

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No. 2

Friday 17 September 2004

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION, AND WOMEN

The Committee met at 11.30 a.m.

MEMBERS

The Hon. P. Forsythe (Chair)

The Hon. Dr A. Chesterfield-Evans
The Hon. A. R. Fazio
The Hon. E. M. Obeid

The Hon. D. E. Oldfield
The Hon. M. J. Pavay
The Hon. H. S. L. Tsang

PRESENT

The Hon. Sandra Nori, *Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, and Minister for Women*

Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation

Mr W. Healey, *Director General*

Mr J. O'Neill, *Executive Director*

Mr J. Shipway, *Acting Manager, Human Resource*

Office for Women

Ms L. Coombs, *Assistant Director General*

CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

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

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

CHAIR: I declare this meeting open to the public. I welcome you to the hearing of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2. First, I wish to thank the Minister and the departmental officers for attending today. At this meeting the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of Tourism, Sport and Recreation, and Women.

Before questions commence, some procedural matters need to be dealt with. I point out that in accordance with the Legislative Council's guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings—which are available from the attendants and clerks—only members of the Committee and witnesses may be filmed or recorded. People in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photos. In reporting the proceedings of this Committee, you must take responsibility for what you publish or what interpretation you place on anything that is said before the Committee. There is no provision for members to refer directly to their own staff while at the table. Members and their staff are advised that any messages should be delivered through the attendant on duty or the Committee clerks. For the benefit of members and Hansard, would departmental officials identify themselves by name, position and department or agency before answering a question referred to them.

I wish to indicate that the Committee has taken a decision that questions will be across the portfolio in blocks of 20 minutes: 20 minutes to the Opposition, 20 minutes to the crossbench, 20 minutes to the Government—on a rotation basis.

Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No.

CHAIR: Are there any questions?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, has Lisbet Dean, the former head of the Department of Sport and Recreation, left the department?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is correct.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Why did she leave?

Mr HEALEY: As you are probably aware, the department had a budget cut of \$2 million in the most recent mini-budget, and we reviewed the structure of the organisation. There was a view that that role was probably the role that we could dispense with, because the department is already extremely lean, and in order to save around about \$600,000 in staff costs the abolition of that SES position went a long way to achieving that result.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: She was not earning \$600,000.

Mr HEALEY: No, she was not earning \$600,000, but that was a component of the amount that we had earmarked for staff savings as part of our plan to meet our \$2 million savings target.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: What remuneration did Ms Dean receive on her termination?

Mr HEALEY: Ms Dean was an SES4, and she was subject to the Statutory Officers Remuneration Tribunal [SORT] process. My understanding is that that tribunal gave her the full allocation under her contract.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Which was?

Mr HEALEY: Thirty-nine weeks.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: So she is no longer on any government payroll?

Mr HEALEY: No, not that I am aware of. As part of the settlement under the SORT determination, you are precluded from taking government employment for a twelve-month period.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Can you provide to the Committee details of the amount that she received for that 39-week termination?

Mr HEALEY: I will take that on notice. One of the things I am uncertain about is the confidentiality of those settlements. But certainly, if it is available to me to do so, I will provide that information.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, are you aware that Lisbet Dean told two whistleblowers that misappropriation of resources and theft within the Department of Sport and Recreation was systemic in the system and that it had been going on for 20, 30 or 50 years?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will refer the honourable member to *Hansard* of what I said in the lower House. I am happy to reiterate comments that I made in response to a question asked of me in the House. I will read that, if you like.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Will it take long?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Minister, I am interested, if you will read it.

Ms SANDRA NORI: In fact, I made two contributions on this matter, aside from the two answers I gave when directly asked the questions in question time, and in response to those two questions after question time on 16 March:

I have a supplementary answer. The first thing I want to say is that I have now received advice—and I will be releasing the report referred to earlier in question time. It is on its way over from the department and it will be tabled, as will a letter from the ICAC that I will be reading to the House shortly. Mr Speaker, once again the Leader of the Opposition has got it so wrong and it is a pity he is not here to hear it. I ask you to bear with me. I have been advised by the Director General of the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation: one, that Ms Lisbet Dean has no recollection of making the comment attributed to her; the Nolan report resulted from a protected disclosure by certain staff members and hence my desire to seek advice first before releasing the report;

I point out that the protected disclosure legislation places obligations on the department and myself as Minister, and I really did have to seek advice as to what I could and could not say so that I would not be in breach of that legislation—even though I think the Leader of the Opposition at the time clearly was. I continue with my response:

... the matter was investigated in accordance with the normal processes; ICAC was informed of the disclosure and supported the agreed approach; the review was undertaken by the internal audit bureau to the satisfaction of the ICAC. Now I shall read a letter from the ICAC from Cheree Ryan, Assessment Officer:

Dear Ms Dean,

I refer to your reports of December 4 2003 and March 17 2003, regarding the alleged corrupt conduct of Peter Nolan

And another party that has not yet been mentioned here.

I deleted that paragraph when I was reading the letter into *Hansard*:

Please be advised that the ICAC has now examined the information you have provided in respect of the above matters. It is noted that your Department found 13 breaches of discipline proven against Mr Nolan and that he was demoted to Grade 7/8. It is also noted that Mr Nolan was transferred to another area where he has no direct responsibility for staff supervision. You have advised that Mr Nolan had lodged with GREAT against the demotion.

The next paragraph refers to another person that hasn't been mentioned yet. And let me quote with emphasis the following sentence:

In light of this information the ICAC has determined not to take any action in respect of this matter.

The report raises some issues which the ICAC's Corruption Prevention Education Research Division will now consider.

Its work is focused on strengthening policies and practices of the NSW public sector agencies with the aim of building resistance to corruption.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Your attention to reporting this matter is appreciated.

Later that night, or possibly the next day, because it was about 24 hours later, I said:

I have now had 24 hours to familiarise myself with the report and ensure that the names of unintended third parties are protected. I can inform the House that the report found implications by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Brogden, that tens of thousands of taxpayers' dollars were spent on renovating a departmental employee's private home were unsubstantiated. More specifically, the summary of the report reads in part:

- There is no evidence to show that the employee misappropriated departmental funds to purchase roofing and guttering materials for his house.
- There appears to be no connection between work done on the employee's kitchen and work done at the centre.
- There is no evidence that the employee purchased timber through the centre to use at his own residence.
- There is insufficient evidence to show that other building related products were used on the employee's House.
- However, the report found that the employee had not declared a conflict of interest when he built his house at the same time, and with the same contractor, who was doing work at the Berry Sport and Recreation Centre.

The employee was disciplined about other matters—for example, orange juice, milk and bread taken for personal use, as well as using departmental equipment for personal use and preferential treatment given to family members. For these matters he was demoted from a management position, and the ICAC has determined not to proceed further with the matter. Legal advice confirmed that the charges were at the lower end of the misconduct scale and did not warrant dismissal, and that on appeal he would probably succeed. If any employee had such serious allegations as the Leader of the Opposition made yesterday proven against him or her, not only would it be a dismissal offence but it would be a criminal matter and, clearly, the Internal Audit Bureau and the ICAC would have taken the matter further.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, does Mr Nolan still hold a position within the department as a grants manager?

Mr HEALEY: Yes, he does.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: So he is handing out grants to groups around New South Wales?

Mr HEALEY: No. Mr Nolan is in our property section; he is not handing out grants. We have a properties and grants division, and he has a position within that in accordance with the discipline findings that followed on from the review.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: The gentleman in question that ICAC has had a look at and said there were some issues there—which are still fairly well unresolved, I would suggest—is still employed by the department in the grants section of the property department?

Mr HEALEY: No.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Quite clearly, in the properties section of the grants and properties division.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Can you explain to me what his job is?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Ms Pavey, could I just point out to you what my advice was. I have just read it, but I will read it again:

Legal advice confirmed that the charges were at the lower end of the misconduct scale and did not warrant dismissal, and that on appeal he would probably succeed.

That was our legal advice.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: What is his role? What is the job within the property section dealing with grants?

Mr HEALEY: Could I correct you? It is not dealing with grants. We have a properties and grants division. The properties division is involved with monitoring and planning for maintenance of our centres, and Mr Nolan is involved in areas associated with the asset maintenance program for our centres.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Is that not a little unusual? Despite the fact that in the report he was clearly found to have not disclosed all relevant information in dealing with his own builder for his own home maintenance, he is now working in the property section?

Mr HEALEY: As the Minister said, this matter has been investigated, it was the subject of a protected disclosure, and appropriate action was taken in accordance with our grievance procedures and discipline procedures. There was an agreement as to this person's future employment. There has been appropriate counselling and ongoing monitoring of his performance. And, from that point of view, we are getting on and putting that incident behind us, and we do not believe that his current position in any way compromises the department.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: In putting it behind you, was any money paid in terms of compensation to Mr Nolan?

Mr HEALEY: Not that I am aware of.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Was Mr Nolan allowed to stay living on site at the very sport and recreation centre, despite a recommendation from the Internal Audit Bureau [IAB] that he should not, amid concerns raised with the department about his intimidation of two whistleblowers?

Mr HEALEY: Not to my understanding.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: So he did not stay living there?

Mr HEALEY: No.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: When did he move out?

Mr HEALEY: I am aware that Mr Nolan built a property in close proximity to Berry. I think he left the departmental land—can I just clarify that? There was a gap there when the inquiry was under way when he could not be removed for issues associated with natural justice. But, irrespective of that, my understanding is that he did move out because he built a house in close proximity to the camp.

CHAIR: Did he move out when his house was completed?

Mr HEALEY: Yes, to my understanding.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I think we need to clarify. My understanding was, and I stand to be corrected, that the legal advice said that under his contract he could not be legally moved from the department premises until such time as the internal audit bureau's report was completed. I think that is what the director-general was referring to—in other words, until such time as a determination had been made as to his guilt or otherwise.

CHAIR: Let us be clear.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is my understanding.

CHAIR: When was the Internal Audit Bureau report completed?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will have to take that on notice.

CHAIR: When you take that on notice, can you also then advise at what date he left the department's property and moved to his house?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Has Mr Nolan been asked to pay back any money to compensate for the things that the IAB report found that he had taken over a long time?

Mr HEALEY: The report found that the things he took were quite small in terms of monetary value, although the principle that he should not take anything was upheld. So he has not been asked to repay because it would be very difficult to document the actual economic value of orange juice, milk and bread, and the use of equipment.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: You are confident that these matters are not widespread within the department, Minister?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Subsequent to that issue being raised in the House I was taken through by, if I recall, Lisbet Dean, the very processes that had been instituted earlier, in fact, in response to the initial investigation to make sure that the department was working at our best practice model in relation to this.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: How many employees have been dismissed from the department for sexual misconduct since 1998?

Mr HEALEY: I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: What policy does the department have in place to ensure that any employee sacked for sexual misconduct cannot be re-employed at another sport and recreational centre in New South Wales?

Mr HEALEY: Certainly the department complies with all of the relevant legislation in relation to reporting people who have contravened child protection legislation, and if an allegation is proven then, clearly, our response would be in accordance with that legislation. In relation to the exact policy and procedures, I would have to take that on notice and get back to you. But, clearly, as you would be aware, there are significant checking processes now under relevant State legislation to ensure that anyone who works with children has to be cleared. We actually run those processes for sports generally through our Child Protection Unit and we comply with all the relevant legislation to make sure that we monitor very closely who works in our centres.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, are you aware of the case of an employee at the Berry sport and recreation centre who was dismissed for sexual misconduct in 1999 after multiple previous allegations of inappropriate behaviour of a sexual nature, including one case of a disabled client, approximately 16 years old, who was inappropriately touched by the employee?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I point out that I was not the Minister at the time. I am aware of an issue that I presume you are referring to; I assume it is the same one. I think that either the director-general or the acting human resources director could answer, but my understanding is that no-one was actually dismissed for sexual misconduct. Perhaps the acting human resources director can give you the circumstances, if we are talking about the same issue.

CHAIR: I think we would want to know how it was investigated.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Was it done internally or were the police involved?

Mr HEALEY: My advice is that there was an internal investigation, and action was taken to remove the person. That became subject to normal industrial processes and there was a settlement in accordance with those processes and that person was no longer an employee of the department and has not been employed subsequently by the department. But, as the Minister said, it predates any of the people at his table. So any further inquiry, we would have to seek information and come back to you.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: We would appreciate that. Can you advise us whether it was handled internally or whether it was handed to the police? Could you take that on notice?

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: He just said it was handled internally.

Mr HEALEY: My advice was that it was handled internally and because of the issues in relation to natural justice, the way it was settled meant that it was not necessary to hand it on to the police. There were process in place but, as I say, the detail of the particular issue predates all of the people at his table.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: But did the employee leave the department after this incident?

Mr HEALEY: The person involved at the time was a temporary employee; he was not a permanent employee. The way the matter was handled, from our advice, subsequently led to industrial action and there was a settlement in accordance with normal industrial practices for wrongful dismissal. As I said, the details were that the matter was raised, our understanding is that the matter was investigated and there was a settlement consistent with normal practice. As for the detail of the particular allegations and accusations, how they were investigated, that really would require further investigation as to how it was handled at the time.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: In reviewing this, could you just provide any information for us as to why it was not referred to the police?

Mr HEALEY: I will take that on notice, but I also need to say that in all these matters they are the subject of allegations. There are appropriate processes in place to investigate these processes, particularly in relation to the most recent matters. As the Minister said, she reviewed our processes following the question without notice in the House. As part of our internal audit program we have had the Internal Audit Bureau review our fraud and corruption risk processes on both sides of the department, Sport and Recreation, and Tourism, and we will implement any recommendations in relation to that. We are also working closely with the ICAC. It is important to note that while there have been allegations, any allegation has been investigated in a way that satisfies our internal processes and, from what we can gather, the ICAC.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Is it true that a female staff member was sexually harassed in a Central Coast office of the department by a senior manager in 2003, which I think is on your watch?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Sorry, I missed that?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Is it true that a female staff member was sexually harassed in a Central Coast office of the department by a senior manager in 2003? I believe that was on your watch.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It depends which month in 2003, but generally speaking you are correct. No, I have not been advised of that.

Mr HEALEY: There was a complaint that has been investigated in relation to that matter. As I have said, part of the normal processes of all government agencies is to have appropriate systems in place to ensure that staff are protected adequately when they make a complaint and disclosures. It is very important that confidentiality for both sides is protected when protected disclosures are made. We have taken a lot of effort to ensure that if a staff member does make a complaint, firstly, that their interests are protected but so, too, are the interests of the staff member about whom the complaint is made. I am very comfortable. I have been in the position since October and a number of these matters, of course, predate me. But I was very comfortable when I came in as to the integrity of the processes that had been put in place.

As I said, if there has been a complaint I am comfortable that our systems and processes would have been employed to ensure that they were investigated appropriately. From time to time the nature of these complaints mean that people's perspective as to what is the best way to resolve them

should and could well vary. But one of the strengths of our system is that it implies a degree of objectivity and independence. And, as I said, if these complaints have been made, certainly they have been investigated in a way that is consistent with normal public service practice.

CHAIR: I will now ask the Hon. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans whether he has any questions.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Can anyone ask me about the boat at Somersby?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The boat sunk and now so has the resort. Why would I ask you about that? I am sure it is a housing thing. Perhaps we should ask you about what is happening at Luna Park instead. Are you going to approve the 14-storey tower there, which is supposedly going to finance the—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Arthur, I am the Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, and the Minister for Women. I am not the Minister for Planning. I am not North Sydney Council. I am not au fait with the issue in the sense that I could give you an answer on that. I am not aware of the processes any more than a member of the general public. That is not true. Obviously, I know a little bit more in the sense that I take a closer interest in these things. But that is not a question for me. It is not one I could possibly answer. I do not know what I do not know, obviously. However, if you are asking me—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Luna Park is mentioned in your section of the budget. That is why I was curious.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, but it does not give me—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: For you to say you have nothing to do with it seems extraordinary.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not have planning control. You have asked me a specific question as to whether I could give permission for the 14 storeys. You tell me they have put up their hands for 14 storeys. No, I do not have that role at all. My role in that is very limited. However, since you have raised the issue of Luna Park, can I say this. I think it is fantastic, as Minister for Tourism, that Luna Park has reopened, that Peter Hearne and his company and investors have put money into reopening this icon. It is travelling extremely well.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is it lasting on its car park or on its property development?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Visitation is up.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am pleased to hear that.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Sydneysiders have taken to it like ducks to water. It is so fantastic to see it operating again and providing enjoyment. It is a great tourist attraction.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: You can go there by ferry, Arthur.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: It looks good on the harbour. It looks wonderful on the harbour

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It is nice to see the thing there. I hope it is doing financially okay. I was horrified to see the car park built and I am very concerned about the 14-storey tower, for which—

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will take that concern on notice.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I hope so.

Ms SANDRA NORI: And I will deliver it to the relevant Minister.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The Luna Park Reserve Trust is in your section of the budget estimates under your heading. The idea that you have no power with something that is in the budget under your portfolio is of concern to me.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am quite happy to dig up the Crown Solicitor's advice that will prove the point that I simply administer the Act—the trust is, in fact, the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority [SHFA] board—that I have no power. But I am happy to show you the Crown Solicitor's advice, but it will take you at least an hour to read it.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: We are awash with Crown Solicitor's advice.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I would not want Arthur not to know everything.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I do not want to see it. We are awash with Crown Solicitor's advice when it is convenient to the Government. Thank you, but I would—

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, I am sorry. Wait a minute, I am not going to let you get away with that, Arthur. Now, wait a second. This is not about convenience. This is about Ministers being entitled to understand the limits or, indeed, the extent of their responsibilities. Try not to cloud that fact up with whatever political point you are trying to make. I am entitled to have Crown Solicitor's advice on that, quite properly.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am not saying you are not. I merely make an observation about the number of Ministers who have Crown Solicitor's advice about things.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, no, Arthur. What you are doing is trying to suggest that I am trying to hide behind something. That is not the case. I have Crown Solicitor's advice to show both you and me, Arthur, the limited nature of my involvement in Luna Park.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am used to Ministers avoiding questions by saying that it is outside their portfolio. It is just odd to note that it is within your portfolio in the budget papers, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Not in the sense that you suggest.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Certainly the Opposition would seem to be committed to not building 14-storey towers and I am concerned that there will not be much in Luna Park left. The idea that property development solves all problems is a worrying one. This Government seems to be very worrying in the way it flogs off and approves property development to solve its problems. That is an observation, and you do not have to answer it, Minister. I would rather that you did not.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Thanks.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The issues of compulsory sport in schools—we are concerned about the rising rates of obesity of children in New South Wales. Does the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation monitor what sport is done in schools?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Again, Mr Chesterfield-Evans, you know that, strictly speaking, that is a responsibility of the Minister for Education and Training. I will, I hope, be able to paraphrase him with credit by referring to a program that he introduced six months ago, I think, where he actually changed the emphasis—it was the personal health and development program—whereby young people in schools will actually have to commit to more exercise-type activities within school and within that program. However, what I can tell you about the department is that we have worked with the Department of Health and we have launched the Kids in Gyms Program. We are working in conjunction with the Federal Government on an after-school program which is again designed to address the issue of obesity or a lack of exercise in children. Of course we are concerned about the

fact that young people—mind you, it is not confined to young people. There seems to be a lot less emphasis in people's lives on taking physical activity as a form of recreation.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So it would seem that you do not have a monitoring role in that, officially?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, I do not, officially.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Sport does not monitor the amount of exercise that children do. Is that right?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, because there are organisations, including the World Health Organisation and all those sorts of research organisations, from which we can get our data. Arthur, the research has been done to death. We know the one thing that matters: we know that young people—they are not alone—are not exercising enough, so I think it is much better that we concentrate on programs that provide sporting facilities, that provide programs and that raise the whole profile of sport, and getting people to be more active.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Minister, any program that provides things has to audit whether it is doing any use by that provision, surely?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Correct. If you cannot measure it, you—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: There is no point in saying "We provide things but we do not know whether people are using them or not".

Ms SANDRA NORI: Correct.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is an absurd approach.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I find this absurd coming from someone—I am sorry, Arthur: I have never gotten cross with you before.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is not true either, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Is that right?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You have not been cross with me since last year's estimates.

Ms SANDRA NORI: You must know from the nature of the studies that to have any meaning they would have to be conducted via the Department of Health or the Department of Education and Training, and it is a long-term trend that you look at. The Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation has not been put on this planet to do that. It has been put there to provide resources and programs in the general that assist people in their sporting and recreational activities.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Thank you, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: The study of obesity as such is a health issue. I will rely on the Department of Health and any help I can get from the Department of Education and Training and the World Health Organisation and you name it for those sorts of things. You know damned well that any program would not show results very quickly because we are talking about a long-term cultural trend.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That is why I am concerned about the data collection. Who is collecting it? How is it being monitored?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Well, you should have asked the Minister for Health.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I want to know who is responsible. You are the Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation and your department provides facilities. It

would not seem unreasonable for you to be monitoring who is using those facilities and what effect they are having on the health of children. That would seem to me to be perfectly reasonable. I know the Department for Women was monitoring women, and it was abolished. I am concerned that the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation is not monitoring sport. It might be abolished as well.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have news for you. The Department for Women did not monitor women. Think of your English very carefully. I am joking.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Minister, I am trying to be brief. I have a lot of stuff to get through.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Okay, good. Let us get on.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The point is that I was shown very carefully the database for women, which looked at indices of progress for women in terms of their disadvantage in jobs and equal opportunity programs. I made a special visit to find out about this, following last year's budget, and I was quite impressed with what I saw. It has been abolished, which I am not impressed with. Coming back to sport, I am concerned that if there is no monitoring of what kids are doing in sport, the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation might be privatised for someone else to manage the sporting facilities.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Look, that is just fanciful.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I would have said that about the Department for Women last year.

Ms SANDRA NORI: The monitoring of obesity, child weight and exercise requires going in and getting, at the very minimum, a sample. It is quite a large logistical exercise. The Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation would not even have the right, I hazard, to go into schools and do that. You know that it is a whole-of-government approach and that it is something that the Department of Health will be doing, and organisations that are equipped and experienced in doing that kind of research. We take that research and then adjust our programs accordingly, and that is an appropriate thing for the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation to do.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So you are monitoring that research? Is that the bottom line? You are monitoring that research in order to get your programs? I am interested to know whether you are monitoring.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, Arthur. We worked it out a long time ago that kids were getting overweight, were not exercising. That is why we implemented the other programs. Yes, it was not that hard.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Your whole-of-government approach appears to be mainly flogging off schoolyards, as far as I can see. There were 84 in the paper the other day and we have a whole lot more listed.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Why do you not resort to your normal trick and ask me about where there is a good place to holiday in New South Wales, because you are much nicer like that.

CHAIR: Dr Chesterfield-Evans, your 10 minutes is up. I am going to offer a chance to the Hon. David Oldfield to ask questions. If he does not use the full 10 minutes, I will give you an opportunity to ask further questions.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Thank you, Madam Chair. I am filling in for Reverend the Hon. Dr Gordon Moyes . Could you tell me about the 10 per cent bed tax: where does that stand at the moment with the Government? Is there any potential to reduce or remove that at some stage?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Are you asking this as David Oldfield or as Reverend the Hon. Dr Gordon Moyes , or both?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: It depends on how reverend you wish me to be.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not care how reverend you are, but have you understood a fundamental change in national—Federal-State—taxation relationships? Do you understand that under the introduction of the goods and services tax [GST]—

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: It has been abolished.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: The bed tax has been abolished, has it?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Hello! Of course it was abolished. It was traded off in the intergovernmental agreement in the lead-up to the introduction of the GST. The States do not have the right to levy a bed tax any more. The right was given away and it was abolished. It went with the GST, which was introduced so long ago I have forgotten when—2000 or something.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Thank you, Minister. I have finished with that point.

Ms SANDRA NORI: So now you will tell me whether you are David Oldfield or Gordon Moyes.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: That was a question from Gordon Moyes.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I thought so.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: I will tell Gordon and I am sure that he will be very pleased to know that it has been abolished.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am surprised that Patricia Forsythe did not rule that question out of order on the basis of its being abolished.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: She does not know either.

CHAIR: If I was here to protect every member, we probably would not get through this.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Minister, can you give me a bit of an idea of what it is that the Government has in place in particular to attract greater visitation to New South Wales from people within Australia?

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Is it from Gordon Moyes, this question you are asking?

CHAIR: The Minister may answer the question.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Okay, so you are asking me to take you through some of our marketing campaigns. Is that what you would like me to do?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Yes, that would be good.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: That is supposed to be my question.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Did you get yours from the Government, too?

CHAIR: The Minister may answer the question. I do not think we need any cross chatter.

Ms SANDRA NORI: In general, we can divide our marketing strategies. We obviously market domestically and internationally, but you want me to focus on the domestic market, is that right?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Yes.

Ms SANDRA NORI: There are two sorts of campaigns, in general. Obviously, one is aimed at attracting people to Sydney and its surrounds—basically the two-and-a-half to three-hour drives using the CBD as the centre, and then of course the rest of regional New South Wales. On Sunday 1 May, we launched the new Grand Sydney campaign. You may have even seen the ads on TV. We showed them for a week in Sydney but, of course, they were aimed almost exclusively at the Brisbane and Melbourne markets, so you would not necessarily have picked up that they were on TV here. That ad campaign reflects a whole new iteration and a new tag line; it represents a whole new branding. It has taken us, if you like, to the next iteration of marketing Sydney and we have moved to a tag line, "There's no place in the world like Sydney". We developed those ads with a view to promoting Sydney as Australia's global city.

That ad could also fit very nicely in international markets, when and if we get a co-operative partnership. When and if we want to, we can take that offshore. That was one of the criteria that we used—we wanted it to be able to go offshore. We also wanted that ad to not be inconsistent with other messages about image, about this State and, indeed, this country. We feel we came up with a product that was not inconsistent with an investment message. Sometimes it has been said that sometimes tourism promotions run counter to the message that you might want to give or the image you might want to give about a certain investment destination. This one fits in extremely well and complements that other message. It was based on a lot of research. We actually commissioned a lot of very detailed research. You have to do that from time to time. We feel that this particular ad, which we see as a piece of infrastructure, will last, we think, maybe five or maybe even seven years, so was a big investment in shooting the ad and getting it right.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What was the investment?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The exact figures—it was about \$800,000 in production cost, from memory.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What about screening costs?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That will vary, depending on how much air time we buy.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What would that be a week?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That will also depend. You need to know this because—

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: I understand variation in air time expenditures.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, but what you may not understand, or maybe Gordon does not understand—I am not sure whom I am addressing.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: If I get anything wrong, I am Gordon.

Ms SANDRA NORI: The other thing that comes into this is the number of private sector partners that you might attract. You might attract more for the lead-in to summer, or you might attract more for the lead-in to winter and so on. So in a sense you are asking me—I am not going to avoid the question, but in a sense I need you to understand that you are asking me how long is a piece of string because at any one time different partners may come in.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: In the week campaign that you have just mentioned—

Ms SANDRA NORI: It was not a week campaign. I said it was shown for one week in Sydney but it was shown for about three weeks in Brisbane and Melbourne each as well.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: It would be better if we look at it in Brisbane. In the Brisbane and Melbourne campaigns, how long was it shown there?

Ms SANDRA NORI: About three weeks.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: In the three-week exposure in Brisbane, what would have been the cost? Firstly, were there any joint venture partners?

Ms SANDRA NORI: There were some, and what we are coming up with now is that for the next round of this ad we have actually got up to 60 partners. You would expect the number of partners to increase over time and, in fact, that has been very effective.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Did they share in the \$800,000 production cost?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, though they buy the air time. We provide the infrastructure.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What was the Government's all-up cost with the exposure air time for the weeks in Melbourne?

Ms SANDRA NORI: For that first campaign.

Mr O'NEILL: The media cost was about \$1.3 million, but that included not just TV but print and web as well.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: That was both cities for three weeks?

Mr O'NEILL: Exactly, and the stuff in the New South Wales market.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: So that was Sydney as well for the week, was it?

Mr O'NEILL: Correct. We think that the total amount that we will invest over the course of the 2004-05 in the Sydney campaign will be in the order of \$4 million, but as the Minister said, there has been significant co-operative support from Qantas Holidays and Air New Zealand. In fact, we ran it in New Zealand as well.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: But the Government's cost was \$1.4 million, was it?

Mr O'NEILL: Correct.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Minister, can you tell me what actually did happen to the Department for Women? Do I understand the Premier now has it?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Where has it gone?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The department was abolished.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: It was just abolished?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The department was abolished as part of the mini-budget process in response to the \$365 million that New South Wales was deprived of under the Commonwealth funding arrangements. But what it did was it became the Office for Women and that sits within Premier's, but it reports to me, so I am still the Minister for Women. What I need to point out to you is that we have been the only State in the Commonwealth, including the Commonwealth itself, that had a department. What we have done is we have gone back to—

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: I am sorry, so you were the only State that had a department?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Would you be concerned—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Can I just finish?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Yes, but would you be concerned that some might suggest that you were well ahead and then decided not to stay ahead?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No-one has actually said that, by the way. Most people said that overall their view was that there are some advantages in going back to the fold, as it were, and emulating the models that exist in all other States and Territories, and indeed the Commonwealth. The role—

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What is the Government's future plan for assisting women with their specific needs in this State?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Can I finish what I was saying?

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Point of order: I would like the Minister to be able to finish her answer without interruption, so that we can follow the information she is providing. Madam Chair, I ask you to ask the Hon. David Oldfield to cease interrupting the Minister while she is answering.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have the gist of what you are getting at. I am happy to give you the discursive answer and I am sure I will traverse well beyond your question so you can get the picture. I suspect that everyone would appreciate that.

CHAIR: The Minister may continue.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It has gone back to an Office for Women. One of the great advantages of having an Office for Women is that it is able to have an oversight role into a whole range of—

[Interruption.]

Ms SANDRA NORI: Would the Hon. Melinda Pavey like to share the joke with us?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: It was not at your expense, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Point of order: It does not matter whether it is at my expense, it is at the expense of this process. I am sure that if I did the same I would be pulled up. Madam Chair, I ask that the Hon. Melinda Pavey, MLC, and the Hon. David Oldfield, MLC, cease and desist from passing written jokes to each other. I think it demeans the whole Committee.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: I actually thought it was serious, but the Hon. Melinda Pavey—

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: It was a note of information, actually.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is why you were laughing and smiling so happily to him? I do not think so.

CHAIR: Minister, you can answer the question.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I uphold my point of order.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: I do not think you are able to take points of order.

CHAIR: I do not believe the Minister can take a point of order, but members are entitled to pass notes to each other.

Ms SANDRA NORI: They are, but in order to maintain the dignity of this procedure they are not entitled to conduct themselves like that. However, I will leave that.

[Time expired.]

CHAIR: The Government members may now ask questions.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Minister, with the Paralympics about to commence, are we assisting elite athletes with a disability to fulfil their potential? Are we providing all people with a disability the opportunity to participate in sports?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, of course we are, and of course we do. Obviously we are looking forward to their great feats in Athens. We have given considerable funds to the Paralympic team. For example, and this is not specifically for the Paralympic Games, we have developed a guide called "No Limits" that includes a contact list of disability organisations and sports that people can contact for more practical information. That involves programs at the non-elite level and that new guide is one of the many ways that the Government is supporting disabled sport. In 2003-04 the department provided assistance to athletes with a disability totalling \$1,343,800 in the form of direct and indirect support through its statewide programs. We have a centre of excellence for athletes with a disability based at the Sydney Academy of Sport based at Narrabeen.

Honourable members may not know that that sport and recreation camp is set up for people with a disability. Yesterday the organisers of the junior disabled sports for 2005 announced that the event will be held at Narrabeen, because the equipment and the set up are so good. That centre has worked to improve the quality of service and levels of support available to athletes with a disability. The accommodation is part of that. The Government has given \$105,000 towards scholarships and support programs for elite disabled athletes, including programs for beginners, talent identification and talent development. The program is about creating a pathway. The New South Wales Institute of Sport has provided \$70,000 to the National Wheelchair Track and Road Program.

The department supports the disability sports development program, known as D:Sport, and has provided \$230,000 in the past three years. We also have done work at Jindabyne to assist athletes, and I am happy to take you through other money that has been given through the International Sporting Events Program. That program supports events the sports people with a disability. In 2003-04 we gave \$15,000 to the 2004 Sydney International Wheelchair Tennis Open, \$20,000 for the 2004 Summer Down Under Wheelchair Road and Track Series, \$5,000 for the South Pacific Wheelchair Lawn Bowls, \$20,000 for the Oceania Wheelchair Basketball, \$150,000 to the Paralympic Team, a great team of 143 athletes. And we wish them luck.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Recently I read an item in a newspaper about incidents of sport rage and that the Government is doing something to curb that. What is your department doing to alleviate sport rage in junior sport? Does it involve only the participants or also the parents?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Unfortunately, sport rage is demonstrated by athletes on the field, even little kids, their coaches who cannot believe that the team has not been awarded a try, as well as parents and friends on the sidelines. Sadly, the largest category is the athletes on the field. Parents and coaches come in at about 25 per cent. Regardless of who or what, the context is completely unacceptable. Nationally we have lost considerable numbers of volunteers in junior sport over the past five or six years, particularly at the umpire and referee level. That statistic was provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Last year the department held a seminar on the Central Coast to which Liz Ellis and a lot of people involved in administration and kids attended. A workshop was held, which came up with a range of ideas that have been implemented.

In short, we developed a kit that is available on the web to sporting organisations, but the most pleasing pilot we were able to run was with the Blacktown District Soccer Association. It achieved simple things such as getting parents at the beginning of the season to sign up to a general pledge about what good sportpersonship is about. The good result is that at the end of this season no yellow cards were issued, whereas a couple of years ago there were 43 yellow card incidents. We think that is working. We have a pilot running on surf rage, also.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: Surf rage?

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Someone was beaten in the head on the North Coast, at Yamba.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, and there is another subset we are working on. We are rolling them out in different responsibilities. We are doing that because fundamentally, aside from sport providing a form of exercise and recreation and all the disciplines they learn, it is a metaphor for life for little children. They have to learn that sometimes life can be unfair, and it is unfair, but there is no point in them losing their temper and carrying on at innocent parties. Get on with it—they will not always win in life. That is a good lesson to learn early, within the confines and disciplines of sport. Students from Kempsey are booked in to take lessons in sport rage as part of the new sports education program, commencing next week.

The Department of Sport and Recreation has teamed up with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, the Rivers Regional Council and the Department of Education and Training to develop a program in which students in grades 5, 6 and 7 at Kempsey High School, St Paul's College, West Kempsey Public School and South Kempsey Public School will participate in the new sports rage lessons. I have often been asked by the media: What will the next step be? Is it legislation? No, it is not. I am hoping that this program raises a level of awareness; it has been aired extensively in the media as a result of us launching a kit. I am hoping for a process of cultural change to get this issue on an even keel.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: Minister, I refer to your Tourism portfolio, which is very relevant to regional New South Wales. What is the New South Wales Government doing to support events in regional New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We have the Regional Flagship Program, which is grants based and application based. It has been running for a number of years, since 1996. In that time we have provided \$2.6 million to about 144 regional events across the State. We have had various formulas and iterations of the program and will change the formula slightly. With each iteration we learn more. As the industry in regional New South Wales matures we respond to that. This year the successful events will receive a \$10,000 one-year grant, and three events will receive a grant of \$20,000 per annum over the next three years. That is a slight change. One thing I instituted about two years ago was to ask the department allocating the grant, certainly for the larger grants, to keep back a percentage so that we could advertise its event in the Sydney market.

Honourable members should be clear that my money does not go to bricks and mortar for an event; it goes to promote that event. My money is there to get more people into the town, into the hotels and motels, the cafes and restaurants, and so on. The money goes in some way to promote an event and we want to do more about promoting events in the Sydney market, Sydney being the largest market in this nation. Also we are about to switch to the calendar year in conjunction with and after discussion with the regional tourism organisations. They are happy with that, because it gives them more timing.

Yesterday the mayors of Deniliquin and Conargo visited me in my office to talk about one program I absolutely love, an event that would not have taken off without funding. The first three years of funding allowed the organisers to cement their place, and I am referring to the Deniliquin Ute Muster, which is to be held on the long weekend in October. The event is expecting 10,000 visitors, and they will bring a lot of money to Deniliquin. The organisers expect about 6,000 utilities to participate in the muster, including the first entry from the United States of America—a Chevy or Cadillac pick-up, the owner of which wanted to participate in Australia. Who would have thought of that? I would never have dreamt it up. That event is going great guns and has made a big difference. It brings several million dollars to Deniliquin over that weekend.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: While talking about rural issues, although my interest is not in ute musters, what is the Premier's Council for Women doing about the impact of ageing on the female population, particularly in rural and regional areas?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have given the Premier's Council for Women a brief; I would not call it an instruction, it was made following discussions. I want us to concentrate on issues that affect women and ageing, because the truth is that everyone ages, but I will bet that no-one has consciously worked out what that means. A high proportion of the ageing population is women, and women have special needs. For instance, first up, they may not be able to drive a car; they may be of the generation in which women did not drive a car.

That includes issues relating to loneliness, housing and so on. I have given council a brief to look at housing and at housing models, and what we might need to do as a society, as an industry, as a government, or as local government to get ready for that. The brief that I have given council is to look at ageing, but in respect of housing—simple things like housing apartments that are being built. Has anyone given any thought to the fact that in 10 years time a fair proportion of residents living in apartments might have those electronic wheelchairs or gophers? Has local government thought about the implications for footpaths? Have shopping centres thought of the implications of parking those gophers?

At some levels quite simple things need to be looked at. Do we need to make it easier for a housing model that allows a couple of women to live separately, but together under same roof to combat practical issues and to address issues of loneliness? That is council's brief. It will be researching this issue, going around the communities, integrating with the Council on the Ageing and so on. I am quite excited about making that contribution to whole-of-government policy.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Will council be putting out any reports on this, or will it just be working with other agencies?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I hope that there will be a report. I hope that at the end of it I, as Minister for Women, will conduct, for want of a better word, a workshop, a seminar or a summit, if you like, calling together the housing industry, planners and local government, to try to raise an awareness of this issue. Strictly speaking, it is not something for which we can legislate. We just want to put the idea out in the community. Sooner or later people will work out that there is a quid in it. But my concern is that by the time the housing industry has established that this is an issue, demand will far exceed supply and it will be too expensive. If we get in a bit earlier hopefully we can make it a more commonplace product so that it is affordable.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: I understand that the Australian Tourism Forecasting Council has estimated that over the next 10 years emerging markets such as China and India are set to boom. Can you tell us what the Government is doing to encourage tourists from emerging markets to come to New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: For the first time we have allocated \$500,000 in our budget to establish an office of emerging markets which will focus in particular on China and India. It will ensure that we get on the ground early in these emerging markets. There is no doubt that we are seen in the Asia-Pacific region as a western sophisticated experience, without having to go to the United States of America or to Europe. At the moment that is our niche market. In the Indian market we will be including the word "C" for cricket. That is not something that I expect everyone to understand or to appreciate. We will be working in partnership, for example, with Qantas and we will be starting off by doing familiarisation.

We will be bringing out 10 travel agents from India. That is the way in which we work. We get the familiarisation trips happening, we start to get good press and we start to build our market. We will also be introducing the Indian tourism industry to tourism operators in New South Wales at an Indian market brief that is being set up. Tourism New South has just participated in the Tourism Australia India mission—a tourism trade show. Some of the participants included Taronga Zoo, Luna Park, Showboats and so on. We have just hosted other international journalists. We have also been looking at the Middle Eastern market, particularly with Emirates Airlines and the clear commitment that Emirates Airlines has to Australia. We will probably be looking at Bahrain as well through Gulf Air, not because the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are great source markets but because they are out of Europe for the Middle East.

In partnership with our operators we will again be participating in a travel exposition that will promote New South Wales to the Middle East. I think it is fair to say that in China it is a bit more advanced. Our strategy will involve a combination of marketing and trade activity. We already do a lot of advertising in China. As you know, Qantas will be going back into Shanghai in December. There will be a lot of co-operative promotional activities surrounding the commencement of that service. So we are cognisant of the huge growth. Last year China grew about 30 per cent. This is off a

low base; it is not in the top three or four inbound flights. We are not really getting high yield; we are getting more the package tours. It is at the lower end of the market, but that is okay. We need volume.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: In view of our successful Olympics team in Athens, can you indicate what New South Wales has achieved as a result of the \$6 million it has provided to the New South Wales Institute of Sport? What value are we getting for it?

Ms SANDRA NORI: This is not just about the Olympics, if that is what you are saying. It is always very nice to bring home the medals. It takes a while for an institute to develop. It started in 1996. At the last Olympics, in Sydney, we established that if the athletes from the institute had performed as a nation we would have come fourteenth on the medal tally. In the period 1996 to 2000 there has been a big quantum leap. We did extremely well at the recent Olympics, the obvious ones being people such as Ian Thorpe, some of the Kookaburras and some of the cyclists. I refer also to the shooter Balogh.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: She is from Orange.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That does not mean that she does not get assistance from the Institute of Sport. We are not just creating Olympians. We are saying that we value sport and that we have these facilities and this high-level training. Up to a point you have to have volume to get a gold medal. There are probably a fair few people trying to get there. We can ensure that elite sports men and women have a real chance through the Institute of Sport.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, why was there a decrease of 15 per cent of international visitor nights spent in New South Wales since 2002, whilst Queensland has had an increase of 11 per cent and Victoria has had an increase of 5.4 per cent?

Ms SANDRA NORI: There are a number of reasons for that. Of course, you have to understand that New South Wales and Sydney are the gateway for international visitation. There is no doubt that international visitation has been difficult in the last couple of years. People the world over are only just beginning to travel again.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: I am referring to the difference. Why is Queensland doing better than New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Because it is less dependent on international visitors than is Sydney.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: I am talking about percentages. Why is Queensland doing better?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Fewer people are coming to Australia from international markets. Sydney will feel that a lot more than anyone else.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: I am talking about visitation numbers.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Do you consider someone getting off a plane to be a visitor?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Why are we not performing as well as Queensland? Is it because we have cut the tourism budget by 12.2 per cent in New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Let me just explain this issue to you. We have the largest market share, at 36 per cent. Compare that to Victoria on 24 per cent and Queensland on 22 per cent. In visitor nights we have 88.6 million, Queensland has 76.9 million and Victoria has 55.8 million. I can take you through holiday visitors and holiday visitor nights and all the different permutations. New South Wales has the lion's share of the industry.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Of course it has, but why has our share of the market fallen from just over 60 per cent to 56.4 per cent between 2001 and 2003?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Let me explain. Queensland has always had one advantage. It does not get as many visitors, but when people go there they tend to go there for two weeks. So Queensland gets the visitor nights because people tend not to go there for a short break. Queensland is not as dependent on international visitors and nor is Victoria. New South Wales is doing extremely well in what has been an extremely difficult environment globally for the last couple of years.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: I appreciate that. Are you not concerned then that our share of that international market is falling?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are always finding ways to increase visitation. For example, we launched a campaign in May. I am quite happy to take you through some of the statistics that show the increases that that delivered. I am about to launch a suite of advertisements for regional New South Wales, which will be screened on television. We have not had this sort of campaign before.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: They have already been on, have they not?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, not the suite of advertisements. You have seen advertisements for country New South Wales. You have seen what has been called advertisements for explorer country. That is what you have seen. It is only one of a suite of advertisements.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: So you are concerned then about the dropping share of international visitors, and that is why you are introducing these programs?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Of course I am concerned, as is every Minister for tourism around the globe, about SARS, two wars, Bali, the New York towers, terrorism and so on and the impact that that has had. Tragically, there is not a lot that one can do about that. One thing that Queensland has had—again, it is out of my control—is the benefit of Qantas taking people from Japan straight into Cairns. That is not a decision over which I have any control. We lost a lot of capacity. The other thing is the great blip to which Federal member Jackie Kelly referred. I forgot about it. With the collapse of Ansett we lost so much capacity—thousands of seats each week—out of Japan.

Qantas eventually went back in to replace some of that capacity, but it is not bringing people to Sydney, it is taking them to Cairns. A number of them make their way down the border, but you do not always pick them up because, as you know, there are no border controls. I would like to see the methodology and the statistics. This problem might not be solvable but my guess is that some of that would be due to the fact that people are counted in and out of Cairns quite easily through immigration and so on, but they are not counted as they arrive in New South Wales from that same landing in Cairns.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: In relation to domestic tourism, another area of concern in New South Wales is that interstate business to New South Wales has remained steady, whereas visitor nights have increased in Victoria by 5.8 per cent and in Queensland by a whopping 11 per cent. I understand that the Victorian and Queensland governments run some good local campaigns to encourage people to stay overnight, in particular in regional areas. This question has a regional focus. What are we doing about catching that grey nomad market, which is pretty famous? If you travel around regional areas you are forever stuck behind caravans driven by people travelling north. They go north and they go through New South Wales as quickly as they can. They are not staying the same number of nights here as they are staying elsewhere.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is quite true. No doubt Pepsi and Coca-Cola have the same argument: Market share switches at the margins. It depends who has been doing what in the market at any one time. As you watch the ebb and flow of those campaigns you will see that it switches. At the end of last year we actually stole market share out of Queensland and Victoria. If the figures that you are providing show that they have taken a bit of the market share back, that is part of the ebb and flow. However, I am confident about the campaign that we launched in May. We are about to go back on air in Brisbane and Melbourne, but that is more for Sydney and surrounds. But the suite of advertisements—which the member has not yet seen as I have launched only one—will be going to air over time in the next couple of months. I point out, however, that these ads for regional New South Wales are aimed specifically at extending the shoulder. So we are not going to promote visiting the outback in the middle of summer. When do the outback ads go to air?

Mr O'NEILL: The suite is rolling out over the next 12 months.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are rolling them out in time to extend the shoulder season. For example, the campaign for the Snowies is not about the winter season; it is about the summer season. When that suite of ads is rolled out I think you will find them interesting and that they will be effective in the marketplace.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Will they be shown in the Sydney marketplace and other capital city marketplaces?

Ms SANDRA NORI: They will be shown mostly in Sydney in the short term to try to get the Sydney market out there. You may not have heard the point that I made. We are going to this new campaign but until then we have had drive campaigns and different iterations of them.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Some of them were successful.

Ms SANDRA NORI: They have been successful. That is why at the end of last year we stole some market share from both Queensland and Victoria. Those figures are for the quarter ended 30 September last year. These things wax and wane a bit; it depends on consumer patterns and what else is going on in the market. The fact that international visitors are returning to Sydney—particularly in view of the rising Australian dollar—also means that more Australians will give vent to their pent-up desire for international travel. Tourism is not a static dynamic.

CHAIR: Have concerns been raised with the department about safety of clients and staff at the Berry Sport and Recreation Centre? If so, what is the result of those submissions?

Ms SANDRA NORI: They have not been raised with me, but I will let the Director-General answer.

Mr HEALEY: There has been a number of staffing issues at the Berry Sport and Recreation Centre that were investigated, as I mentioned earlier, in accordance with the normal practices. There have been management changes at that centre and as part of those changes we are investigating all our internal processes to ensure that staff are treated as they should be. Several staff from the centre are still involved in workers compensation matters and we are very keen to help those people return to the work force as soon as possible.

CHAIR: Is it true that the cable glide activity at the centre that is meant to be run with five trained staff is normally run with only two trained staff and three untrained staff, including teachers?

Mr HEALEY: I am not aware of the specifics of that. I would hope that any of our facilities, given that they are dealing with young people, operate in accordance with due practice. I will take that question on notice and investigate the matter. If there is a problem we will certainly make sure that any process complies with the normal obligations.

CHAIR: Has that activity been the subject of any internal investigation process?

Mr HEALEY: I will have to take that question on notice. The Berry issue has a broad range of aspects and several elements. I will have to look at the specifics.

CHAIR: Also at Berry, it is a fact that a student was injured by a maintenance officer—the student was run over by a maintenance officer on a quad bike—in April?

Mr HEALEY: I am not aware of that incident. We have reporting processes when students are injured and I have not been advised of that incident. I will certainly investigate whether the specific incident has been documented at the centre.

CHAIR: That goes to the issue of the reporting process at the centre. When looking into that matter could you also investigate whether the student received appropriate medical attention and whether the student's parents were informed?

Mr HEALEY: I have no evidence that our processes are not appropriate. However, as I have said, we will certainly investigate that case. Of course, appropriate responses depend very much on the view of individual people. We have a new manager at the centre and I have every confidence in his ability to apply our practices.

CHAIR: But there have clearly been problems at the centre in the past.

Mr HEALEY: Judging from your questions, I think you are well aware that there have been some issues. But, as I have said, the management is in place at the centre and our aim is to try to get everyone involved back into an appropriate work situation as quickly as possible.

CHAIR: Minister, a moment ago you referred to the ski season. Has the department been involved in discussions to try to get a regular airline service to Cooma airport, particularly during the winter season?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Probably; I certainly have. I have been talking to airlines—I am always trying to get airlines to extend their number of services, particularly for tourism purposes. John, have you had specific discussions?

Mr O'NEILL: We have certainly talked about it with different airline operators. The biggest issue is that Canberra is so nearby. It has great demand for flights and so it is a competitive situation. The commercial guys inform us that, unfortunately, the volume is not there.

CHAIR: Minister, does the department have any role in the marketing campaigns that are run for Taronga Zoo?

Ms SANDRA NORI: They may ask us for advice—I would not be surprised if they do—probably through Tourism Sydney. We certainly get them involved in our campaigns. So there is some crossover in the general sense. I am trying to get more and more instrumentalities, particularly State-run instrumentalities, to think about coming in on our campaigns to make sure that there is no duplication and so on. But, yes, we have a very good relationship with Taronga Zoo.

CHAIR: You talked earlier about the funding for some wheelchair programs. Is that funding only for sporting events or is some money provided for promotion, such as for the Wheelchair Down Under program?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We did fund Wheelchair Down Under, but I am not sure what—

CHAIR: In terms of promotion.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not sure what they use their money for. We did give them money.

Mr HEALEY: Our funding is part of a broad range of sponsorship that the Government provides. I am aware that the Motor Accidents Authority is a strong supporter of that program. But our funding is generally in relation to the conduct of a sporting event rather than broader promotion work. I have a supplementary answer to an earlier question. The bike incident was investigated in accordance with our normal practices.

CHAIR: Are you satisfied that the centre took proper action?

Mr HEALEY: I will take the question on notice and get back to you but I thought it was important to say that we have been advised that the incident was reported and investigated.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Returning to the issue we discussed earlier regarding the sexual harassment allegations in the Central Coast office in 2003, did the officer involved receive a termination payout or was she transferred?

Mr HEALEY: I am advised that that particular matter was subject to a complaint. The normal grievance procedures were followed and there was a settlement. The person involved was happy with the settlement. Like most of these settlements, it is subject to a confidentiality agreement.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Has she moved to another part of the department?

Mr HEALEY: No, that particular person is no longer in our employ.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: What about the alleged harasser?

Mr HEALEY: That person took redundancy as part of the recent restructure of the department. The particular matter was dealt with and all parties were happy as a result of the mediation process that was employed. The subsequent departure of that person was due to the restructure and unrelated to that particular matter.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: What costs has the department incurred in transferring or separating from Centennial Park and the Botanical Gardens Trust in terms of information technology administration and human resources? I understand that the areas were combined to save money but it will cost some money to separate from where you were.

Mr HEALEY: There is no formal separation of those two areas. You are referring to a situation where the corporate support arrangements for Tourism New South Wales, Centennial Park and the Botanical Gardens were provided by a joint body, known as VSA. That body has been amalgamated with the corporate support area of the Department of Sport and Recreation. That was one of the intentions of the amalgamation. The actual savings across the department are still being clarified because in addition to the rationalisation of corporate support we have had restructures on both the Tourism and Sport and Recreation sides. We have reduced the number of senior executive service positions across the department. We estimate at the moment that the corporate support amalgamation will lead to the abolition of three to five positions. But you must remember that when the Botanical Gardens is finally unbundled and goes off to the Department of Environment and Conservation only then will we have a clear picture. Currently the services provided by that body are still being provided to Centennial Park and to the Botanical Gardens and that will continue to occur.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, are you aware that Victoria has a Major Events Corporation, with a budget in excess of \$35 million? What is your budget now that the department comes under your portfolio?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is really hard to compare apples with oranges. There is no way to compare how we do it in New South Wales with Victoria. Do you want me to pursue that or to explain to you—

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: What is your budget?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It varies because it depends. They have a global budget, which is given once a year; we bid for an event and we get a one-off budget to deal with that event. So how long is a piece of string?

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: How much is a major event?

CHAIR: You must have the figure in your forward estimates; you do not pluck it out of the air.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, but if we become aware that, for example, they will not be able to hold the world women's soccer championships in China for some reason or other and they are looking for another city that could host that event, that is an extraneous event that comes up at the last moment. I am saying that in bidding for major events—outside the really obvious ones such as an Olympic Games, which has a set date; a Rugby World Cup, which has a set date; or a soccer world cup, which has a set date—it is often a matter of scanning for what is available. People come back to us with information—literally good intelligence—about an event, particularly a sporting event, that might be suitable. An entrepreneur might say, "Hey, I think I can get so-and-so to come out here." We

tend to deal with those on a one-off basis so there is no budget allocation in that sense that is comparable—I do not mean in terms of quantum but in terms of its role—with the Victorian model. It receives an allocation at the beginning and they work within it. We can sometimes go higher and sometimes lower.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Our time for questioning has expired. I would like to come back to this issue later.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Sure.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I want to return to the monitoring role of the Department of Women. It was monitoring a number of indices of women's progress in terms of how many women had got through the glass ceiling, which departments have affirmative action programs and so on. With the abolition of the department, will those databases be maintained? That seemed to be a major part of the department's job.

Ms COOMBS: Yes, they will be.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Will all those indices be produced?

Ms COOMBS: Yes. The department itself may have gone but the actual work and functions continue. So the audit of government agencies' progress against the Government's policy commitments continues and the database continues.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does the grants program continue?

Ms COOMBS: Yes, it does.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But the budget is reduced.

Ms COOMBS: No, it says 0.75 in the budget papers, indicating that it seems to be a reduction. When the budget papers were prepared we were not aware of the actual budget breakdown that the Office for Women would have. Through the savings we have made and the relocation down to Bligh House, which is closer to the Premier's Department, we have been able to re-establish the grants level back to the original level of last year.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are you saying that you are producing exactly the same database, exactly the same auditing of departments and exactly the same grants program with a smaller budget? It sounds like magic pudding stuff.

Ms COOMBS: Not necessarily; it depends upon the assumptions underlying that statement.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you have the same output for less money input?

Ms COOMBS: I am saying that we can still do the audit, and we are still doing the grants program, yes, but they do not need the total sum of money that was there.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Because you are saving on rent and an SES position, is that the bottom line?

Ms COOMBS: There are two SES positions which have gone, yes. There are no more SES positions in the Office for Women that are funded from the Office for Women budget?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But you are telling me that the output of the department in terms of the statistical audit parameters and the grants have not been reduced?

Ms COOMBS: That is right. We have maintained the level of funding for the grants program and we will be continuing the auditing function, yes. We have taken the database results over to Premier's Department.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Will those reports still be available to anyone who wants them at the same frequency?

Ms COOMBS: All audit plans and reports are currently on the web site. We will be continuing those. At this stage we are working out the time frame for the next audit, and that is not just because of the move of the department into an office space inside Premier's Department but it is part of a larger review of the amount of information and reports that agencies have to provide to central agencies. So that is still under way.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Speaking of audits, I am pleased to see you are still auditing the state of women, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is such an unfortunate turn of phrase, but anyway, you may proceed.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You are not doing research on children and their exercise levels but are you monitoring the results?

Mr HEALEY: You would be aware that the whole issue of obesity in young people is not the responsibility of one department. Certainly, our department is playing an active role in relation to the whole-of-government approach which resulted from the Obesity Summit. We are offering opportunities for young people to be more active more often. We have got a particular responsibility to look in the after-school care area and the after-school period and also in providing opportunities for sport and active recreation more broadly. But there has been a whole-of-government response to the Obesity Summit and, obviously, monitoring will be part of that process. Obviously, we will contribute to that monitoring but it is not the sole responsibility of the department.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Is it your responsibility to monitor the activity of kids in sport?

Mr HEALEY: We, through our relationships with sporting organisations—and we fund approximately 90 different sporting organisational sports—will be monitoring participation levels and tracking whether their numbers are up or down. But the other thing that has become quite apparent from the research is a lot of young people do not necessarily want to engage in formal sport. The Minister is on the public record as saying that she is a strong proponent of active recreation and activities where individuals are active doing a range of things, such as riding skate boards, that are not linked to formal sporting arrangements. We are looking at a broader picture. We also have, through the restructuring of the department, an active communities directorate which will start to work more closely with communities more broadly. We have groups aligned to local councils so that we can monitor the sorts of activities available and the impact of those activities on young people. But, as I said, our information will inform a broader evaluation of where people sit in relation to obesity but also we will benefit from that information and adjust and target our programs accordingly.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: But you are not in any way monitoring the kids? You are monitoring the activity levels in the various sports? Is that right?

Mr HEALEY: The kids and participant levels are one of the aspects that we are monitoring—and, invariably, they are young people. So we will be looking at numbers as part of our process, and we will be looking at the level of activity, and that will complement more broadly the analysis that is done right across the board, whether it be through the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] or the Department of Health.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I want to compliment the Director-General on his answer. No, we are not taking out the scales and the tape measures. To me, that is what monitoring means. We are not going to do the physical testing to see what their fitness levels are but we are going to use university research work with the Department of Health and all the things that I and Mr Healey have said to make sure that the trends are in the right direction, or to adjust whatever the trends are showing. But we are not going to go out and measure or weigh the kids

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: We have had this conversation twice already. I am not asking you to do the monitoring, I am asking you to audit what is going on.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, we are.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Can I get statistics from your department of the activity level of kids?

Ms SANDRA NORI: After a suitable length of time has passed so that we may have judged whether our programs are working. This is all about longevity.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: If you are looking at long-term you start with data and you follow that data in the long term. You do not come up with some data later.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Do you want to be an academic or something?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am partly an academic and that is why I have to be precise about it. I do not want political waffle, Minister! I want some facts.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We know that kids are not exercising enough.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are there any statistics on kids' activity patterns that your department has monitored? If so, can I get them?

Mr HEALEY: The department has a range of statistics available. Each program that we fund would have evaluation criteria—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So if you are not funding the program you will not have the statistics; is that the corollary of that answer?

Mr HEALEY: No, there is a range of areas that we would have information on in relation to the exercise patterns of people in New South Wales and Australia. A lot of this information is publicly available through the ABS in terms of what people do and in some cases it is quantitative and in some cases it is qualitative. The key issue is that you have a co-ordinated response so that you do not have a multitude of people trying to chase up the same information. The purpose of the Obesity Summit was to try to get a whole-of-government approach to address this important issue. We will play a part, as I said, and we will monitor certain things for which we are responsible. We will use the information that other parties have gathered to inform our programs.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you monitor the amount of exercise kids do in schoolyards? Schoolyards are being sold off or paved and the unstructured exercise that kids do may be quite important. Do you monitor that? Are there any facts on it?

Mr HEALEY: As part of a whole-of-government response to addressing the obesity issue, the Minister has already referred to the fact that the Minister for Education and Training has reintroduced mandatory sport activity in schools. I think that answers itself.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: I note a couple of times today you have mentioned Taronga Park Zoo, which we all understand is a very important draw for tourism. Given the Premier's recent comments with regard to the potential of a zoo being competitively opened in the Darling Harbour area, are you as Minister for Tourism concerned about the impact that might have?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Not in the slightest; in fact, I welcome it. It is fair to say that I arranged for Tourism NSW Tourism Sydney, through the executive director, to have discussions between the zoo and the proposed aquarium for joint marketing. To me it is about growing the pie. To me it is very simple. To me you would perhaps collaborate even with Bridgeclimb perhaps and have a single entry pass to both of them. Taronga Park Zoo tends to be a half day experience, maybe a three-quarter day experience, and that self-selects its own clientele up to a point. The Darling Harbour experience will be quite different, much shorter.

They have presented their plan to me. It is extremely exciting. It tends to be a two-hour or three-hour experience. It is incorporating all the latest developments in the exhibition of animals, fauna, globally. It is really going to be at a completely other level. I understand that they are having fruitful discussions between the zoo and the aquarium. The aquarium is used to going overseas to the trade fairs and selling, as part of packages to wholesalers in what become outbound nations for us—an inbound market—on a yearly basis so many entry tickets and so on as part of a bigger package.

The aquarium is actually going to help the zoo, particularly Dubbo, from memory, with getting greater international visitation out to Dubbo. I am really excited about it because any attraction that comes to this city that gives people an excuse or a reason to stay an extra couple of hours, particularly if that is in the afternoon, so they do not feel obliged to jump on the plane that night but stay one more night in a hotel, is great.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What is going to be markedly different about the zoo and the exposure of these animals in Darling Harbour as opposed to what one might see in one visit?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am quite happy for the aquarium people to give you a full briefing so that you will reach the same level of enthusiasm as I have, based on my understanding of the product. In short, this will be Australian fauna. It will not have lions, tigers, giraffes and all of them. So it is a qualitatively different experience. It will be confined only to Australian fauna whereas the zoo, as you know, takes us across the whole gamut of the natural world.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Would that not be one of the most dangerous competitive aspects? When people visit Sydney and Australia and go to the zoo, as it is now, they have a full expectation of seeing the vast range of Australian animals. In fact, international visitors are perhaps not necessarily going to the zoo to see lions and tigers but to see platypus, kangaroos and koalas being fed. Will all of those activities that are absolutely specific to Australia now occur in competition?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is not going to be a competition. I suggest to you if the two venues can work it out amongst each other then who are we to quibble? But I will put it to you, it is a commercial world out there. I suppose your point is that the Government has got an investment in Taronga? Well, the Government also has a huge investment in Darling Harbour where the proposed attachment to the aquarium will be located. It is not the job of government to go in and argue and arbitrate over two commercial ventures. But I have taken the step of bringing the two organisations together to work for the greater good of both, and the greater good of Sydney. I think that is a very good outcome.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: When the Department for Women was liquidated, what happened to Robyn Henderson?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Nothing, she was already gone.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: She went first, did she?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Who ran the department after her departure, in between?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I had Dr Elizabeth Coombs go in. In fact, Dr Elizabeth Coombs was in the department as an Acting Director-General while Ms. Henderson was on annual leave and then prior to the mini budget I made Dr Coombs a permanent Acting Director-General.

Ms COOMBS: Yes, I was acting.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Basically, Robyn Henderson went on leave, Dr Coombs took over and then Robyn Henderson did not at any stage come back?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is correct.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Did she go of her own volition?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, I had her removed.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: You sacked her?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: What were the pay-out implications?

Ms COOMBS: I am not aware of the sum that the former Director-General received underneath the tribunal.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Would you provide that?

Ms COOMBS: I will take that on notice. As the Director-General for Sport, Recreation and Tourism has pointed out, I am not aware of the precise confidentiality arrangements that might apply to that but if I will find out if I can.

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Minister, I am happy to take you up on your offer to be briefed on the different ways in which the animals will be displayed—if I can use that as an unfortunate term relating to live creatures.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: Will you take Arthur with you?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Arthur has a great love of animals, like myself, which is why he likes to come to these places. I would like to get some understanding of the different aspects that will complement rather than compete with each other.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: We hear lots of reports about Aboriginal girls becoming teenage mothers. What are you doing to try to keep these girls in schools?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are about to kick off on a new program that is kind of an evolution from the very successful Girl Savvy Program that we have been running so in order for you to understand about the new one called Sisters Speak that we are going to institute, I will have to tell you a little about Girl Savvy. Girl Savvy is a program that we have developed. We take it out into schools, usually the lasses are approximately 15 or 16 years of age, in that year 9, year 10 bracket. We get mentors from their local community to come in.

Through this whole day they are made to think about what sort of career they want, what sort of income that will give them, and what does independence mean. They are made work through a budget. Having decided what career they think they would like, they are shown the entry salary for that career, and then they are supposed to work out whether they will live at home or not. They invariably think that they are going to live away from home. Then, when the realities are brought home to them, they realise that their budget is not matched by their income.

This might sound very simple and sweet, but it is one of those rare teaching experiences that actually switches these young lasses on in a way that no amount of nagging from mum, dad, grandma or even teachers can do. It makes them realise that if the things they want require a few more dollars than they will earn from their current career aspirations, they will need to upgrade their aspirations. It is an interesting experience to see these lasses going through that process. That has been going well. We have been rolling that out and using it all over New South Wales, including in regional areas of the State.

We know that any disadvantage that women face in our society will be at least doubled for an Aboriginal woman, so we wanted a program that addresses the particular needs faced by young Aboriginal women and the difficulties they will face. We are taking it to these young Aboriginal women at a slightly younger age, at years seven and eight. We feel it is important to intervene earlier to develop self-confidence and a sense of self—giving the potential victim tools that might enable

them to avoid becoming a true victim and help them elevate themselves. Sister Speak will consist of a series of structured activities and games for Aboriginal girls with themes on the importance of having a job, having your own income, looking after yourself, and dealing with personal safety, and leadership. We think those are the things that might make a difference to a young Aboriginal lass's life.

We have given some money to *Streetwise* comics to develop the program, in close consultation with the Aboriginal Education Unit in the Department of Education and Training, the Office for Women and Aboriginal community organisations. *Streetwise*, in turn, will employ an Aboriginal educator to develop the workshop and the materials, focusing on Aboriginal girls who are still within the mainstream education system. That is our target. Those learning materials will be developed to reinforce the key messages of the Sister Speak workshop—a magazine, a board game, posters, CD-ROMs, fact sheets or information cards, and then we will pilot it. So we will develop the template, pilot it, and then we will roll it out. Hopefully, one day it will be something more de rigueur—for example, something the Department of Education and Training may incorporate in a more mainstream kind of way. This is one of those programs that will never make the headlines, will never make a government a hero, or conversely never bring a government undone, but I think it will change some individuals' lives, in the way that Girl Savvy has. I am really looking forward to seeing this one roll out.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: Minister, we are all aware of women having problems entering management positions. Would you please advise us what the Office of Women is doing to resolve this issue?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are doing a couple of things. There is one that I want to talk about particularly, because I invented it and am proud of it, and that is the Lucy Mentoring Program, named after a young lass at St Vincent's College. Two weeks before her Higher School Certificate I asked her, "What are you going to do?" Lucy said, "Oh, I'm going to be an executive." She took my breath away. I said, "When did you decide that?" She said, "Oh, I've always wanted to be an executive." I said, "That's good. I wish I had had your confidence at your age." She is off to Sydney University, doing commerce-like subjects. The aim of the program is to put young women who are studying finance, management, business degrees, commerce degrees or law degrees in a mentor situation where they are highly placed in either the public sector or the private sector.

A couple of weeks ago I began approaching big-end-of-town men for their interest in this program. I am pleased to say, whilst I am not ready to make the announcement, that I have some significant and high-profile men who will also join this program. They will have a specific one-semester program involving an initial meeting where they scope out what the mentor is willing to offer. It is a process of bringing these young women into that mentor's workplace for about a two-week period as part of a three-month or four-month program, and there will be some follow-up lectures and so on. What I want these young women to know is that they have got someone they can ring up to help them establish a relationship. It might be something quite simple, such as "What subject should I do in my next year?" Hopefully, this will create a pool of young women who have come to the attention of significant corporate entities in this town. Hopefully, when they finish their degrees these people will be on the look-out for them and, if they meet the criteria and so on, to help them in ways that the informal boys network has helped the boys for a thousand years or more.

I am hoping to create literally an alternative network through this mentor program. Through that I hope we will see over time more and more women rising to CEO positions, and more women who, when they cease to be CEOs, may then be put onto private sector boards—because the truth is that while the Government has improved the representation of women on the boards it controls and to which it can nominate positions, the private sector is going backwards. The next couple of years, I am reliably informed, will see the retirement of a significant number of the current generation of private sector board members. I presume that this goes in waves. So I want to see the young women of this city particularly and women generally feeling that gap, effecting a quantum change. That is one thing.

The Hon. HENRY TSANG: Minister, the Australian Order Foundation has a very similar program. Perhaps your department might be interested in going into partnership with the Australian Order Foundation.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Perhaps. We are also working with the leading women entrepreneurs of the world. We have asked them to provide us with a couple of scholarships for Lucy participants. We are talking about extremely high-profile women who, in the global context, run enormous companies, to see if we cannot get internships within those global organisations for some of our Lucy participants. We are very happy to link up with them.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Minister, does your department still have funds available for programs where you have partnerships with the PCYCs that target youths and are aimed at preventing antisocial behaviour such as juvenile delinquency and juvenile crime?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We have a specific program called the Youth in Sport program, where we particularly work with the PCYC and community youth clubs targeting kids at risk. The activities are primarily based with the PCYCs, and the program receives support not just from our department but from other government agencies as well. A range of successful projects have gone through under the banner of Youth in Sport. They include targeting young people under the Active Communities Grants Scheme. There is an initiative aimed at young people from Arabic-speaking backgrounds, for example. There is another program that we have put about \$40,000 towards called the Statewide breakdancing program and competition. I would probably have preferred it to be ballroom—but, then again, that is my gig! That was conducted across a number of PCYCs throughout the State in 2002-03. It included training for 19 breakdancing instructors. Following that, we have a series of breakdancing workshops and displays at ten PCYCs during Youth Week in 2004.

The department has also implemented a number of initiatives, such as leadership programs, to develop young people's skills in sporting functions, like coaching, refereeing, and first-aid. About 30,000 young people have been through our Youth in Sport program. We have had really good feedback about the program. In 2004-05 we have allocated \$300,000 for that program. Also, in 2004-05, still within the Youth in Sport program, a pool of \$10,000 has been made available for individual case management, as a pilot scheme to target identified priority one youth who have been referred to a PCYC. They are individually case managed.

I am also working with the Duke of Edinburgh award, for which I hold the licence in this State. We are looking at ways of getting more and more kids at risk—indeed, even young adults within normal correctional facilities, because the final version of the Duke of Edinburgh award is for those in their earlier twenties—involved in doing the Duke of Edinburgh award. I would really like to see the Duke of Edinburgh award even more widespread than it is amongst the general community. I have had discussions with the head of the Duke of Edinburgh award about this, and they are very pleased to help us along that way. Funnily enough, a disadvantaged kid can get more out of it, because it means a lot to have on their CV that they have done a Duke of Edinburgh award; it has great prestige.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Government members do not have any more questions, Madam Chair.

CHAIR: Then I will allow a one-minute question for the other three members, and then we must adjourn, because this room must be cleared for the next Committee at 2 o'clock.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: We would not have anywhere near enough time to ask the questions that we want to ask.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Well, put them on notice.

The Hon. MELINDA PAVEY: Minister, could I seek clarification? If Peter Nolan could have won his appeal, why did he drop the appeal and sign a deed of release?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have never met the man, as far as I know, or spoken to him. I certainly have not spoken to him on this issue. I would ask the director-general to answer that.

Mr HEALEY: Firstly, the arrangements in relation to that matter were subject to normal industrial negotiations. One of the things that normally involved with a settlement is a confidentiality clause. So, at the end of the day, you would have to ask Mr Nolan that question—as you would any

person who negotiates a settlement in the industrial arena, which I can tell you from my previous background is the majority of cases. Most people seek to settle, rather than to have arbitrated arrangements. As for the exact terms, they are subject to confidentiality agreements.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you monitor language skills in the programs that you sell overseas? Do you have any program to see how many speakers of varying languages there are in the tourism programs you are selling overseas?

Ms SANDRA NORI: You are asking about tourism?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Do you monitor the number of language skills in the people with the packages that you are selling overseas?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not sure I understand.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Chinese people might like to have a guide who speaks Chinese.

Ms SANDRA NORI: You want to know, when we use New South Wales taxpayers' dollars and buy space in a Chinese language newspaper in mainland China or in Hong Kong, whether the advertisement is in Chinese. Is that what you would like to know?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: No. I would like to know if the guide on the bus, when they get here, speaks Chinese, and if you know how many guides have these language skills.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I think that is a question for the Minister for Fair Trading. That is not within my jurisdiction. I do not have—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: So you do not monitor it?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We have a Minister for Fair Trading whose job it is to licence it, and occupations and certain activities. I do not licence anyone for anything.

CHAIR: I think we have the answer.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You do not have to.

CHAIR: It is a quality issue. I think you have the answer you are seeking.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes I do. You have not got a clue. I understand.

CHAIR: I will have to ask the Hon. David Oldfield if he has a final question.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Wait a minute. I am not going to let you get away with that on the record. This is just an insanity, David, because you do not understand—

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: No, he is Arthur.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am Arthur.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Arthur, yes, right.

CHAIR: Order! We want to wrap this up.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, let me finish.

CHAIR: Order! We want to wrap this up.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Point of order.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are not in a position—

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Can I please raise a point of order?

CHAIR: Yes.

Ms SANDRA NORI: —within our jurisdiction, nor do we have the resources, nor is it within our Act to even do that.

CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Excuse me, Minister.

CHAIR: We have a point of order being taken.

Ms SANDRA NORI: There are other Ministers whose job that is.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: My point of order is that the Hon. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans should withdraw his comments to the Minister—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Exactly.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: —that she does not have a clue because I think that is an inappropriate comment to make during the estimates process.

CHAIR: Do you wish to withdraw that?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: No, I do not because the Minister did not even understand what she was being asked.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: It is not her portfolio.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is not my fault.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: None of us did.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not the only one who could not understand what he was trying to get.

CHAIR: Minister, are you taking offence at that remark?

Ms SANDRA NORI: How can anyone take offence at Arthur?

CHAIR: Okay, then there is no need—

Ms SANDRA NORI: However, I will—

CHAIR: The member does not withdraw it. Thank you.

Ms SANDRA NORI: However, I need to make the point that I was not the only one who did not understand what Arthur was getting at. You can note that on the record.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: None of us understood it.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: No, I did not understand it either.

CHAIR: David Oldfield, do you have a final question?

The Hon. DAVID OLDFIELD: Just one question. Can you tell me what is your position in relation to the seasons cricket test and one-day matches being played at the Sydney Cricket Ground or Telstra Stadium? Have you had any actions that you have undertaken where this debate is concerned?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Obviously not. There is a tender process. It would be highly inappropriate for me to be involved at all.

The Hon. EDDIE OBEID: Give that back to Brogden's adviser. He sold you a dummy, David. They have done it before.

CHAIR: I now declare the meeting closed. I would like to thank the Minister and departmental officers. I do not believe there were any tabled documents during the proceedings.

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.

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