.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have just a couple of follow-up questions, Mr Coutts-Trotter, on the Regional Seniors Transport Card. Has your department been consulted at all in relation to this, having carriage of seniors and aged care? Has there been any consultation?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I would need to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Specifically in relation to your responsibility for carers, has it been canvassed at all as to whether carers of seniors or elderly people should be able to access the cards?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Again, I would need to take that on notice I am afraid, Ms Jackson.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I would be interested if you could take on notice any discussions that have happened between, presumably, the Department of Transport and officers of your department in relation to the ability of carers, in particular, to use the card.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sure. I would be happy to do that.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you. On the Ageing and Disability Commissioner, when the legislation was first passed, which was in fact earlier this year, there were—I am not sure if you recall it—various kinds of back and forth in relation to amendments to that legislation.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: And figures were provided about the funding for the commissioner. When the actual budget was released, those figures were different. So has there been any work to align the expectations that were given by the Minister at the time the legislation was passed and the figures that were actually in the budget for the commission?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: This question has been responded to earlier, from memory, by Minister Ward. The budget for the commission is \$13.9 million over four years and, as I recall, the Minister made the point that the commissioner is an independent statutory officer. He—again, from memory of that evidence—said he had spoken to the commissioner and the commissioner had said that there is nothing he is aware of at this point that suggests that that budget is inadequate. But if that changed from experience—the experience of operating the commission, receiving reports and responding to them—he would make it clear if he needed more resources.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is the commissioner to the Minister?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: That is my recollection of the Minister's evidence to this Committee a couple of weeks ago.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I suppose you are not able to provide us with any information on when the commissioner, as an independent statutory authority, makes that representation to the Minister or to the Government of "I need more funding for X" how likely that is to be forthcoming?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: That is pretty speculative.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Good try. He is one of the best in the game. He will not answer it. It is out of order—you know that.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes. I will move on. Ms Jones, we did just check—I do not actually know if the data on the breakdown of sports between boys and girls is available on the website. That is not something that we have been able to find on the website. I am not sure if you are able to—

Ms JONES: I can check that for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That would be great. It would be good if you could check that and if it is not there for some reason—if it has not been loaded or something—if that is information that you could provide, that would be useful. I want to ask a couple of questions in relation to Veterans. This is probably to Ms Mackaness. Am I pronouncing that correctly?

Ms MACKANESS: Yes, it is Caroline Mackaness.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes. Ms Mackaness, presumably you are aware of the recent release of the Productivity Commission's *A Better Way to Support Veterans* report?

Ms MACKANESS: Yes, I am.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has the New South Wales Government responded to that report?

Ms MACKANESS: I am really proud of working in the Veterans space. New South Wales has been doing fantastic work. There was a ministerial council established in 2016 in the framework of the Centenary of Anzac period. So I think the Veterans landscape has raised in profile quite considerably. The last ministerial council was on 23 August, and I attended it with the Minister. There was a presentation done on the work that the Department of Veterans' Affairs [DVA] is doing at the moment. There has been a really big shift in the way DVA works and the way it works with Defence and with all the States. There is a lot of information sharing.

The Veterans space is a bipartisan space, so it is very collaborative on working together to ensure that our veterans are honoured, respected and looked after. We have about 1,200 veterans that exit into New South Wales each year, and we are actively working on programs that support the directions that are being understood through all the research that DVA and Defence are doing at the moment, and that research points to transition being the most critical time for veterans. We are aware of a lot of issues around veterans' suicide, for example.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The Productivity Commission's *A Better Way to Support Veterans*, from what I understand there were 69 recommendations in that report and they did not all relate to areas of State Government responsibility. Has any work been done to develop a comprehensive response from the New South Wales Government to that report and those recommendations?

Ms MACKANESS: New South Wales was leading the way in some of the things that are being recommended around transition. Employment is a really important support mechanism. We led the nation in our Veterans Employment Program, for example. Employment is very important. The other initiatives New South Wales is working on—in health, the Concord hospital facility is world class and we are leading the way in that joined-up medical support mechanism. We also work very closely with the ex-service organisation landscape. We are working actively with the Commonwealth on an initiative that we hope will evolve in Nowra as a wellbeing centre with Commonwealth funding allocated there.

The answer is the Commonwealth is responsible for veterans but actively the New South Wales Government is working very closely, so things like attending transition seminars with the Commonwealth to ensure that veterans know about their options for exiting defence and which States offer what programs—education, health, employment. We have established the Ranks to Recognition program through TAFE which helps veterans to identify their skills and capabilities and where there are gaps in the civilian framework so that they can improve their chances of employment. There is a lot of work being done, and it is supporting the Commonwealth.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is excellent work but does that work specifically include providing a comprehensive response to the Productivity Commission and its 69 recommendations? Even if it is the case that

a number of them either are already being done in New South Wales or are fully within the Federal Government's jurisdiction, I am interested in a specific response on work that is being done and a specific response to this report.

Ms MACKANESS: We have not been asked for a specific response other than collaboration and cooperation and attending meetings. There is a mental health summit that is being held next week. I have been asked to attend with a staff member. We have been asked to participate actively. The transition seminars, we were asked to give feedback actively. One thing that we have definitely been asked to do is to collect data and the Minister has written to five relevant Ministers to collect information for the Commonwealth to collaborate. The Commonwealth is sharing all of their research and reports—the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute on homelessness.

We are receiving data actively on situations for veterans in the State. Commonwealth asks us for support on data, on programs, and we are working exceptionally well. New South Wales has shared its information on its Veterans Employment Program with every other State and Territory actively and I think we now have veterans employment programs in every jurisdiction. We have recently rolled out another initiative from New South Wales, again leading, with the Local Government Rank to Grade initiative, which is helping veterans see where jobs are available across New South Wales in local government.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: On the Veterans Employment Program specifically, I agree it has been doing good work. For example, as you would well know, from 2015 to 2018, 831 veterans found work or had been offered work as a result of that project, which is very good. However, the program only aims to help an additional 169 veterans by 2023.

Ms MACKANESS: No, I think that is a misquote. It is 1,000 by 2023.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: An additional 1,000.

Ms MACKANESS: An additional 1,000, yes. We are tracking that; we do six-monthly reporting. Again, New South Wales was the first to identify the need to collect data. We worked with the Public Service Commission to initiate data collection on veterans who were applying for jobs but then also through the annual survey to find out how many veterans were staying in roles or changing roles, moving between jurisdictions.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want to ask about the issue that we had with the My Community Project initiative and veterans in New South Wales. Are you aware that Gold Card holders were ineligible to vote in that project?

Ms MACKANESS: Yes, I understand that issue. I think when people set up programs like this they do not always know all of the complications across the nation. A lot of veterans do not have Medicare cards. They are covered by the DVA and when they are actively in defence. I understand that you could vote using your Medicare card.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is accurate, you needed a Medicare card. My understanding is that there were no provisions made for Gold Card holders who did not have a Medicare card to participate.

Ms MACKANESS: I think it is possibly an oversight. We have lots of complications in the Veterans space. Again, we have become a little bit of a front line to try and support veterans. My team actively refer them. We are working very actively with different bits of government. Transport concessions are very complicated; across Australia every jurisdiction has different concessions for our veterans.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I accept it was an oversight, as you say, as a result of not necessarily understanding the complicated nature of the different concessions and cards. Were representations made to try and resolve it for this round, to extend the deadline, to fix the problem? What was done to try and resolve it once it was identified that an oversight had occurred which meant that veterans were unable to participate?

Ms MACKANESS: I think, to be honest, it was only brought to the Government's attention at the last minute. I am unsure. I was only notified of it this week. I am not sure myself of the deadline of the closing and when the actual issue was raised.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It was not brought to your attention at the time; you were not made aware of it at the time?

Ms MACKANESS: No. I think it is fair to say that the general populace does not actually understand all of the different card systems that our veterans are under. Their legislation is quite complex and DVA has worked very hard in the last couple of years particularly to streamline the legislation, to support veterans better and to make the processes easier for them. They are some of the things that we are working with the Commonwealth on—transport concessions across Australia are very difficult, companion animals, and Acts in different States.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Albeit it is too late this time; it is done and there was an issue. Have you been given assurances that for any further rounds of specifically the My Community Project initiative but similar initiatives that this will not happen again?

Ms MACKANESS: I think absolutely that we would all want veterans to be able to participate in these programs, yes. We have written back. We will work to explain the different card systems that the veterans operate under.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I wanted to ask specifically in relation to veterans seeking homeless support services in New South Wales. Are you aware of how many? According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare there were 1,215 veterans who sought homelessness support. Are you aware of how many of them were in New South Wales? Do we have any figures?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, we do.

Ms MACKANESS: Yes, the Commonwealth again has done surveys. There are 5,000-odd homeless veterans across Australia. In New South Wales we are waiting for the exact data.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: The dataset you referred to was the 2017-18 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare dataset. The dataset, as you say, identified—this is specialised homeless services reporting through. In New South Wales 331 of 71,628 people who approached New South Wales specialist homeless services were identified as veterans.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Were all of those people able to be assisted to at least have some support to transition out of homelessness?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I would have to take that on notice. I do not have that in front of me.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That would be useful. Ms Mackaness, is there anything else you would add? It is useful to have that information in relation to that cohort who sought support and what support they were able to get, but what other work is being done to ensure that our veterans are not experiencing homelessness? Obviously this is something that absolutely shakes Australians to the core to think this is happening. What projects are being undertaken broadly to resolve that?

Ms MACKANESS: We do know that veterans seek veterans-specific services. From the survey that has been done, they do not generally approach New South Wales government services. We do have a partnership with DefenceCare. It is often a more complex needs basis. You would be aware of RSL LifeCare, Narrabeen, and Homes for Heroes at Narrabeen and Penrith. There are specific veterans services. I understand from RSL LifeCare that they have joined up with Wesley recently because veterans experiencing homelessness have much more complex issues usually. It is about the wraparound services.

The New South Wales Government has supported a Rent Choice veterans-specific program and that is being reviewed at the moment. Part of that has been working with DefenceCare to ensure that the veterans get the wraparound services that they need and we are directing them to the right sort of support so it is sustainable. There is a lot happening in this space as well.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That Rent Choice review, when might we anticipate the findings of that?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I will take that one on notice. And to decode for it in case it needs decoding. It is a rent subsidy that provides a step-down subsidy to a person's rent in the private sector over up to three years, from memory.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It would be good if we could get some information about that review.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sure.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You might need to take this on notice. Regardless of the review that is occurring, is there ongoing funding for this project? Yes, it is being reviewed, but does the budget provide ongoing funding for this type of support?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: That product is funded, yes.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I will continue to ask questions on multiculturalism. How much of the Multicultural NSW budget is allocated towards the grants program?

Mr LA POSTA: Currently?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: As it stands at the moment, in 2018-19 Multicultural NSW was allocated \$23.1 million. Of this amount, we spent \$1.9 million on recurrent grants and—I might need to get further information on that—\$1.9 million on recurrent grants over and above our Community, in Partnership, taking Action to safeguard Australia's peaceful and harmonious way of life [COMPACT] programs and our other initiatives and programs.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: In terms of the overall grants program, is it \$1.9 million?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes, we have the COMPACT program at \$9.2 million and then we have other grants and initiatives around festivals, events and those things that are on an annual basis. We have a number of programs that are locked in over a period of time. I can get you the exact numbers on our grants on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What percentage of that grant funding accounts for the overall New South Wales budget?

Mr LA POSTA: In 2018-19?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: I can get you the exact numbers on notice. However, I do know for 2019-20 we have secured further grant funding going forward.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What is the highest amount awarded for any one grant?

Mr LA POSTA: Any one grant?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: In terms of our recurrent? We have a number of different grant categories. Was there a specific category that you had in mind?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: In one event that you may have given?

Mr LA POSTA: In terms of our event grants?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: Up to \$10,000, I believe.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: That is the highest?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes, up to \$10,000 for our events grants and then \$40,000 for our projects grants.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How many Multicultural NSW staff are allocated to working on the grants program?

Mr LA POSTA: On the specific grants program?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Is there a non-specific one?

Mr LA POSTA: No, it is more the delineation of staffing responsibility. Obviously a grants program initiative, we have a number of designated officers who work solely on our grants programs.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How many is that?

Mr LA POSTA: Two.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Of those grants you spoke about, you said there is \$1.9 million for recurrent grants. How many are awarded to regional communities?

Mr LA POSTA: In terms of festival and event grants?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Are there any other grants?

Mr LA POSTA: Projects grants. Across the three different grant categories we ran last year—events, projects, and festivals and events—would you like to know the breakdown in terms of regions?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: I will need to take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Do you have the breakdown of successful grants between culturally and linguistically diverse [CALD] and Indigenous organisations?

Mr LA POSTA: I can take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: On 10 August this year at the Council of Indian Australians India Day dinner Ray Williams announced that \$900,000 would be set aside by Multicultural NSW for Indian events?

Mr LA POSTA: Sorry, in August this year? Last year, in terms of his capacity as Minister?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: When did Ray Williams announce the \$900,000?

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You are telling the story.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is your question.

Mr LA POSTA: The specifics are Ray Williams is no longer our Minister. He was our Minister up until Minister Sidoti. So was it this year or last year?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: You have a note there, so do you want to have a look?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I am assuming it would be an announcement from Minister Williams in August last year? I have to acknowledge; I am trying to clarify.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: My question says 10 August at the Council of Indian Australians India Day dinner.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Right. Well, we can assume it is August last year.

Mr LA POSTA: In terms of \$900,000. Yes, an election commitment was made to the Indian community broadly for \$900,000 over four years.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Which grants does this fall under?

Mr LA POSTA: All of our different grant categories. What we have sought to do to ensure the transparency and ethical acquittal of all of our funding for the election commitments is to put it through our standard grant processes and then those communities can apply for that funding directly.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I can confirm that it is this year. He made the announcement on 10 August that \$900,000 would be set aside by Multicultural NSW for Indian events.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: This year?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Didn't he realise he is not the Minister anymore?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Why did Ray Williams announce this?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You look as confused as we are. Why was someone who is not the Minister attending this event announcing money?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Which grants program does that fall under?

Mr LA POSTA: I cannot speak to the specifics of Ray Williams making an announcement this year; I will need to take that on notice. With regard to the content of your question, there has been an election commitment that was made in the lead-up to the last election to the Indian community for \$900,000. That is not specific to any one community or a different organisation. For those familiar with the Indian community, they have about 270 different associations that all proclaim to represent the interests of India in New South Wales. That commitment has become a part of our standard grant process that we oversee as an agency and then each of those communities can apply for grant funding through our standard grant acquittal process.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have just a couple of more questions in relation to Active Kids. The information that is available on the website.

Ms JONES: Did you find it?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is it there, is it?

Ms JONES: It is, yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: In relation to the voucher breakdown, are we able to get any information about what the redeemed rate was for voucher 1? Do you have that information? There is a voucher breakdown between voucher 1 and voucher 2. I am keen to get how many of voucher 1 were redeemed?

Ms JONES: Is that total or for 2018-19?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That would be a good start, 2018-9. Do you have that information?

Mr LA POSTA: Just while my colleague is seeking that, Mr Moselmane, I am informed that Ray Williams represented the Minister from 10 August—you are quite right, in terms of the specifics of the date—and reconfirmed, as opposed to announced, the funding commitment to the Indian community in line with the numbers you suggested.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Thank you.

Mr LA POSTA: Mr Moselmane, there was a question taken earlier with regards to the specifics of the consultations that we ran throughout western Sydney around some of the concerns that were raised. I can confirm that the consultations were run within the broader arts and community centres of City of Sydney. Business and sport forums were run at Belmore Oval throughout Canterbury and Bankstown and as well as the Ethnic Communities Council in Redfern, City of Sydney; up at Waratah, at Newcastle, Illawarra and Wollongong at the council. The Joint Partnership Working Group was held in Parramatta. There was also a session run at Parliament House, a session run at Police Citizens Youth Club [PCYC] in Blacktown, and a session run at the Sikh temple at Glenwood with all our interfaith leaders. We have run sessions in Albury, in Armidale, in Wagga Wagga, in Dubbo and, as I alluded to Mr Shoebridge before, also in Parramatta.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How do you monitor those grants that you give out of \$10,000 or more?

Mr LA POSTA: There is an agreement that is struck with each recipient of a grant. This has been feedback that we have also received around our community in terms of the authenticity and the size of each of these festivals and events. Obviously the projects are far easier to monitor because we have consultations and ongoing dialogue with each of our project recipients. With regards to the festivals and events, part of our responsibility within our community engagement team and our grants team is to attend as many of those festivals and events wherever possible so that we can validate the numbers of people who are attending those festivals and events. One of the other key things to notice is that Minister Sidoti's remit has been far more around not just supporting individual grants and festivals to attract a part of the community, but getting better at promoting social cohesion and introducing more and more different communities to experience the uniqueness of each of those communities.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How do you promote for those grants? Do you advertise in ethnic media?

Mr LA POSTA: Yes.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What do you do?

Mr LA POSTA: It is captured through all of our own social and digital platforms and across our website. We circulate it to all of our ethnic media partners as well. We send through our media link to all of our community partners, which reaches over 6,000 different constituents. Also through our processes with key stakeholders and community groups, those that were successful or unsuccessful in previous years and the broader network of the database we have—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Do you have a list of those that were successful?

Mr LA POSTA: In terms of grants?

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes.

Mr LA POSTA: I can take that on notice.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What about unsuccessful applications?

Mr LA POSTA: I would need to take that on notice as well.

The CHAIR: Ms Jones, do you have any vision on what is going on with the Young Aquatic Centre?

Ms JONES: Let me have a look to see if that was an election commitment. I will take the question on notice. One of the reasons I keep referring back to my notes and looking through the list of election commitments is because there was a substantial amount of election commitments made for sporting facilities. Just to give you an appreciation of the magnitude, over the next four years we are up \$150 million with more than 40-odd sporting facilities, so asking me about individual projects is a bit challenging at this time but I can take them on notice.

The CHAIR: What about the Premier's commitment to do the right thing and put the money into Orange to build a sporting complex there?

Ms JONES: My understanding is that it is an election commitment. However, that has not been allocated to the Office of Sport.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Are they under the Regional Communities Development Fund instead?

Ms JONES: I think you will find—I will take it on notice.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: I am just providing some help. If they are not there they might be in another fund, that is all.

Ms JONES: If you want more detail I am happy to look into it for you.

The CHAIR: Take it on notice. Maybe you can tell me where it is, or someone can point us in the right direction so we can dig this money up.

Ms JONES: Sure, I can do that.

The CHAIR: Mr Doorn, I am not sure whether you are still in charge of it, but can you give us an update on what is happening with the Southern Highlands rifle range complex?

Mr DOORN: I would love to, Mr Borsak. Sadly, it has not been mine for a while.

The CHAIR: That is a shame. That is a sporting facility.

Ms JONES: It is.

The CHAIR: It is over to you, Ms Jones?

Ms JONES: Yes, it is over to me.

Mr DOORN: I am glad you remembered me.

The CHAIR: I did. You did a good job.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You are an unforgettable man.

The CHAIR: You are an unforgettable man, that is right.

Ms JONES: The Southern Highlands Regional Shooting Complex is also known as Hilltop Shooting Range. We invested \$9.2 million into the upgrade of that facility and I am pleased to say that the upgrade of the 50 metre range and the 500 metre range was completed earlier this year. In fact, there are world competitions going on right now at that range, as we speak. It is a really great facility.

The CHAIR: Pistol shooting, that is.

Ms JONES: Yes, that is right. For the 50 metre.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Jones, did you have that information I was—

Ms JONES: I can tell you that the number of vouchers created in 2018 was 671,756. In terms the actual redemption rate, I would have to take that on notice and get back to you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That would be useful. This is the information that is publicly available: we can see the vouchers created, we can see the breakdown between voucher one and two, gender breakdown overall and top female and male activities. But obviously more detailed information is available because, as I mentioned, on the Minister's press release the information in relation to electorate, population, vouchers created, vouchers redeemed, percentages—that has been provided. I suppose I am interested in that level of information for every electorate. Is that something you could table for the Committee?

Ms JONES: It is something I can take on notice for you. However, if you do go on our website, as I explained earlier, the breakdown or the functionality on that website allows for you to search by electorate or local government area and postcode to get the breakdown. It goes through what the top female and top male sports are for each one of those electorates or local government areas. In terms of the actual redemption rate, that is something I would have to take on notice for each one of those.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That would be useful. If you say that you can do that, I am sure that that is accurate.

Ms JONES: I am happy to look into it for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: If there was a document that was at the back end of that, which listed all of that information, that would be useful to table for the Committee.

Ms JONES: As I said, I am happy to look into it for you.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What is the Government doing to ensure that registered sporting clubs and organisations are not simply raising the cost of their registration and membership fees in order to soak up the voucher?

Ms JONES: We are aware that is a risk of the project and we have been working quite closely with sporting organisations and clubs in relation to that. Where matters of those come to our attention, it is something that we investigate and take action on.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: If that is brought to your attention, what type of action do you take?

Ms JONES: In the first instance we go through an investigation process to make sure it is a legitimate issue. If it is a legitimate issue, we have stern words to those organisations and ask them to bring their pricing policies back into line. I do not think we have ever had a repeat offender after that but if it was the case, we would look at whether or not there was an option there to penalise heavier.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Deregister them.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: You have not deregistered anyone at this point, is your understanding?

Ms JONES: I will take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How many of those investigations have you undertaken?

Ms JONES: Again I will take that on notice. During my time as the acting chief executive I have seen maybe two or three maximum.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The only way that they are being brought to your attention is by members of the public alerting you. Is that the only mechanism by which you are alerted to that potential problem?

Ms JONES: The ones that I have seen have been by virtue of complaints that have come through. But again I am happy to take that on notice to see whether or not we do have an audit system in place to go through that.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is right. I am interested to know whether there is any proactive monitoring of prices in order to ensure that they are not increasing.

Ms JONES: If I can take back that take it on notice, if you like, to save us some time and work. I have had the statistics handed to me. In terms of clubs that have breached their privacy of pricing issues, we have suspended one and eight that were raised with us have come into compliance.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Thank you for that information. It would be useful to know if there was any proactive work being done to monitor.

Ms JONES: Absolutely.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Why is the information that is provided on the vouchers generated and not on the vouchers redeemed? The vouchers redeemed are kids participating in programs. That is the point at which they have enrolled the child with an authorised provider and they are participating whereas the generation is not actually that. As we have seen, there is a reasonable gap between vouchers generated and vouchers redeemed. Why is that created vouchers information available on the website but not on vouchers redeemed?

Ms JONES: At this stage, as I said, this new dashboard that we have put on our website is relatively new. As I said in a previous answer, we are becoming a bit more sophisticated in terms of our data analysis work and then making that information publicly available. In terms of publishing the vouchers created, that would have been a fairly straightforward-type process. And then going through vouchers redeemed, there might be a correlation process there between who generated what voucher, at what stage was it redeemed and for what sport. There is an added level of sophistication there in terms of data analysis. That might explain the delay. I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That additional information you just described—who redeemed what and when and what sport—is the intention to provide that?

Ms JONES: We do have to be conscious of any sort of privacy concerns when we are talking about individuals and their data. However, for us, there is value in understanding more generically what sports are more popular in what areas, what sports are not so popular in certain areas and then obviously the flow-on effects from that—Is there an increase in demand for facilities? Is there an increase in demand for programs? From our end, there is value in understanding that data more broadly and that is something that we are currently working on.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Mackaness, I want to ask specifically about programs that are targeted to female veterans. Are there any programs targeted specifically at female veterans?

Ms MACKANESS: At this stage our programs do not differentiate between male and female veterans.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Is any consideration being given to the development of specific programs for female veterans?

Ms MACKANESS: One of the things that we are aware of is more to do with the wellbeing of the whole family unit, male or female serving. It is the partners quite often that need the support. We are starting to work on how we might better support the partners of our current serving veterans in particular who move all over the country. It is often the partner who suffers from a career perspective. So that is one thing that we are looking at. But again we are working on the health and wellbeing initiatives with the Commonwealth.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Going back to Multicultural NSW, I want to ask a few questions particularly on hate speech. Since the Crimes Amendment (Publicly Threatening and Inciting Violence) Act 2018 passed last year, what specific initiatives has Multicultural NSW engaged in to educate communities and community groups?

Mr LA POSTA: New South Wales is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse States on earth—I touched on that before—coming from 305 different ancestries and speaking 215 different languages. As the Committee alluded to before, promoting and maintaining social cohesion and community harmony is a Government priority and it is also embedded into our principles. To this end, in June 2018 the New South Wales Government introduced legislation to strengthen penalties against people who threaten to or incite violence based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex or HIV/AIDS status.

The legislation introduced a new offence in the Crimes Act carrying a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment and a fine of \$11,000. The legislation replaced section 20D of the Antidiscrimination Act 1977—an offence of serious racial vilification punishable by a maximum sentence of six months in prison. As this provision has proved ineffective in punishing people who encourage acts of violence, that is hence the way that the reform and wider reform took place. The Crimes Amendment (Publicly Threatening and Inciting Violence) Act 2018 received assent on 26 June 2018 and commenced on 13 August 2018.

With regard to some of the initiatives, Mr Shoebridge touched on this in terms of the research. He produced different research to what we have commissioned. But research unfortunately shows that more than half of 12- to 17-year-olds in Australia have seen or heard hateful comments about culturally and linguistically diverse religious groups. Multicultural NSW developed a program called Remove Hate from the Debate to address online hate. This program aims to champion community harmony, counter hateful and divisive narratives and influence and amplify positive voices online. Remove Hate from the Debate recognises online hate speech as a common element of all forms of extremism.

The program aims to empower young people with the tools and resources to speak out against online hate and use their voice to promote positive messages. A key component of Remove Hate from the Debate are an online resource centre with tools and resources to empower young people to deal with hate speech online and high profile ambassadors that really connect with the young people that we are hoping to engage and are now willing to publicly endorse the message. These include people such as a south-west hip-hop artist of Sikh origin, a Sikh rapper who is dedicated to social justice, a guy called L-FRESH the Lion; Jarrod Morton-Hoffman, a Lindt Café siege survivor; James Fry, a former white supremacist—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: I am happy for you to take this notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want you to do some rapping.

Mr LA POSTA: That is not a good thing. It would be entertaining but not good.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: How does Multicultural NSW monitor hate speech online?

Mr LA POSTA: That program has now reached over 130,000 young people on social media. That was part of the initial launch. So far as part of our secondary launch we have connected with 54,000 young people. More than 4,000 of those young people have now directly engaged with the website using the tips and tools.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Do you monitor hate speech online? How do you monitor it? Does Multicultural NSW monitor it?

Mr LA POSTA: As I said in our previous answer, Multicultural NSW is not responsible for any crimes—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Yes, you said you deal with the police.

Mr LA POSTA: Correct.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Do you monitor it? In your discussions with the police, can you see an elevation of hate speech online?

Mr LA POSTA: We have a number of forums that convene and come together. The Police Multicultural Advisory Council was one. COMPLAN is another forum that we have that works across different agencies that all come together every three months to discuss education, anti-discrimination, Family and Community Services, Multicultural NSW, the Police Force, Corrective Services—

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: What I am really asking is in terms of hate speech, right-wing commentary. Do you have staff who monitor the hate speech that goes on online?

Mr LA POSTA: We do for our website; we do not for all websites or social media platforms. One example is, unfortunately following the Christchurch attack, conversations with one of our partners, SBS. It had to double, if not triple, its social media resources to balance the hateful speech that it was experiencing just on its social media platform. To expect any one government agency or any one area of society to have a solution to that, including the police, is ambitious.

The CHAIR: Mr Moselmane, can I break in for a second? I have been asked by Ms Ward whether she can have leave to ask one question.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Absolutely.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I am going to be very cheeky. Before I do that, I will declare a conflict of interest: I am a mother and I have applied for two Active Kids vouchers, neither of which have been redeemed. My question goes to the Active Kids scheme, of which I am a huge fan. My question is—and if you would like to take it on notice, I understand—in the case of the Hon. Rose Jackson's questions about obtaining vouchers and redeeming those vouchers, can I ask you to inform the Committee about why it is in some cases when vouchers are obtained by the parent they cannot be redeemed because the provider says, "You have registered a group or a team to play in the competition". For example, in touch football competitions, where you register a team with the organisation as opposed to the individual players—and you are required to do so—you are then unable to redeem that voucher. I have raised it with the department and there seems to be a disconnect between the two. I would be appreciative of your response about what can be done about that.

Ms JONES: That sounds like a fairly particular circumstance. Unfortunately, I will have to take that on notice to understand what the rules are around the registering teams as opposed to an individual.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you. That may go some way towards some of the numbers to do with the disparity between obtaining a voucher and redeeming it.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Mr Coutts-Trotter, has Minister Sidoti ever provided you with any notice, either in writing or in person, in relation to his interests and conflicts and how they might be managed?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: To me? No.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Have you never had any meetings with Minister Sidoti or received any written advice from him in relation to pecuniary interests that he might have or conflicts of interest that he might have and how they should be managed by the department?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: No, I have not but I am happy to take the question on notice to make sure that something of that nature has not emerged elsewhere. But, to the best of my knowledge, no.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Would it not be the case if a Minister were to seek to make those representations to the department or have that dialogue with the department, the secretary of the department would be the normal place where that conversation would be initiated?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I support six Ministers.

The CHAIR: Only six!

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, only six.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Wow, we have seen you here a bit.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, indeed. The way I support them does differ a little bit. Every Minister is important and every Minister needs the department's support, but when it comes to Minister Sidoti he has a range of other highly competent senior officials. Your assumption that it would necessarily be a discussion or declaration with the secretary would be true of some Ministers but the government structure is a little bit different

in this area of the portfolio so I challenge that assumption. You have asked the question and I am happy to take it on notice to see if there is any senior officer who has had a similar discussion.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: To clarify with the rest of the panel, has Minister Sidoti provided you with information, either in person or in writing, in relation to any of his interests and how they might be managed? Has no-one else received anything like that from the Minister?

Ms JONES: No.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have a couple of questions for Ms Mather. How much was provided for the Waratahs from the \$170 million to move from the SCG trust lands? How much was provided to the Waratahs to move and was that money from the \$170 million that you outlined earlier from the Treasury line?

Ms MATHER: Thank you, Senator. Nothing was provided to the Waratahs.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I so appreciate being called "Senator" but to clarify, I am not. Sorry, what was your answer?

Ms MATHER: Nothing.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Given that the State Government signed a memorandum of understanding with Parramatta City Council to allow the Gunners to play at Wilson Park for the next 40 years, why have they not been allocated two fields to continue to compete?

Ms JONES: That is a question over to myself.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Apologies, Ms Jones. I jumping back and forth and I have various ones.

Ms JONES: That is all right. You are referring to the Parramatta Gunners. That is an issue for the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Would it be paying for the relocation and upgrade? Is that all Sydney Olympic Park Authority?

Ms JONES: That is correct.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What work has been done to relocate grassroots sports clubs displaced by the move of the Waratahs headquarters to David-Phillips Sport Field?

Ms MATHER: I cannot answer that. The Waratahs moved before the whole relocation process commenced. I think they moved in February 2018.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Centre of excellence.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Are you not aware of any work that has been done to support smaller grassroots clubs that have been affected by the relocation?

Ms MATHER: I think that is probably a question for the Waratahs, actually.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Jones, I was going to say is the Office of Sport involved in any of that?

Ms JONES: I would agree with that. It would be up to New South Wales Rugby when it did decide to move out of the precinct and how it would manage its grassroots programs.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Ms Mackaness, how many employees does the Office of Veterans Affairs employ at the moment?

Ms MACKANESS: We are a reasonably small office. There are 12 people in the office, including myself. We run a whole range of programs, other than the Veterans Employment Program. We also run a war memorial grant program, which gives out grants—two rounds each year. There are very rigorous processes involved in those. We run the Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarship program. We support the veterans commemorations and services and I am also the honorary secretary to the Anzac Memorial trustees. We have a lot of governance responsibilities for our State memorial as well.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: With that 12, do you have figures are available for 2017-2018? Was it 12 then as well?

Ms MACKANESS: We have been very fortunate in remaining consistent in our core staff through the Centenary of Anzac period. In fact, the office was really established only in 2010 in the lead-up to the Centenary

of Anzac period. We run a number of policies and programs. It is a small, honed team and they are very dedicated to their work.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: To clarify in relation to the Parramatta Gunners. My understanding is that Cricket NSW moved onto their land and the reason Cricket NSW moved was the demolition and construction at the SFS. Is there any funding being provided, other than through the Sydney Olympic Park Authority, in order to support that even though their move is also as a result of the—

Mr DRAPER: I will excuse myself. Thank you very much.

(Mr Draper withdrew.)

Ms JONES: The actual management issue between Cricket NSW and the Parramatta Gunners out at Wilson Park, which is at Sydney Olympic Park, is an issue for Sydney Olympic Park Authority. In terms of any money or any conditions or terms for the Parramatta Gunners, it is an issue for the Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Even though that issue arose because Cricket NSW was moving into the area, because it had to relocate from the SFS, there is no consideration given to the flow-on effects of all of the different moving pieces?

Ms JONES: My understanding is that Sydney Olympic Park Authority was always looking for other uses for Wilson Park. So regardless of whether it was Cricket NSW or another entity, this issue would have come about.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want to ask a couple of brief questions about the seniors strategy, so I suppose these are for you, Mr Coutts-Trotter?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I think the current seniors strategy is due to expire next year. Is that correct?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: This is the seniors Ageing Strategy 2016-2020?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Yes, so 2020 is upon us imminently.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, terrifying.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: What work is being done for a post-2020 world for seniors?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I am sure the Committee will be pleased to know there is an interdepartmental committee having a look at this, so you can rest easy.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Tell me more. Who is on this committee?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: The current members include the Department of Communities and Justice, Premier and Cabinet, Health, Transport, Planning and Environment, Education, Fair Trading, Industry and Justice, and the strategy has been articulated over a four-year period and then there have been year-by-year plans of action.

The CHAIR: Mr Coutts-Trotter, what you failed to mention is that you are the secretary for all of them.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Happily not yet. Not yet. It will be subject to evaluation and we will, of course, be providing advice in due course to the Minister and will take it from there.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: The interdepartmental strategy group has been convened. Has it met?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: It has been active through the period of the strategy.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has it convened on the question of the next strategy? Has that conversation commenced?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I understand it has.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has that included any kind of review of the last strategy overall?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I will take that on notice, but I would be very surprised if it does not.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: As the budget is from 2019-20 and goes into 2020, what is the funding allocation at present for that strategy going forward if there is no detail in it?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: It is a whole-of-government, whole-of-community strategy. Within our portfolio, from memory, I think there is about \$8.5 million in projects specifically linked to its priority areas. For

example, housing choices is one of the priority areas for the strategy, and you have the Social and Affordable Housing Fund delivering, I think, 46 per cent of the social and affordable dwellings being delivered under that strategy targeting people over the age of 55, including older women. So there is a range of expenditure happening across government in support of those priority areas. The question of funding for any future strategy that emerged is not one that has been settled yet, but I am happy to provide a response on notice about the review timetable.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has any consultation with seniors groups or senior Australians more generally occurred as part of the development of the new strategy?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: That kind of consultation happens almost constantly or consistently. I am happy to take details on what consultations are taking place as part of a review and refresh of the four-year strategy.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Has the Minister been briefed on the new strategy? Has he provided any broad outline as to things that he might like to see in it? Is he engaged in this review?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: He is absolutely engaged in it, but the department's engagement with the Minister and his office on this does not happen through me, so I will take that on notice.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: You should have asked him this morning.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: You were not here.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is right, I was not here this morning.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Just a bit of supplementary information for Mr Moselmane: L-FRESH The LION is performing at The Factory Floor in Marrickville on 11 October.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Are we invited?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes.

The CHAIR: No—unless you declare it.

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: Can I correct the record? It was *Nemo on Ice* or *Finding Nemo*, not *Shrek on Ice*.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: No-one was listening.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I want to ask specifically about homelessness services for seniors, and in particular elderly women, which I understand is one of the fastest-growing groups of homeless in New South Wales.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, the rate of growth is, as you say, high. Thankfully, the numbers of people in that cohort is still relatively low, but it is a changing dynamic and, particularly for older women, there was a significant increase in the number of older women approaching specialist homeless services. I do not have the data in front of me, but I recall the trend.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: That is right. Having seen that trend, what is the department doing in order to ensure that services are available for this increasing cohort?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: As I alluded to earlier, the Government set some priorities for the support provided through the Social and Affordable Housing Fund, so that did explicitly target new social and affordable housing for older people, and also older women and older women in regional areas. I am happy to provide some detail on that on notice. The majority of the response to this is through the social housing system and largely through the public housing system where a very significant proportion of people who are housed and who are prioritised for housing are older.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: How many staff are employed in the Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It would be useful to take that on notice. And how many staff were employed in the 2017-18 financial year as well, if you could?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: For the elder abuse hotline?

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I have it as the Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Sorry. Yes, okay.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Do you have any information about how many calls are received by the helpline?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, we do, I am just having a look. Just to be clear on that, that is the services delivered by a non-government organisation, from memory, but I am happy to see if we can capture employee data.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: It is funded by the department, is it?

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, it is funded by us. But, just in terms of the employment numbers, it would be through a non-government partner. I am sorry, I do not think I have that to hand. I am happy to get details on the number of calls.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: Also investigations as a result of those calls would be useful information.

Mr COUTTS-TROTTER: Yes, sure.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: I think I may have reached the end of my questions—or whatever questions I have left appear to have muffin all over them.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: All muffin-covered questions have to be on notice.

The Hon. ROSE JACKSON: We have one minute to go, so I think I may declare my questions at an end.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Muffin else—don't report that in the transcript.

Mr LA POSTA: Mr Moselmane, one point of clarification: When I was talking about COMPLAN, I mentioned correctional services. It is actually the Office of Emergency Management in the Department of Justice, so my apologies.

The Hon. SHAOQUETT MOSELMANE: Thank you.

The CHAIR: With no more muffin questions—

The Hon. NIALL BLAIR: We have been dealing with crumbs all day.

The CHAIR: You got the last word in—good on you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Muffingate.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.