

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No. 2

Friday 23 September 2005

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas

TOURISM, SPORT AND RECREATION, WOMEN

The Committee met at 2.00 p.m.

MEMBERS

The Hon. P. Forsythe (Chair)

The Hon. Dr A. Chesterfield-Evans
The Hon. C. E. Cusack
The Hon. G. J. Donnelly

The Hon. A. R. Fazio
The Hon. K. F. Griffin
Ms L. Rhiannon

PRESENT

The Hon. S. C. Nori, *Minister for Tourism and Sport and Recreation, Minister for Women, and Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development*

Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation

Mr R. L. Adby, *Director General*

Tourism New South Wales

Mr J. O'Neill, *Executive Director and General Manager*

Office for Women

Ms S. Boyd, *Acting Director*

Sydney Olympic Park Authority

Mr B. Newman, *Chief Executive Officer*

Mr N. Hubble, *Executive Director, Finance and Commerce*

CHAIR: I welcome everyone to this public hearing of General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2, and I thank the Minister and departmental officers for attending today. At this meeting the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of the Tourist, Sport and Recreation, and Women. Before questions commence some procedural matters need to be dealt with. In relation to the broadcasting of proceedings I point out that in accordance with the Legislative Council's guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings, which is available from the Chamber support officers and clerks, only Committee members and witnesses may be filmed or recorded. People in the public gallery should not be the primary focus of any filming or photographs. Those who report the proceedings of this Committee must take responsibility for what they publish or what interpretation is placed on anything that is said before the Committee.

In relation to the delivery of messages, there is no provisions for members to refer directly to their own staff while at the table. Members and their staff are therefore advised that any messages should be delivered through the Chamber support officers on duty or the Committee clerks. I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. Minister, do you wish to make a brief opening statement?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, I do. I have a number of documents that relate mainly to questions that have been asked in the House on notice that I will table to obviate the need to ask questions about it.

CHAIR: You may table them but I do not think that prevents anybody asking a question about them.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, but it would stop wasting time if the question has already been answered.

CHAIR: Although only one copy of the material does not make it easy. As I understood it, multiple copies any material that is tabled should be provided. But I am sure we will be able to deal with that if we need to.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I thank all the staff from the various departments and my own office for their work and for being here this afternoon. I cannot help but reiterate and put on the record that whilst I understand that questions might lead to some crossover between portfolios, particularly between Sydney Olympic Park Authority and Tourism and Sport, as a general rule I think it is inefficient to expect all public servants of departments—particularly with regard to the Office for Women, in relation to which there could be no possible crossover between portfolios—to attend for the duration of the hearing.

For the benefit of David Oldfield, who last year asked me a question about the bed tax, it has been abolished. Also for that member's benefit, we have not found the boat at Sydney Town. They are questions I am asked every year and I need to point out that nothing has changed. I have got reference to a matter raised by the Hon. Catherine Cusack in the Legislative Council last week when she implied that I had somehow set the date of the Ministerial Council for my convenience, and therefore I could not attend the estimates committee. The Committee and the Hon. Catherine Cusack ought to understand that dates for Ministerial Council meetings are established by the Commonwealth, as this was under the previous Chair—I was the incoming Chair. In consultation with the States date was found that was mutually convenient for all the States and the Commonwealth. So I had nothing to do with it, except to indicate that at that stage when I was asked—long before the dates of the estimates committees were announced—that I was available.

At one point I even I thought I might be able to get out of the Ministerial Council for Women to make it here at 2.00 p.m. but it became apparent that I could not. I really resent the imputation—the stupidity, frankly—and the quite unnecessary viciousness in the motion moved by the Hon. Catherine Cusack in the upper House.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can I respond to that?

CHAIR: I was going to ask a question, but you may proceed.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I have a copy of your communication with the Commonwealth in which you indicated that that was going to be the date for the Ministerial Council meeting.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We indicated my availability. It could have been changed at any time if all the other States had said that they could not turn up on that date. The honourable member must understand that Ministerial Council meetings have to come first, particularly if you are the Chair.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Minister, you just indicated to this Committee that you were the one that made yourself available for that meeting and now you concede that you were the one who initiated that date. I believe it was some six months ago.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Correct, and by the very wording of your motion, when were the dates for these estimates Committees circulated? Two months ago? So the date for the Ministerial Council meeting was established long before the estimates.

CHAIR: When did your office become aware that you had a clash of dates?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not sure. You would have to ask them.

CHAIR: When did you become aware?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I cannot remember. But you change the dates. The dates for estimates committees are changed a million times—you know that. At one point did you not have me and another Minister being examined at the same time by the same Committee? In other words, you had to change it yourselves, as I understand it.

CHAIR: No, the dates are set by the Government. The Committee was surprised that it was only given two days' notice.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: At the International Women's Day reception this year you may be aware a request was made by a number of male Coalition members to attend with recipients that they had nominated for awards that were being conferred by Premier Carr. I do not wish, in the time available to recap that issue. However, a phone call was made to John Brogden's office on behalf of the Government by Liz Coombs. Why was Liz Coombs the person who made that phone call?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not sure what you are referring to?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am referring to the Government not allowing male parliamentarians to attend that reception.

Ms SANDRA NORI: But males did attend, and male Coalition members attended.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: John Brogden was told that he was not permitted to attend.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I know nothing about it.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Does it surprise you that Dr Elizabeth Coombs was in communication with the Opposition about that matter?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will take that question on notice. I am not prepared to believe anything you say, just on your say so.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: On the Office for Women flow chart Dr Elizabeth Coombs is listed as the Assistant Director General with responsibility for the Office for Women and the Performance Development Division of the Premier's Department. Is she the senior female bureaucrat in New South Wales who has responsibility for Women?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That depends because she has now been seconded across to another area. I will let Sharon Boyd answer that question.

Ms BOYD: The answer is yes, she is the senior bureaucrat on the Premier's Department Executive.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Who is acting in her position while she is temporarily redeployed as head of the Department of Juvenile Justice?

Ms BOYD: The Acting Assistant Director General, Performance Development Division of the Office for Women, Mr Peter Connolly. He is the Executive Director of the Performance Development Division.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is this the first time a male has been appointed to that role or to head women's issues?

Ms BOYD: Possibly.

Ms SANDRA NORI: You need to understand that we deal with Sharon Boyd.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: My understanding was that the Government wanted to reassure women that at the most senior level—the Assistant Director General level—women's issues were being represented to the Government.

Ms SANDRA NORI: They are.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: To my knowledge that is the first time in Australia that a male has been appointed to undertake such a role.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Possibly, but on a day-to-day basis it is Sharon Boyd, who is a very dedicated public servant and understands the needs and policy imperatives of the Government on women's issues.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: How long do you expect this situation to continue?

Ms SANDRA NORI: You would have to ask the Premier's Department.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You are the Minister responsible for women.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not have a problem with it continuing because I am very happy with the performance of Ms Sharon Boyd. On a day-to-day basis, to all intents and purposes, she has the responsibilities.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is not a reflection on Ms Sharon Boyd?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Well, what is it a reflection on?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: On the advocacy for women at the Assistant Director General level in the department.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Is this an estimates committee, or what?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am asking about the structure of your organisation.

Ms SANDRA NORI: All right.

CHAIR: It is perfectly in order.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It might be in order but it is hardly a rational or useful use of time.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Are you aware that sexual harassment in the workplace is a serious issue?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Are you aware of how prominent it is in Australian workplaces and of research that shows how significant the issue is?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It can be significant, yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You cannot think how many people experience sexual harassment in the workplace?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Not off the top of my head. I do not have those statistics, but I will happily take it on notice and provide you with the information, because you do not know.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has conducted research that shows 41 per cent of all women and 14 per cent of all men have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. Are you sponsoring any policies to address that issue in New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The Government has a whole raft of programs that deal with sexual and other harassment, workplace harassment. We are happy to get you information on that.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Are you as Minister personally promoting that as an issue within the Government?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I promote all issues that concern women.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: What aspects of that issue have you been promoting?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It would take too long to tell you. I will take it on notice and give you a detailed reply.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you have procedures in your office to deal with the problem of sexual harassment in the workplace?

Ms SANDRA NORI: My understanding is that all offices have that.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can you explain those procedures to the committee?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not understand what this has to do with estimates.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It has to do with women's issues, policy issues and the Government's commitment to that policy.

Ms SANDRA NORI: You must understand that ministerial staff are hired and their employer is the director general of the Premier's Department. I am not technically their employer.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Who has responsibility for your workplace?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Ultimately the Premier's Department.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: What is the grievance procedure for women in your workplace?

Ms SANDRA NORI: They are as set out by the Premier's Department. I am happy to provide you with those procedures on notice.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am asking if you can articulate those procedures.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am going to save the time of the committee and present them to you by taking the question on notice.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you know what those procedures are?

Ms SANDRA NORI: What is the point?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am trying to establish whether you know what the procedures are in relation to sexual harassment.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will tell you one procedure. Somebody has to tell someone that they feel they are being sexually harassed, if that is what they think is happening to them. The first thing that has to happen is that someone has to make a complaint or comment.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Are you aware of research by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, commissioned by Pru Goward, which showed that 68 per cent of the targets of workplace harassment did not formally complain, often because they believed there would be no management support?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Does that concern you?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is a shame.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: What sort of management support would someone in your office receive?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That to which they would be entitled.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: As I understand it from the media, a sexual harassment claim has been made in relation to your office. According to the *Australian Financial Review*, your media adviser's employment was terminated and another member of your staff has subsequently left. Was that a sexual harassment claim and how was it managed?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Let me read you a statement. A former member of my office made allegations of inappropriate behaviour in respect of a former chief of staff. The matter was referred to the Premier's Department on the day that I was informed of the allegations. The Director General of the Premier's Department is the employer of ministerial office staff. The director general instigated an independent investigation of the allegations by an external consultant. The result of the investigation was that the claim was found to be without foundation.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Was that before or after the media secretary's employment was terminated?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Whose?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The media adviser.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Was it before or after?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Did you become aware of the complaint before or after her employment was terminated?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, the complaint from the former staff member came some time after she had left the office.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: So the procedure in your office appears to be to refer such matters to the Premier's Department.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, it is the employer.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Were you concerned that the complaint was not made prior to her termination?

Ms SANDRA NORI: What are you asking me?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am asking if your office has an environment in which someone who has a complaint they wish to make feels able to make it.

Ms SANDRA NORI: The matter of making the allegation was very much up to the individual staff member. Their choice of timing was their affair.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Can you understand why sexual harassment in the workplace is such a problem with attitudes like that?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Do not lecture me on sexual harassment. I have been involved in the women's movement for a very long time. All my life I have taken up a whole range of issues that you would not even know about.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Minister, you say that an independent consultant was appointed.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That was a decision for the Premier's Department.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The media's report is that it was—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Of course it must be right.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am asking you a question.

Ms SANDRA NORI: What is the question?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: That it was Helen Bauer from the Premier's Department who undertook the inquiry. Is that correct?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Has the report been submitted to you?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is it possible for the Committee to have a copy of that report?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Apparently not, but you will have to ask the Premier's Department. It is not my gift.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: So there is no process in your office for managing these complaints.

Ms SANDRA NORI: What do you mean by "there is no process"?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Every workplace must have a grievance procedure and a management process.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, and there is one and it is set out by the Premier's Department. I would have thought the first step would be for a person who had a complaint to at least discuss it with another staff member or perhaps come to me. There is a range of options.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I understand that the complaint was made against the Chief of Staff.

Ms SANDRA NORI: The then Chief of Staff, that is correct.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Did he resign from his position prior to the finalisation of this investigation?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I cannot recall. I do not have the dates. I will take that question on notice. But you need to know that he had made a decision to leave my office and had, in fact, been offered a contract of employment with his current employer a couple of weeks before the complaint from the other staff member came in.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: In the past—under a previous government—a high-profile complaint of sexual harassment was investigated by the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have received a letter from the Anti-Discrimination Board, as, I understand, has the Premier's Department. As I have stated, there has been a full investigation. The claims were found not to be without foundation and the Premier's Department will respond accordingly. If you are asking me whether the Anti-Discrimination Board has been involved, it seems that the staff member who made the allegation is taking it there.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: So the matter is ongoing.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Clearly it is in her mind. If you are asking me whether there will be an Anti-Discrimination Board examination of this matter, there may well be. I guess that will be up to the board.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The former Department of Women was a standalone agency with a \$6 million budget and a staff of 48. The new Office for Women has a budget this year of \$2.3 million and a staff of 14. Can you please advise the Committee of the programs that have been deleted that were formerly undertaken by the Government and the programs that are not available?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will let Ms Boyd answer part of that question.

Ms BOYD: The office's primary function is to provide policy and program advice and support to a range of government agencies in addition to providing ministerial and parliamentary support as well as the liaison with stakeholder groups that the former department always provided. In terms of your question about what has gone from the responsibility of the department to elsewhere, those particular programs would be services such as the Women's Information and Referral Service. Separate arrangements have been made. That service is continuing. In fact, advice is that that service is working very well indeed. The intention there was to provide a very professional standard of service and advice to women by involving more closely those specialist services that can be provided through Law Access, Family Planning, Health and some of the other information services that are available. That is one of them.

There is a range of other programs but I will have to take that question on notice and get the detail of the specifics of those programs. I am acting temporarily in this position and was not with the former department, so I am not across the minutiae of those programs. But I think it is probably fair to say that, while some of those other programs ran their course and were either picked up by other line agencies or came to a natural end, we have other programs in place now under the new office arrangements.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: One of those programs was the Women's Grants Program, which has been cut from \$1.25 million to \$150,000. In relation to the 2004-05 grants program, did you seek expressions of interest for that funding through advertising, as has been done in the past?

Ms BOYD: Could you please repeat the years that you are interested in? Are you talking about this year or last year?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am sorry; I should be referring to this year. The 2005 program is now \$150,000. Are you advertising for expressions of interest in that program?

Ms BOYD: No.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: How are you ensuring awareness of that grants program and encouraging quality applications for it?

Ms BOYD: There is some advice on the web site about that and we are advising callers to the office of the changed circumstances.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: What are the criteria for allocating funds from that program?

Ms BOYD: As to the funding we have got, \$100,000 was allocated for the Working Women's Centre. When the centre closed we had to make a decision about what we would do with that money. The additional \$50,000 was for International Women's Day grants. There will be an advertisement for that because those grants go to local councils. That was done this year and it was a very successful program. A number of councils were able to access funding. I think about 52 councils benefited from that program, and we will be doing that again this year.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It sounds as though that grants program is now closed to non-government organisations, which cannot apply in the ordinary way—the way they did in the past.

Ms BOYD: No, that is not right.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: How much of it will be available?

Ms BOYD: At the moment the \$100,000 from the Working Women's Centre is the money that organisations will be able to apply for.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: When do applications for that funding close?

Ms BOYD: It is not a start-finish process. We have had a number of submissions from organisations that were involved with the Working Women's Centre agenda. Discussions will be held and a decision will be made by the Minister.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: For example, there is a community group in the Tweed that had a grant from the previous \$1.25 million program to run a video project for women. It was an outstanding project. Would they be eligible to apply for funding out of this \$100,000?

Ms BOYD: One of the things we are trying to do with applications from community organisations is help them to access other grants programs that are still run by other government agencies. If you are familiar with the *communitybuilders.nsw* web site you will see that there is quite a strong focus on that web site now on encouraging organisations to access that. We are doing quite a lot of work with those sorts of organisations.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am familiar with that. I am trying to understand how far \$100,000 can go in a statewide program to fund innovative projects for women's groups.

Ms BOYD: It will not go very far at all.

Ms SANDRA NORI: On that point, there is no doubt that the budget for the Office for Women is less than it was a couple of years ago. However, compared with the position as outlined in the mini-budget, we have actually had a 104 per cent increase because we managed to convince Treasury to give us more money. So our position has improved from the mini-budget. But let me

explain to you the reason that the budget has been reduced. The budget has been reduced for good, cogent and tragic reasons. Unless and until New South Wales gets its fair share of GST revenue funds only front-line services will have a priority. The tragic victims will be agencies that are not in the same sphere as Health, Education, Transport, and so on. That was made abundantly clear by the Treasurer at the time of the mini-budget and abundantly clear by the Premier on many occasions since. That is the reason a number of budgets were impacted upon during the mini-budget process. There is no doubt that the Office for Women was one of them.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Some years ago the department kindly showed me the databases that you were keeping on key performance indicators. How have the key performance indicators of progress for women gone in terms of their equality with men?

Ms BOYD: I would have to take that on notice to give you a detailed response. I do not have the detail of that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You are monitoring the departments' compliance with policies and the statistics on how many women they had at certain levels, is that right?

Ms BOYD: The former department was keeping some of those statistics, I understand. I have been in this position only since April this year. There have been some problems with trying to keep that information accurate because there have been a number of changes to government agencies. Were there some particular areas you wanted to focus on?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: One of the points made at the time was that the department monitored what other departments did and advocated for women in that context, and had the top pops of which department was doing well and which department was doing badly as some incentive. I understood that the statistics would be kept to tickle people along. Is that still the case or has statistical collection—

Ms SANDRA NORI: But on what basis are you judging the department? Do you mean the number of women it promoted to senior positions or the number of people in the department overall? I am not sure what you mean. Perhaps you could be more specific.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: My understanding is that those things were being measured to see whether women were being promoted. Is that not right?

Ms BOYD: Those sorts of statistics are kept more broadly by the Public Employment Office not by the Office for Women per se, but we access—

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am not sure who collected them, but, obviously, they were important indices in terms of whether what you were doing actually works. It is an output rather than an input, which is a nice change in a sense. Those statistics are not collected now, is that the bottom line?

Ms BOYD: There are statistics collected in the Public Employment Office on women and their employment. There are statistics. As to the actual program, we give information on program successes and within that there would be statistics about improving education outcomes for young women and that type of information.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Could you give me a summary of where women are up to compared to men in the public service and in industry generally in New South Wales?

Ms BOYD: Perhaps the best area of improvement has been the appointment of women to government boards. There has been an increase in that area. I cannot give you the exact statistics off the top of my head, but I do know that we have that figure in the office. The short answer is that women still have a fair way to go, and that is something that we are working on particularly through some of our programs such as Girl Savvy and the Lucy Mentoring Program, where we have quite a strong focus on working with young women at every level—finances, literacy, education retention,

employment and career planning. That is a major focus of the office and something the Minister has been very strong on. We are just starting to do some similar work along those lines, particularly targeting indigenous young women in that high school to career range. If you are looking for an indication of what sort of indicators we are using from a variety of inputs as to where we need to focus our efforts, the short answer probably would be in that mentoring, career, planning, financial independence area.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I can understand that areas in which you are doing advocacy work or affirmative action work might be selected by what is likely to work, or what the problems are in the areas, or what areas are particularly disadvantaged. I am interested in what indices you have of progress within society; what you can give in data terms and what changes there have been over time. Do you have that sort of data available?

Ms BOYD: What I could provide for you on notice are statistics about professions, for example, the number of women going into law, the number of women being appointed to the bench and different professional areas. I cannot give you that off the top of my head, but we do not hold or manage that process within the office; we would tend to access that from other areas. There is a range of organisations at both Federal and State levels collecting that sort of data. We would tend to do it for a purpose rather than just keep vast amounts of data. It is such a time-consuming exercise and resource intensive, and we have only 14 staff in the office.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I understood that collecting that data was a major focus of the department so that it could monitor that progress. Is that no longer the case?

Ms BOYD: I could not comment on what the former department did. It did have 48 people and we have only 14.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Does it make any difference whether they are workplace agreements or union agreements, the new AWAs or enterprise business agreements [EBA] as they are called? Do they make any difference to the status of women?

Ms BOYD: That is something that the Women's Equity Bureau in the Office of Industrial Relations is very well across. We are starting to work with them closely on that to look at what sort of information is emerging in that area.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: I was trying to cross-reference the budget for the Office for Women under the Premier's Department, and you have direct oversight and responsibility for that on a day-to-day basis, is that correct?

Ms SANDRA NORI: In a ministerial sense, yes.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: I noticed the department is spending \$2.3 million on the Office for Women. What is the Office for Women doing that could not be covered adequately in the Ministry for Women?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not quite sure what you are getting at. There is no department. There is an Office for Women, which has a Minister. It is the same thing.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Thank you. I have difficulty reading how these funds are being expended. I cannot believe that the Office for Women has expenditure of \$2.3 million only. Is that correct?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes. I refer you to my previous answer to Catherine Cusack.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: I noted the decrease in the number of full-time employees from 48 to 14. Is that representative of the Government's attitude to women employed in the community?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, it is not. As I said a couple of moments ago, it is a direct consequence of New South Wales constantly, one way or another, either being cost shifted back by

the Commonwealth or gouging our budget. Money does not grow on trees and pigs do not fly. The Government really had no option but to rearrange its budget priorities to make sure that we could deliver front-line services and keep those departments that are responsible for front-line services, such as Health, Police, Education and so on well funded, particularly in light of quite significant increases in public service salaries.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Did you protest against the downgrading of women?

Ms SANDRA NORI: What you mean by "downgrading"? The budget, or are you referring—

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Everyone else is getting funding but not the Office for Women.

Ms SANDRA NORI: A lot of budgets were changed as a result of the mini-budget, for the same logic that I have just outlined. If you ever become a Minister—and it is true of anyone—no Minister ever wants to—

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: I have been a minister of religion for 49 years.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Correct. Well done!

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: I have no ambition to be a Minister in the Government.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Point taken. Ministers are always arguing their case. Ministers always have a chance to present to the budget committee, and the budget committee process. There is no Minister on this planet who does not always prosecute the case for their own budget at its highest.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Which goes to say that your department—

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is not a department any more. It is an office.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: If your office, then, was only funded at a rate of \$2.3 million, your argument with the other Ministers was obviously not very successful.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We actually got a 104 per cent increase over the mini-budget position, which I think was a pretty good outcome given the tight budgetary situation.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Your mini-budget was approximately \$1 million for the Office of Women.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I can get you the exact figure. It was about \$1 million, yes.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Is that an example of this Government's attitude to the significance of women?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, not at all. This Government has a long and proud history of supporting women. It was in fact a Labor Government that introduced the Anti-Discrimination Board and a lot of anti-discrimination reforms that have been very, very useful and important to women. In fact, it has been Labor governments that have done that—

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Can you point to something in the last year?

Ms SANDRA NORI: —but that budgetary cut was very much in response to Canberra.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Is there any significant achievement in the Office of Women in the last year?

Ms SANDRA NORI: There are several. I am happy to take you through them.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Please do.

Ms SANDRA NORI: My favourite one is the Lucy mentoring program which is now going from strength to strength and is getting quite a profile within the business community and within the universities. We started it only last year. We match up young women who, in a broader sense, are doing management degrees.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Yes, I am aware of the program. But you are managing that all on a very small amount of money.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, we are doing extremely well because it is one of those things that has a great outcome and it is not hugely expensive to run. Let me just tell you about one of the really exciting things that we have done with that. After the first round of success, we are finding that more and more universities are actually asking us can they be part of it. TAFE is asking us. We have even had people who are involved in, how should I put it, culinary tourism saying that we should do a similar program to match young female chefs up to high profile chefs, so we are looking at different iterations of the program. But as early as this year I decided to take a fairly bold step and introduce male mentors. We got the likes of Gerry Harvey, Marcus Blackmore, Jack Cowan, Andrew Kaldor, Aussie's John Symond, and I think there were some others but I cannot rattle them off the top of my head.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: All free?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Free. The young women do a six months program with them but, most importantly, at the end of their degree they will have a relationship with a person in the business world or highly placed in the public sector who can act, if they feel these young women are meritorious, as their mentor, their guide, and perhaps introduce them to job opportunities and perhaps act as a referee. That is how we have created it. The reason I am so excited about this program is that I think it has the capacity, once it is a little more established, to perhaps be sold on or given to another organisation to run. Once it is well and truly templated and piloted, it can go on and grow in that way, leaving us the opportunity to reinvent and innovate another program and introduce that to the world.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: Minister, would you be aware that there would be at least 20 charities in Sydney that spend more money on women than your government office?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Well, that is good. The Government recognises the importance of the non-government sector in providing support to women or children in all sorts of ways. Indeed, that is reflected in the fact that governments often provide funding. In fact, you know as well as I do that that is one of our projects; in fact, it was with Mission Australia, at Boggabilla. We have discussed it at previous estimates committees. But I need to point out that you need to delineate between the service delivery/case management side of things and a program, or more general programs, that are designed to, in one way or another, create more opportunity for women, create an environment in which the value of women is truly appreciated. For example, a lot of the stuff that a church or a charitable organisation would do is much more on the case management side. The Office for Women has never been a case manager in that sense. We are looking at the bigger picture.

Reverend the Hon. Dr GORDON MOYES: What I was just trying to achieve was to indicate the scale of 14 staff members in an Office for Women whose salaries would take up most of the total budget allocation for the Office for Women.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We do extremely well on what is not a huge budget. We punch well above our weight. We are delivering some really interesting programs and I am happy to discuss another couple which I think you will find extremely innovative. I think a small office can do this more effectively than a larger agency, and I genuinely mean that. We can innovate a program, template it and then on-sell it and pass it on to a larger agency or the private sector or a charitable group. Having road tested it and developed it, we hand it on and it can be spread. I see that as an important role that we can do in a way that I do not think a larger department can.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: My question is not in the area that we have been discussing.

Ms SANDRA NORI: If we are moving on from Women, I would like to respond to something that the Hon. Catherine Cusack said, if you do not mind, to amplify a previous answer.

CHAIR: It is Government members' time, so yes.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Yes.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I did not mention it before, I am sorry, because I did not fully understand what the Hon. Catherine Cusack was really getting at. We do have a grievance officer in my office, who is not here today. That is where, generally speaking, one would expect a staff complaint to be referred to first, though there is no obligation on the staff member to start there. They are perfectly welcome to go up to the Premier's Department if they wish.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: My question is in the area of Sport and Recreation specifically.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am happy to move on to Sport.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: What is the Department of Sport and Recreation doing to assist in the fight against obesity in children, in terms of providing guidance to primary school children?

Ms SANDRA NORI: You have identified an area that is of concern. Someone was telling me that adults now, at every age group—and therefore I am sure it is the same for kids—are something like three kilograms heavier than they were at an equivalent age even as recently as, say, a decade ago. So let us not kid ourselves that it is not an issue. We know that one in five Australians is obese and a much larger proportion is just overweight. Over 5 per cent of children are obese and 14 per cent to 18 per cent are overweight. So when you add up all the categories it is cause for concern.

Our Prevention of Obesity in Children and Young People—NSW Government Action Plan, was released in 2003. That outlines most of the initiatives. It has a series of initiatives to take us through that four-year period, from 2003 to 2007. The department has modified the Building Active Communities Grants Scheme to focus on preventing childhood obesity and has allocated \$750,000 over three years from 2004-05 to 2006-07 to 10 community-based projects.

The Youth in Sport Program gives priority to projects which focus on healthy lifestyles, incorporating physical activity and nutrition education. That program targets youth at risk with funding of about \$300,000 a year. There is also the after-school care, and the Be Active After School initiative. I can take you through that. There is a program with NSW Health, the Department of Education and Training and the National Heart Foundation that is contributing to the development of the Kids Healthy Lifestyle Portal. There is a partnership with the Australian Sports Commission and the department is co-ordinating the Active Australia Schools Network in this State.

We have also got the Active Schools Connection and the Federal Government's Building a Healthy Active Australia—a project with the Commonwealth, obviously—and that is providing \$116 million over four years. Some \$90 million of that has been allocated to the Active After School Communities program.

Already 30 co-ordinators have been employed in New South Wales and commenced in term two this year. More than 160 schools and 240 out of school hours care centres participated. More than 1,400 coaches have been trained. We are working towards a Junior Sport Week campaign for April 2006. We have also put out the Kids in Gyms guidelines, which are to be incorporated into the fitness industry code of practice. That program was about getting kids into traditional gyms, modifying their programs, modifying their equipment, and making sure that people were trained specifically to deal with little kiddies. As well, the Sport in the Neighbourhood program provides introductory sporting opportunities in the local park for kids in the neighbourhood, free of charge. We have the It's a Girl Thing program and the Arabic Girls Multi-Sport Program, which focus on girls groups becoming

involved, because they are less likely to. That is not the complete list of the things we have done, but this is an area we take very seriously.

The Hon. KAYEE GRIFFIN: Bad sporting behaviour has been the subject of much discussion in recent times. What is the department doing to address that problem?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is fair to say that the department has led the way, literally. It is a very good story in terms of the Government's response to a very bad situation. Again, it is a program that has not cost a great deal, but we are actually getting more traction with it. We have developed a whole set of resources, which basically came from industry, sportspeople and kids. We have rolled out that program to various codes, and it has been adopted. We have anti-sledge pledges for parents to sign when they sign up their kids. There is a code of conduct for kids and a whole set of resources that are appropriate to young children. We specifically rolled out the program during the soccer season last year.

It was rolled out with the Blacktown Football Association, which is a soccer association. They did not have one yellow card or red card or one send-off last year. This year we launched it with junior rugby league at Leichhardt Oval with Dene Halatau, who will do very well tomorrow night when they beat St George. Next we will roll it out with basketball. We have rolled it out with surfing—people do not always show their best behaviour when fighting for a wave, something I find amazing! It is a worry, because while the level of concern and public debate has had some traction, the behaviour of some people has not improved. People ask me why I do not legislate for that. Quite clearly, if any behaviour triggers the criminal law, it should be dealt with that way. Most of the time we are talking about ill-discipline, rudeness and stupidity. I do not think any of us have worked out how to legislate against that. It really is very much a program—

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is hard to chair against that.

Ms SANDRA NORI: What did you say?

The Hon. PATRICIA FORSYTHE: Please continue with your answer.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We want to create a community debate, where we create peer pressure, and create a taboo about that behaviour. I am really encouraged by the lengths to which some very devoted people are going, for example within the junior rugby league district, to bring this message out and to create an environment in which behaviour improves. We have triggered something that is really important in terms of our program. We have triggered a debate, and we are getting somewhere. I have instituted also a Values and Integrity Award, which I hand out once a year at the sports award for a code, individual or organisation that has done the most to deal with the general issue of respect and responsibility in sport. It has had tremendous support from the major codes. I suspect that this dynamic will continue and eventually it will improve. If it does not, we will work for the many people who perform voluntary roles in junior sport. We cannot run junior sport without them. It is not fair on the kids and it sets such a terrible example for them.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Minister, my question relates to Tourism. I notice that the wave of Japanese tourists seems to have disappeared and we getting more Chinese and Indian tourists. Are we doing anything to attract them here or are they turning up spontaneously because they like us?

Ms SANDRA NORI: People like coming here. We have emerging markets and it is quite clear that India and China are growing off a low base. There has been a huge growth in those markets and there is a huge potential particularly in the high-yield end. The Japanese market has always been very susceptible to the Japanese economy. If they do not think the Japanese economy is going well they stop spending. They have the highest savings rates in the world but they are slightly nervous travellers. However, there are some signs that the Japanese economy is picking up. We have been very keen to make sure that we maintain market share, and we have actually increased the share of visitors from Japan. In fact, that probably started late last year, when we convened a roundtable to discuss with industry, inbound and outbound, what we could do. And, of course, we sent a strong delegation to Aichi, where we did a lot of work with industry.

Some positive things are happening, but there is no doubt that China and India are growing markets. You are quite right to say that you notice more and more visitors from China. Up to a point we are beholden to the number of flights, but I notice that Qantas now flies into Shanghai and we are running a group to campaign with Qantas to get people to come to New South Wales. The good thing about visitors from China is that they tend to stay in Sydney, and in New South Wales. It is very important that we continue to target them. They do not seem to have been very keen to go out any further. We have some really exciting things happening in the Chinese market, including a television series, which they decided to make in Sydney. We have given them assistance with the logistics. The program is called *Waiting for You in Sydney*, and it will be shown three times. It has a huge audience.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Is it a drama or a soapie?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have met the cast. I think it is a bit of a soapie, but that is all right. Of itself it will generate enormous interest, and we are working with the Federal Government to organise a tactical campaign. It consists of about 20 episodes of 47 minutes each, and it will be seen by hundreds of millions of people. That is mind boggling.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: With regard to regional tourism, one of my duty electorates is Ballina. There is a small segment in Byron Bay who do not like tourism.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is true.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Apart from that, everywhere else I go in country New South Wales people seem to be quite keen on promoting tourism. What are we doing to attract more people to regional New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The main thing we have done is release the five advertisements. We have one for each region, and different iterations of those ads as well. So in fact we have more than five, and the campaign is called *There is No Place like New South Wales, No Place Like It*. We tweak them a bit. Sometimes we show the Snowy in winter and sometimes in summer, or a mixture. Aside from being shown on television, and obviously aside from creating brand awareness those ads are tracking extremely well. You need to know that we are getting 18 per cent brand awareness from our research. The Pieces of Victoria campaign is up to 25 per cent, but that is a 12-year campaign.

It is unprecedented to get that level of brand awareness so quickly, within a seven-month period. From my point of view, the most exciting thing about these advertisements and the whole campaign is that industry likes them so much. We can see that they are valued and that industry is using them itself, and/or thinking of using them itself. Typically you have a brand campaign—that is, a 30-second advertisement. People are now beginning to consider and/or are using the 15-second iteration of that advertisement and they are then coming in a couple of minutes later. So the Government is providing, if you like, a piece of marketing or advertising infrastructure.

We did the hard yards, the research and the location shots—literally thousands of miles of camera footage. We went into the bush and took stills and live footage that we can use to tweak the advertisements from time to time and refresh them. The best example of what I am talking about is the fact that CountryLink came in with a 15-second version and a very competitive fare for taking people up to the North Coast. It has worked very well with it. We are hoping now that more and more regions will come in and do their 15-second iteration. Sometimes it is hard to get regions to work co-operatively. From time to time there seems to be a bit of sibling rivalry between postcodes. Sometimes there is a lack of understanding in the consumer's mind.

People might think Sydney up to Coffs Harbour and then they think far North Coast. They do not really think of all the dots in between. People would be better off if they were prepared to lose some of their identity in order to gain the greater share of the pie by coming in with this sub-brand, if you like, for their region. We are getting there but it is a lengthy process. There is no doubt that domestic tourism will be under challenge. Our figures have held up. We have gone up a bit in domestic tourism and I think other States have gone down. However, there is no doubt that there are some challenges for all Australia when it comes to domestic tourism.

The low-cost carrier will be a boon to the towns where it goes, no doubt at the expense of other towns. There has been a 25 per cent increase in people going overseas. That reflects, thank goodness, that we have not had bombs and severe acute respiratory syndrome recently, so people are going. The other thing that is showing up is petrol prices. But because we have been in the marketplace and because we have this new brand we are holding up really well. We increased our share slightly. Generally there are challenges for the whole of Australia, for the three reasons I outlined.

CHAIR: Did you offer some prizes to the best-decorated house and business in so-called Tiger town?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes. It is also being offered for Campbelltown. If you are going to refer to it, the *Daily Telegraph* got it wrong; I have no idea why. Of course they are not government-funded.

CHAIR: Did you have a hand in approaching anybody for prizes?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, I did. I asked them whether they were interested and they said, "That is terrific. We would love to."

CHAIR: Is it appropriate for a Minister for Tourism to be approaching hotels and others?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It was done casually. I just jumped in and asked them. They are happy.

CHAIR: Do you see a conflict of interest between that and your role as Minister for Tourism?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am Minister for Sport as well.

CHAIR: Indeed.

Ms SANDRA NORI: As a member of the upper House you might not have to worry about this, but I represent an electorate that still has a proportion, but a diminishing proportion, of older original residents. We have a whole lot of newcomers but there is a bit of a chasm there from time to time. I believe in creating identity, spirit and a sense of community. I think it is okay for anyone who lives in the inner city, in particular in Balmain where there has been a drought in fortunes, to create a sense of community, a sense of fun and a bit of an incentive. It has been done in a generous spirit. No-one has had the heavies put on them and no-one has been strongarmed. People enjoy coming in and helping to promote this sense of community spirit.

CHAIR: Was it for your personal electoral benefit?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not see how offering a prize to Campbelltown helps me. You have to understand that I grew up in the inner city. I have been there all my life. My son played in the Balmain Juniors from the time he was five and he is now 19. We have been going to Leichhardt Oval for a long time and have seen him thrashed, so we are so excited about this. We see the heritage value in the Tigers. It is a bit of fun. For the benefit of members who asked whether I did this for my political advantage, I think the great tragedy is that a lot of people in Balmain would not take notice of this either way because they are not that keen on rugby league. I think that is a bit of a shame, but it is their choice.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I think the concern is for other communities that have struggled and had difficulties in the past.

Ms SANDRA NORI: If any local members of Parliament worth their salt had approached anyone I am sure they could have done the same thing. I just happen to be an extremely enthusiastic and passionate person.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Minister, can I approach you on behalf of Kyogle, which recently experienced a devastating incident—the burning down of the mill?

Ms SANDRA NORI: What would you like?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Government-funded holidays for the people up there.

Ms SANDRA NORI: There are no government-funded holidays. I do not supply government-funded holidays to anyone. But if what you want, Catherine, is a contact in the tourism industry so that the local community can organise a raffle or conduct some sort of fund-raising activity, I am more than happy to help you.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am asking you, as State Minister, to provide support to other communities as well.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do. I am going to be organising a huge fundraiser for the Duke of Edinburgh Award because I administer that award. I have helped any number of organisations fund-raise and I will continue to help organisations fund-raise, if that is what matters to them.

CHAIR: Minister, were you disappointed that the St George and West Tigers match has been scheduled for the Aussie Stadium and not the Telstra Stadium?

Ms SANDRA NORI: There is no doubt that they would have been able to fill the Telstra Stadium. I discussed this issue of the Aussie Stadium with rugby league and with the cricket ground trust. It was an idiosyncratic result. It is not that often that you get that configuration. It is partly the consequence of the draw that obviously is made months before, and it is part of the consequence of who comes first and second and who comes third and fourth. Had the Broncos—wash my mouth out with soap—won and not the Tigers, the Sydney Football Stadium [SFS] would have been a perfectly rational choice and no-one would have missed out. I need to say to this to you: Rugby league and the trust said to me that it is not just a case of tickets and telling people, "You bought tickets, we will switch you out. Go to Telstra, we are changing the game." There are pourage rights and corporate boxes.

Caterers have already done their hiring and probably have already done their buying of food. There is a whole range of logistics. I think even the television stations have a say in it. It is far more complex than most people would realise. I have asked the National Rugby League to think about the future. If we end up with this kind idiosyncratic result where we really could fill a bigger stadium we need to have sufficient flexibility. People can buy tickets beforehand, as they have always done, but they are buying a ticket, they are not buying a venue, and there is more flexibility for change. Having said that the Aussie Stadium has about 40,000 seats, 10,000 of which are kept by the trust for trust members. Notionally, that could be split up evenly between the supporters of all the football clubs. So that leaves you with 30 seats. Of those, about 12 were available to Tiger supporters once the result of the game on Sunday was known. I think a further 1,000 tickets were released as well, so it might even be up to 13. The difference between the ability of St George and West Tigers supporters was not that great.

However, my office and Sydney Olympic Park, for which I have responsibility, have come to the party. At 12.00 noon there will be entertainment. The AFL kick-off will be at 2.30 p.m. There will be live entertainment after the AFL game, and then people will be able to watch West Tigers and St George. I think that is a reasonable solution. It is a contract between the NRL and the stadia. I cannot, nor would I or should I, intervene in a commercial contract.

CHAIR: It seems that Sydney has been duded out of the deciding match of the State of Origin during the next few years. In 2006 it is Sydney/Brisbane/Melbourne, 2007 Brisbane/Sydney/Brisbane, and 2008 Brisbane/Sydney/Melbourne. As Minister for Sport and Recreation, what are you doing to try to reinstate the rightful role and place of Sydney in hosting the third match?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The NRL is a separate entity to government. The NRL made its decision, which was very disappointing to me, without reference to government. They did not come to government and say, "We will keep it here if you would do A, B or C." If they had, at least I would

have looked at whatever A, B and C were, but that was its decision. The same applies with the Australian Rugby Union, by the way. It has made its decisions, rightly or wrongly—I think wrongly—but it did not come to government and ask for assistances or changes.

CHAIR: Are you disappointed about the drop in tourism numbers to the Hunter Valley?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am always concerned about a region that might have a drop in figures but in part one must understand that there are often flavours of the month in tourism, and patterns change. A lot of things are happening in the Hunter Valley and I am sure that its figures will improve. As I said earlier, there is no doubt that there is going to be a change in the pattern of travel, and it is already playing itself out with the impact of low-cost airlines. Petrol prices are an issue. Ironically, petrol prices are a larger proportion of the total cost of the day on a short trip. That will have an impact. People are going overseas to a greater extent than they were a couple of years ago. I am happy to get Tourism to talk to you specifically about what we are doing in the Hunter.

CHAIR: What strategies are in place? According to an article in last week's *Newcastle Herald*, the figures have dropped from 1.3 million day trips in 1999 to about 600,000.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am happy to give you complete details on that. Unfortunately for us, but fortunately for him, my executive director of Tourism is about to depart to Korea to collect a baby he is adopting. Therefore, he is not here today. I extend my apology for that.

CHAIR: Will you take that question on notice? Leaving aside the Hunter Valley, when the department becomes aware of a drop in tourist numbers what does it do? What strategies have you put in place?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It depends. It will vary greatly on the season, the region and the cause—so there is no such thing as "how long is a piece of string?" when it comes to tourism. I am happy to take that on notice and give greater detail. We work with the Hunter a lot to help promote tourism. Even in the past couple of weeks we have had, for example, significant trade familiarisation and travel agents' familiarisation. We take a lot of international media and international travel agents to that destination.

CHAIR: What has been the impact of financial assistance from registered clubs to sport and recreation clubs following the increase in the poker machine tax in 2004, and the further increase on 1 September 2005?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are not aware of that; we are not the collection agency. If you are asking if I have had correspondence on it, I do not believe the department has.

CHAIR: No sport and recreation clubs have taken up their concerns about the poker machine tax with your department?

Mr ADBY: We have received a small number of correspondence, but there has been nothing in recent times. The Illawarra Steelers may have raised it through WIN Stadium. There was an issue about negotiations involving the St George Dragons but it did not have any ultimate impact of which we are aware. The best response is to take your question on notice and we will review our correspondence registers.

Ms SANDRA NORI: If you are implying: Do I constantly get letters that say "Because of the pokie tax such and such a club or pub that used to give us money for the junior so-and-so has now dropped out. Will you supplement it?", the answer is no.

CHAIR: When you become aware of a concern amongst sporting bodies that are registered clubs linked to your portfolio, are you prepared to advocate on their behalf to Treasury?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I advocate on all sorts of issues. I am always advocating for more money for my portfolio, as you would expect me or any other Minister to do: it is my job.

CHAIR: What discussions have you had with Clubs NSW over the impact on your portfolio?

Ms SANDRA NORI: They have been to see me several times. I have a very good relationship with Clubs NSW and the Australian Hotels Association.

CHAIR: What measures are you working on to ensure that volunteer-run amateur community sport survives the clubs' poker machine tax regime imposed by your Government?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Which program?

CHAIR: Many volunteer-run amateur community sporting groups are auspiced through some of the larger clubs, for example, in Monaro where many of the sporting clubs are not likely to get football jerseys that were previously been paid for by some of the major clubs in that area. What measures are you taking to give support to those amateur clubs?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We have a whole series of programs for which people and organisations can apply for funding. I will look at any application on its merits.

CHAIR: Is the Tourism budget adequate to ensure that Australia's premier city and regional tourism destinations can realise their potential?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, I do but there is one very grave deficiency when it comes to the Tourism budget and that is the fact that on a pro rata basis, as a percentage of budget overlay, the Commonwealth spends less than New South Wales. I increasingly find that the Commonwealth is playing political games in relation to tourism even in the domestic front. I think when a government is playing politics and being partisan about tourism it is very worrying.

CHAIR: And you are not?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, because we are the ones who have offered to save it money and give it some decent footage so it can quite properly use Sydney to promote the rest of the country and act as a magnet overseas. But, no, the Commonwealth spent \$5 million on some ads it cannot even use. We spent \$1.8 million on six ads. I would have thought rather than reinventing the wheel it would have been smarter to use our footage, but oh no. The Commonwealth continually runs programs in regional New South Wales and it barely consults us or comes in with us. It ran a domestic campaign and did not consult. Those are the sorts of stupid programs that I see come out of the Commonwealth. Instead of aligning, magnifying and growing the pie, the Commonwealth is all about diluting it, being at cross-purposes and playing politics. I have never seen anything like it, and it did not happen under Joe Hockey.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Who is the Federal Minister now?

CHAIR: You can ask questions shortly.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is insanity to run ads without using Sydney as the magnet when everyone knows that overseas, particularly in the United States of America market, the word "Sydney" means Australia. It is interchangeable. But, oh no, the Federal Government cannot do that. It is a joke.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The closure of the Department for Women was announced in April 2004. How many permanent appointments have been made to the Office for Women? How many people are still acting in temporary positions?

Ms BOYD: There are 10 permanent appointments and four positions to be filled.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Does that include your position?

Ms BOYD: Yes, it does.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: When is it planned to fill that position permanently?

Ms BOYD: That process is in train at the moment.

CHAIR: I refer to the interaction between your department and some other departments and your earlier comments about obesity. Is there any co-ordination between Education, Health, Juvenile Justice—

Ms SANDRA NORI: There is with some programs because they are joint programs, but I am happy for the director general to answer that or take it on notice.

Mr ADBY: There are a number of programs that involve Education, the Department of Health, a number of state departments and the Commonwealth Government. We are happy to take the question on notice and give you full details of those programs.

CHAIR: Do the obesity figures you referred to earlier form the basis upon which you would argue to Treasury for an increased allocation for the department so that the number of programs to assist the community to deal with health, fitness and obesity can be increased?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We put forward budget enhancements on a range of issues. Our priorities vary from time to time depending on what Commonwealth or private sector programs might be running. We have some flexibility.

CHAIR: Earlier you said there was 18 per cent brand awareness of the latest Tourism NSW campaign. Who tracks that?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The Morgan people.

CHAIR: Do you have a contractual arrangement with Morgan?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I assume it is a contract. If you are asking whether we do the sort of tracking you would expect a private sector organisation to do to track its brand, it is completely consistent with what you would expect of the private sector. I can get the details on notice.

CHAIR: I am interested in how much that contract is worth. Who undertakes the advertising campaign?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Who does our advertising? Young and Rubicam.

CHAIR: How much is allocated each year for the No Place Like NSW campaign?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It varies. It depends on how many, how often, our media buying, how often we go to the marketplace.

CHAIR: Could I have a breakdown of those statistics for last year's and this year's budgets?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am sure we can provide that on notice. You need to know that the other variable factor is how much industry puts in. That can vary from time to time. It seems to be going up. The campaign has been very successful and people like the ads. We find the private sector coming in more and more and putting in large amounts. For example, the campaign I launched last night for our summer has \$1.6 million worth of industry funding. I think that is a record.

CHAIR: You might want to add that to the other information on notice.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am happy to do so. It is up to the department; they know all the rules. I hope you are not trying to suggest that we should not track.

CHAIR: Not at all; far from it. My concern is that you are not sufficiently responsive, but we will come to that later because it is now the turn of the crossbench to ask questions.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is a strange way of making that point, wanting to know how much we pay for the contract to have the information tracked.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I asked about health promotion issues associated with the Masters Games to try to get older people exercising. How much will be spent on that campaign and when will it start?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We are only now setting up the committee that comes out of the legislation that was passed recently. I am not in a position to answer that yet.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Referring to the Luna Park Reserve Trust, why was the decision made to lease the 389-space car park to Multiplex for 99 years for a dollar?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Did we not go through this last year? Was it not answered last year?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It is in this year's budget papers.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will take that on notice. That is determined by the trust.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Why was the decision made to lease the clifftop Milsons Point site to Multiplex for 99 years for only a dollar?

Ms SANDRA NORI: We had this argument last year. I read it. In my spare time I read our conversations from last year. There is a division of labour with the Minister for Planning about who is responsible for which bits of Luna Park. I will take that on notice.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You are obviously trying to get more recreation space around Luna Park for basic needs—grassed areas and active recreation on the swings and roundabouts. Is that correct?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Trying to get more? What do you mean? Luna Park has a lease with the trust. I do not determine what rides they have.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Are you saying the trust is autonomous?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, it is not autonomous. I thought when you said "swings" you meant the rides within Luna Park.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes, I meant the rides.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is not a decision for me. They have to go through certain processes and rules. I am neutral about what rides they have there.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The answer is obviously, yes, you want more recreation. If you are trying to get these rides—

Ms SANDRA NORI: What rides am I trying to get at Luna Park? I do not even know what rides they have there now.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: That part is irrelevant. The question is why such a large resource is being given away for so little money. I am referring to the leasehold for the developers of that park.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will take that on notice. I do not always understand your questions.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I would not have thought it was difficult. Are there any specific restrictions on the nature and type of business allowed within Centennial Park and Moore Park? If so, what are they?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will take that on notice. If you want a thumbnail sketch I could get Mr Steve Corbett to answer that question. He is here.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: No, that is all right. It appears Luna Park is still not financially viable. Why is that and what incentives are in place to make it financially viable?

Ms SANDRA NORI: You say it is not viable. It is a question for them.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The budget papers suggest it is not viable.

Ms SANDRA NORI: It might be, but you asked me why it is not viable. That is a discussion you will have to have with them.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You are the responsible Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, but I do not own the lease. I am not the lessee. My people do not run Luna Park. If you are saying it is not viable and it is not working for them, I suggest you ask them.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It is in your budget. Will you wash your hands of it if it goes broke?

Ms SANDRA NORI: If it goes broke it will be their money.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: It will be our park that we gave away.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Who is this 'we'?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The people of NSW. I would argue it is "the Government" rather than "we". The Government has not managed it very well at all.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We do not manage the business. It is a private sector organisation with its own management, business plan and equipment. It runs Luna Park. It has a lease. We do not interfere in its internal organisation.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: The planning laws that probably sent the park broke are the ones that took away the Big Dipper. In a sense, the Government—reluctantly perhaps—is regarded by the people of New South Wales as the curator of its assets. One of those assets was a park at Milsons Point called Luna Park that people enjoyed visiting. There are forces out there that would like to turn that park into a convention centre or something else. It worries me that you do not feel any responsibility for it making a profit and apparently do not want to keep it as a park—which is obviously about taking responsibility for it.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not understand what you mean. What do you mean? You are talking about Luna Park—the place with the face where people go on rides.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I would like that place to stay. I would like to see Sydneysiders, kids from the West and tourists enjoying it. Yes, of course I would. Is that what you mean?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes, but I want something more than good intentions. If you are leasing it to developers for a pittance, it loses money and is likely to close and then you say, "That is up to the people who hold the lease"—

Ms SANDRA NORI: I beg your pardon. I thought you were insinuating that I should perhaps make a loan to them, do their marketing or buy them a new merry-go-round to help them out. That is not the role of government.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am suggesting that you have given them a large chunk of land for very little money and that perhaps as a quid pro quo you might take an

interest in what they intend to do to keep the park that belongs to the people of New South Wales going on that site.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Of course I take an interest in it but I thought you were suggesting something else.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I just want your guarantee that you will have some plan to keep a park on that site.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Can I quote you on that?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Good. So you support Luna Park being financially viable and accessible to the people of Sydney and interstate and international visitors, who can go there to enjoy the rides.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes, I do support that.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Good. We are in the same boat.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Yes, but I am not giving away a 389-space car park for \$1 for 99 years.

Ms SANDRA NORI: What is your point, Arthur?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I am suggesting that you are not managing it very well, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: We do not manage the park—no more than we managed Wonderland or than we manage Warner Bros on the Gold Coast. We do not manage it; the people who have the lease manage the actual running of the park.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: You say you have no part in it but you are leasing out huge chunks of it for a pittance. You are making decisions—

Ms SANDRA NORI: You just told me you liked the idea.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I do like the idea, but if I were managing it, I would not be leasing out its major assets for next to nothing.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Do you want Luna Park to remain as an asset and an attraction or not? You said a minute ago that you did. I thought we were in the same boat.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: We are in the same boat but I want some action in the boat—some rowing perhaps.

Ms SANDRA NORI: What would you like me to do?

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I would like you to tell me how you think the Government could intervene, within the existing framework, to keep the park viable, instead of saying it is not our responsibility; we just lease out its assets for a pittance.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, I am very specific in what I am saying. We are not responsible for keeping it viable. These are things like the park's marketing, promotions and so on. We are not responsible for that.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: No, you are not. That is true.

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is the only point I was trying to make.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: What actions can you take to be sure that our grandchildren will have a park to go to, as opposed to the lessees declaring it non-viable and building a convention centre or something else that some others would like to build on that site? There is already a car park at the front.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am happy to answer that question on notice. By the way, the Budget Papers shows the park has about a \$381,000 cash surplus.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I would like to raise some issues to do with the Office for Women. Minister, are you aware that there is strong support within sections of the women's movement, including the Rape Crisis Centre, for establishing a specialist sexual assault court in New South Wales like that which has been established successfully in Canada?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: In the wake of the sentence reductions for gang rapists, do you support such a court? You said "yes" to that. I would like to know—

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, you asked me whether I was aware of support for such a court.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I apologise. Do you support such a court?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That would be a Cabinet process. It would be very much up to the Attorney General and it would be for Cabinet to discuss.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Would you advocate on its behalf?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have taken an oath—which I take seriously—that I will not discuss matters that are Cabinet in-confidence prior to their going to Cabinet, being passed by the Executive Council and dealt with by the Government.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I am certainly not asking you to speak about what goes on in Cabinet.

Ms SANDRA NORI: You are, in effect. It is a moot point, but you are asking me to do that.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Are you saying, therefore, that this matter is being considered by Cabinet at the moment?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not saying anything. I am simply telling you that matters regarding courts are generally dealt with by the Attorney General, and if there is a process it is something I will contribute to one way or another. If I were to initiate a discussion with the Attorney General on the matter that you have raised, I would consider that also to be Cabinet in-confidence. I am saying that this matter is clearly a whole-of-government responsibility.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: As the process is going on, as a representative of the Office for Women sits on the criminal justice sexual offences task force do you envisage that it will be discussed by the task force? Will that matter be reported on when the task force brings down its report in December?

Ms SANDRA NORI: When the report comes down I presume it will be public and I presume it will be discussed. But if your real question to me is whether I will be looking for anything that I think will improve the chances of women who have been sexually assaulted coming forward and will improve their court experiences—it will always be a difficult court experience; indeed, court is difficult for any gender—

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Would you like to tell us what you are doing to improve the situation?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will take the question on notice because I have some documentation in my office about that.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Thank you. Is it true that the funding provided to the Rape Crisis Centre does not include a rent component?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is not question for me; I do not give the centre its funding. You are asking the wrong Minister. But I will take the question on notice and get an answer from the relevant Minister.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I appreciate that. Is it true that the Office of Community Housing has written to the Rape Crisis Centre asking it to pay rent of \$90 from October?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am not in receipt of rate correspondence. I do not get to read correspondence that is sent from that organisation to any other, and the Rape Crisis Centre does not send its correspondence as a matter of course.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: But in your brief as Minister for Women would you not give support to that organisation?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Of course I would. But you are being a little unreasonable to think I would possibly know who sent a letter to whom in the last two weeks. It is like asking me what someone was wearing three weeks ago. It is insane. If you are asking me to look into the matter, I am happy to do so.

CHAIR: So will you take that question on notice, Minister?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, I will. I will check out, if you like, the correspondence that has been sent from every organisation in this State to every other organisation because that is about as sane as Ms Lee Rhiannon's question. Why do you not ask me to look into it?

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Minister, that is really offensive. You have just said that you are committed to ensuring that women who have been raped have an easier experience in court. We are talking about the Rape Crisis Centre—an organisation that you know has a very fine history in this country. It seems to be having bureaucratic problems. Surely, as Minister, you could say, "Yes, I'll sort it out".

Ms SANDRA NORI: That is fine. I am having a go at you and the stupidity of your question, which asks whether I have seen a piece of correspondence sent from Housing to the Rape Crisis Centre. That is like asking me whether I have seen a note sent from Patricia to Catherine. No, I have not.

CHAIR: Minister, under the standing orders of the Legislative Council you are not entitled to comment on or debate the questions. You are asked only to answer them.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Okay. Then, as Chair, you should ensure that I am asked questions that it is reasonable to expect a sane human being to answer.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Are you aware of the call of the Football Fans Against Sexual Assault [FFASA] for the State Government to work with the Federal Government to develop annual awards recognising integrity, innovation and leadership in sport? What is your response to this call?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Prior to your coming up with this last year I had actually announced and instituted a Minister's award, which I talked about earlier. I have actually already done it.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: I remember the media release very well. It was an interesting headline that you gave it at the time. But it seems that you have misunderstood what FFASA is talking about, which is awards to individuals and creating—

Ms SANDRA NORI: There is nothing in my award that says it cannot go to an individual. You just do not like the fact that we thought of it first, because you think the Greens think of everything first.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: No. That is a very interesting comment. You might like to tell us now how you have responded to FFASA's call, which also came from the upper House.

Ms SANDRA NORI: In that case I really have to jump.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: It was a unanimous motion, and it has the support of the Government as well, for you to work with the Federal Minister for Arts and Sports, the AFL, the NRL and other sporting bodies to develop annual awards that recognise integrity, innovation and leadership in sport. How are you working with the Federal Government? It is not about one-upmanship; it is about changing the culture of the sport. Considering what has happened here, two of your portfolios have come together. We would hope it would be taken seriously—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Thank you for telling me how to suck eggs.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: You have the opportunity—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Thank you for telling me how to suck eggs. I am really sorry. I hate to tell you, but do you want me to take you through chapter and verse the respect and responsibility campaign that we have run? We instituted that last year, and we instituted the round of talks with all the codes, mainly male codes, after the debacle in rugby league the year before. We were having lots of meetings and had lots of discussions. We run a Women and Leadership in Sport Program. We started this whole respect and responsibility campaign with, "The man you become depends on what you teach him now", "Fair play on and off the field", and "Domestic violence is everyone's responsibility". We have run it with cricket, we have run it with rugby league and we are running it with surfing. That is one part of it.

We are continually working with the codes to get them to understand the need to do a range of things, including putting more women into administration, recognising the hundreds of hours of volunteer hours they put in at a junior level—getting those women up. We are giving administration scholarships to those women so that they can then play an increasingly larger role. We have also have my New South Wales Ministers Sports and Integrity Award, which is paid for by the taxpayers of New South Wales. If Mr Kemp wants to have a Federal award, I am happy to join him on that. I actually really like Rod Kemp. We get on. I actually really enjoy his company. But I think you will find that the Commonwealth would find it difficult to understand how we could get together on such a thing. They can institute a national version and maybe State Ministers could have theirs, and then the State winners could all go into the Federal kitty. That is all up to him. If he wants to approach me on that, that is fine. We discuss these sorts of things all the time. I am running an award in New South Wales. Last year it was won by basketball, from memory.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Yes, it was.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: You are saying that you will not approach the Federal Government?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No. I did not say that.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Will you? I will ask the question again. Will you approach the Federal Government? That is the question.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I do not think that is what the question was. I am happy to discuss it with him. I probably will see him at the rugby league grand final in two weeks time, which, I am sure, you will not be attending.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: That is rather insulting. Why would I not be at the grand final? Why are you making assumptions about my sporting interests?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I just am.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: And what are they?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have no idea, but I bet it is not rugby league.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Why do you say that? I will send you my blurb about Souths, if you like. I think it is rather rude for you to make assumptions like that.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I am sorry. My director general reminds me that a lot of those issues have been discussed already at the officer level of the ministerial council.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: I know we have this new A1 Grand Prix, or something, coming up.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Grand Prix of Nations.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: Which I will not be able to attend because it is on the same weekend as the Australian Labor Party Country Conference.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Thank goodness, because I am attending that one.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: I am sure you could enjoy it without my involvement. What is the New South Wales Government doing to ensure that Sydney continues to attract such events?

Ms SANDRA NORI: In the case of the A1 Grand Prix, the fact that we had Eastern Creek obviously was a help. The fact that we had to contribute only \$400,000 for some minor upgrades and changes to make it safe and correct to stage this particular race is important. The other reason that they want the event in Sydney is that it is the largest market so it would have the greatest attraction and so on. We actually have a very interesting list of events not only for this summer but also for the next four or five years. First we had the Olympics, three years later we had the Rugby World Cup and we had Forbes this year—not huge in terms of numbers, but huge in terms of profile and investment potential. We have the World Youth Day in 2007, the Masters Games, the A1—which is like a Formula One-type race, although we are not allowed to say that for intellectual property reasons—and then we have the Lions Convention. There is a whole lot of stuff in there now. It is a really good mix of events that give you branding and visitation. In some cases the emphasis is more on business tourism. In some cases it is more on straight visitation. In the case of World Youth Day, there will be a lot of visitors but it also has a huge profile because of the guaranteed Papal visit. It is a very good time.

The number of events we have is really going to continue to service us into the future. We started off the year with 14,500 Amway incentive visitors. There were so many of them that they did it in three waves of about 3,000 to 4,000 each. That is huge. I forget the figures. I will give them to you on notice, but it goes something like this. We have some enormous conferences and conventions coming and a lot of incentive delegates coming. Incentive delegates are people who work in a company and are rewarded by the company with a trip overseas to continue their interest in the company—sales and so on. I think there are 130,000 of them coming this year. It is a very good year. We continue to attract a large number of events. If you ask me why we do that, I think one reason is that we have the infrastructure. In the case of conventions and conferences, we were the first State to put that infrastructure in—Darling Harbour. Yes, the other States are coming on board, but at the end of the day a lot of conferences want to come to Sydney because Sydney always has the ability to set records for the number of people attending, and that, of course, suits the organiser or the owner of events.

The reason we keep doing it well is the very experience of the Sydney Convention and Visitors Bureau, to whom we outsource the responsibilities for pitching and bidding in this sort of business. The other thing is that it is Sydney. People just love it—it is highly aspirational, really aspirational. People really think we are it. They are the three reasons that I think we do really well in the conventions business. In terms of something like World Youth Day, no doubt it was the Archdiocese of Sydney that wanted to organise the event, but, again, it would not have been able to organise it if there had not been a commitment from the Government to support logistics and so on.

Again, Sydney was selected by the Holy Father because of our experience with the Olympics and the Rugby World Cup, the fact that we are known as a clean and safe city, because we have the infrastructure and the Olympic venues, where the final mass will be held and so on. It is a mixture of things: the sheer beauty of the city, the infrastructure, our know-how and the image projected by the Opera House and our experience with the Olympic Games. I forgot to mention a couple of things. We have the ICCC cricket series test match. I do not think that clashes with the Country Conference. It is on 14 to 19 October.

The Hon. AMANDA FAZIO: I do not like cricket any way.

CHAIR: Minister, are you aware of concerns, in relation to some junior sports—particularly rugby union and rugby league, which are based on age—that there is a growing trend towards disproportionate citing within some teams, in terms of size and weight? If so, is there any proposal to introduce a graduated weight system for under age players?

Ms SANDRA NORI: When there was an incident in the middle of the year—I cannot remember exactly when—I did ask the department, and it will be coming back to me to see what we can do to see whether the sports are on track with these sorts of issues. And I say that as a mother of a hooker.

CHAIR: If your department has more information, could you take that on notice?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Well, he was only 11 when they put him in the under 13 As, and he has always had to play above his age. I mean, I have always been worried about him being a hooker in union. It is for real. He has been promoted to tighthead prop at the moment.

CHAIR: If your department has some more information on these strategies—

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, I will get it to you.

CHAIR: What measures are you taking to increase the participation of girls and boys in sport at school?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have to refer you to an announcement that I think was made last year by the then Minister for Education and Training. There is a whole program about that. I will take it on notice.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Minister, do you believe that restoring the rail services to the Casino to Murwillumbah rail line and extending that line on to the Queensland rail system would benefit tourism in northern New South Wales?

Ms SANDRA NORI: When that whole issue was being debated, we asked for an analysis of the number of tourists and who use it. It is a pity I do not have those figures here, but it actually showed that very few tourists use it.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I think it reflected the fact that there is only one rail service.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Well, for whatever reason. Can I say to you that my experience in New South Wales is that it is the drive State. Touring by car is by far the most popular. That is, intrastate, it is by car. We promote the Pacific drive.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you accept that Brisbane is the closest capital city to the far North Coast, and to be connected to the Queensland rail system but would be of benefit to tourism on the North Coast?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I have no doubt that that would be of benefit to tourism in Queensland, but I am really not that interested in tourism in Queensland. What we do have, though, is very cheap services to Ballina and we have a lot of services and cheap services into Coolangatta. We find that a lot of people want to use it and then do the drive from there.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I was referring to the Queensland population visiting northern New South Wales, not the other way round.

Ms SANDRA NORI: They do not. The truth is, rightly or wrongly, they have always wanted to do it by car, most of them.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Minister, can I ask who is on the Premier's Council for Women and what the terms of their appointments are?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, you can. Their reappointments are due soon. I will be making that announcement shortly. Do you want the new one, or the one that is coming to an end?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: The one that is coming to an end, and I guess there will be a media announcement about the new one?

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes, there will be. I would say in the next month.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Part of the role of the Premier's council is providing an avenue for women to communicate with government on issues affecting women, and this is achieved through consultation with the community and peak women's organisations, including rural and regional areas with non English-speaking and indigenous communities. What consultations of that type have been held over the past 12 months, particularly with indigenous communities?

Ms SANDRA NORI: There have been quite a number. The council has visited regional and rural New South Wales. In fact it will be at Bega next weekend. I think the best thing to do is to give you a list of consultations and visits it has made to regional New South Wales.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Thank you. I wanted to ask about the events calendar on the Office for Women web site. Minister, do you have a view about important events that are coming up in Sydney that are of significance to women between now and the end of the year—or what they are?

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, I do not have it in my head.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I mean, the women's gathering at Bega you have just referred to, but that is not listed on the events calendar. In fact, of the seven items listed on the events calendar, five of them have already passed us.

Ms SANDRA NORI: But you will find that the women's gathering at Bega—is that not organised through Agriculture or Primary Industries now?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Sure. I am referring to the Office for Women's events page for the purpose of promoting important events of significance to women.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Right.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Does it not disappoint you to learn that five of the seven upcoming events have already passed and there are only two events left on the calendar?

Ms SANDRA NORI: That there is what—sorry?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: There are seven events listed on the calendar on the web page.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Five of them are in the past and two of them are in the future.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Right.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: That does not seem like an effective calendar of events for women.

Ms SANDRA NORI: So you are saying there are seven events. We are now in October, and it surprises you that five of them are over. What is your real question so I can really answer it? What is your problem?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: That the calendar is incomplete and out of date.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Is it? I will take that on notice and check it, unless Ms Boyd has something to add.

Ms BOYD: I will provide further information on this. We have actually just instituted some work on the web site this week because we have had a problem with it, so you may be right that there may well be some other events that are not on there. But I think for most of the major ones, people do contact us and we do as quickly as possible get them onto the web site. The Bega women's gathering is an initiative of the Rural Women's Network and that web site is pretty effective. We certainly use it and refer people to it, but we have had a problem with the links.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Okay. In 2003 the department for women budgeted \$188,000 for the upgrading of office equipment. What has happened to this office equipment?

Ms BOYD: Could you be a bit more specific on which equipment you are talking about?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: In the 2003-04 year. It does not say in the budget papers. It just says that the department spent \$188,000 on upgrading its office equipment. I am wondering what was the fate of that office equipment.

Ms BOYD: Some of the equipment was a lease arrangement. Some of the equipment related to an upgrading of the information technology equipment. That equipment has come across to the Office for Women, and it is going to be incorporated into the department's rolling upgrade of equipment, so it will be absorbed into the costs of the Premier's Department.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Just on that, what happened to the office premises that were used by the former Department of Women?

Ms BOYD: I beg your pardon?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: What is the previous accommodation of the Department of Women now being used for?

Ms BOYD: That lease would have been the responsibility of the Department of Commerce, so we can get that information for you but it is not a responsibility of the office to manage older leases.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I would obviously have to get advice on that, but my recollection is that it was taken over by another government agency. That is my recollection, as Ms Boyd said.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Minister, in the budget papers, there is a Be Active After School Program on the Central Coast.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Correct.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: I presume that is a program on childhood activity and obesity. Is it being rolled out more widely in New South Wales?

Mr ADBY: In terms of that program, we have worked in partnership with the Central Coast Area Health Service and the Children's Hospital Institute of Sport Medicine [CHISM]. They have

completed an intervention and evaluation program, and that is the Be Active After School Initiative on the Central Coast, as you know. As a result of the program, a training package and resource manual have been developed for out-of-school-hours care co-ordinators. The training package and resource manual will be launched in mid-September. Twenty-two Out of School Hours Centres [OSHCs] on the Central Coast will be provided with a free resource manual and have already been offered free training. The peak body, OSHC Network for Community Activities, in partnership with CHISM, will provide ongoing professional development for OSHC staff utilisation, the training package and the resource manual. We are still looking at that program, studying the impact of that program, and we are certainly considering going further with it across the State.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: How have you developed the budgets of two departments? If we want to get all the kids exercising—

Mr ADBY: We are working very closely on kids exercising in schools, not just with the Department of Education and Training programs, but we involve NSW Health, DADHC and the Federal Government. They are joint initiatives. They are integrated initiatives and they are comprehensive. A number of the initiatives are joint funding arrangements from different participants. If your interest is in the activity of the children, rates of obesity and other programs I will take a question on notice and give you substantial details.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Minister, earlier you made a statement that suggests I have no interest in rugby league. That is incorrect. I found that insulting and I would like to ask you to read my blog on rugby league, so that you do not continue with that misrepresentation. I hope you will do that. I also have a passion for rugby league, so we share something in common.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I share nothing in common with you, Ms Rhiannon.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: It is rather unfortunate to end on that note, Minister.

CHAIR: Minister, are you concerned that there is no international golf circuit event in New South Wales? If so, will you do something about that?

Ms SANDRA NORI: I think there has been a recent approach to me about a particular golf event. These matters will be addressed.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: Apart from another exemption for Alpine?

CHAIR: I still have the call. Minister, I did not hear your answer. You said that those matters would be addressed.

Ms SANDRA NORI: Addressed on their merits. As they come up, as they are presented.

CHAIR: And that is as good as you can do? Just hope someone approaches you?

Ms SANDRA NORI: People approach us all the time for all sorts of events. Let me put this on the record. You think we should have an international golf classic in New South Wales? What was it I attended a year ago at Concord for several hours, with all those well-known women golfers? There are only so many events that can come to a city. We have had the Olympics, we have had the Rugby World Cup. I have gone through the whole plethora, not in all the fine detail.

CHAIR: That is in the past, Minister.

Ms SANDRA NORI: No, into the future. You were not listening; there is a lot more. This city does really well on a whole range of sporting events, major events, mid-size events, business events. We are doing extremely well.

CHAIR: So you are going to rest on your laurels, are you?

Ms SANDRA NORI: It is the future. We plan for them all the time.

The Hon. Dr ARTHUR CHESTERFIELD-EVANS: There are no women's golf events.

Ms SANDRA NORI: I will expand on my earlier answer. The Major Events Board is in dialogue over a particular tournament at the moment.

Ms LEE RHIANNON: Minister, do the programs that promote respect and anger management, which I understand your department supports, apply in your own office?

Ms SANDRA NORI: The programs that we were referring to in sport are taken out through the codes for junior sports. If you had been reading the fine print, as you claim you do, you would know there are no juniors in my office. It was a program for junior sports.

CHAIR: The time to answer questions has concluded. I thank the Minister and departmental officers for attending today. The Committee has resolved that any questions taken on notice should be returned within 14 days, unless you have a specific problem with a specific question because of detail, in which case you need to advise the Committee prior to the expiration of the 14 days.

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.
