

PAGES 2-3, 4, 14, 15, 18 – TOLL CONTRACT

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: How long has the contract been in place?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: I would have to get that information and provide it to the Committee on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: When is it due to end?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Similarly, I would need to get that information and provide it to you.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Can you tell the Committee the annual value of that contract?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Again, I can respond on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And how much has been spent during the term of the contract to date?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Yes, we can do that as well.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Have there been any problems with the performance of the contract on the part of the courier company?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Not to my knowledge, but I will take advice inside the agency and respond to you.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Okay, I will keep going. I am happy for you to take this question on notice. Is it true that on occasions when files are being transferred from one place to another—files relating to personal or confidential material—only some of the files have actually turned up at the other end when they are being transferred by the courier?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I am happy for you to take all of these questions on notice. Is it correct that many of these lost documents contain highly confidential and sensitive information?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Similarly, we will take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Is it true that some of these lost documents include the history of abuse against children in care or formerly in care?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Is it true that the lost documents include details of family violence?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Details of criminal matters and other legal issues?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Mr Searle, you would expect that we would have to take these questions on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And you would expect that I am going to ask all of these questions so that they are all answered in due course. Is it also correct that the lost documents include highly sensitive details of medical records of those in FACS care or formerly in FACS care?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Is it correct that the department's own legal branch has also had some of its documents lost by the courier, including details of children seeking compensation due to abuse and those seeking victims or other forms of compensation?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Is it also true that the claimants in those cases would need access to those departmental records in order to make good their claims in many cases, and if they are lost that would deprive them of the opportunity to seek some form of redress?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We are able to take that on notice to give you a better answer.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: What voluntary disclosures have you made to the Privacy Commissioner?

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

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to take that on notice. Mr Searle, you should really direct your questions to me.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: When documents are misplaced, if they are, what steps or protocols are in place to ensure that the persons to whom the documents relate are notified?

Ms PRU GOWARD: May I—

Mr Coutts-Trotter: As Mr Hubby suggests, when we provide a disclosure to the Privacy Commissioner, we will as a matter of routine also seek out people whose privacy may have been compromised by an omission within the agency and proactively let them know that it has happened and, on occasions, apologise appropriately.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Is there a written document about what protocols or procedures are in place—time frames, for example? I will assume that all of my questions are directed to the Minister in the first instance.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Thank you. Yes, we have policies relating to that.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Can you provide them to the Committee so we can see what the time frames are?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Yes.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Not now; obviously on notice is useful.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Sure.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, is it the case that any ministerial material being brought by courier in relation to the time that you have been a Minister—are you aware of any of that material being lost or misplaced?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would like to take that question and all other questions relating to this issue on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I understand that. However, Minister, I am asking you to answer the policy question. These are very sensitive, very personal and very important documents. Why, as a matter of policy, is your Government allowing non-government staff to handle and to transport this sensitive material? It is a straightforward question.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to get the facts on exactly what we do. I will take the question on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: How long have these arrangements been in place allowing non-government staff to handle this material?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That is one of the questions you would like answered?

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: It is.

Ms PRU GOWARD: We will do that.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, I am happy for you, Mr Coutts-Trotter or any person with you to answer: How many of these privacy breaches have occurred in the past 12 months and can you tell us the circumstances? Again, I am happy for you to take that on notice.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I think we will need to take that on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: And you will provide further information about the data breaches, how many and the circumstances in the past 12 months.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Without in turn further breaching someone's privacy, yes.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I would not invite you to do that, Mr Coutts-Trotter. Is the department now seeking to end its contract with Toll, Minister?

Ms PRU GOWARD: That is very operational. I will have to ask the secretary to answer it.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Does the secretary have any knowledge?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: I have no knowledge of that, I am afraid.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: I make the observation that it is strange that no-one at the table with you, Minister, has any knowledge about the details of a courier contract with the department—none of the details I have asked for: when it was entered into, its duration, how much money it involves, whether you are trying to even terminate the contract. Whatever the answers are, how is it that neither you nor anyone at the table—there are a lot of you—have any knowledge about this?

Ms PRU GOWARD: We have a number—well, hundreds—of contracts. Perhaps you could have let me know and I am sure we could have provided you with some material. But as it is we will take it on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Minister, have there been meetings between FACS and Toll about concerns relating to missing and lost files?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Mr Searle, I am sorry, I do know the answer. I will have to ask the department.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Not to my knowledge. To your earlier observation, I may just make the point that we contract around \$3.1 billion worth of public money across a variety of organisations so I do not think it is unusual that there is nobody at the table that has first-hand knowledge of it. We will double-check and provide an answer on notice.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Apart from that question, I would also like to know the dates of any meetings and what was discussed at those meetings.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: We will take that on notice.

Answer: I am advised that FACS has contracts with private companies to provide courier services for the department and I am advised that this has been the practice since at least 2007.

I am advised by the department that, to the best of their knowledge, no documents with sensitive client information have been lost by couriers.

In July 2018 there was an occasion where the delivery of some documents by a courier was delayed.

The documents arrived four days late.

I am advised the department could find no evidence of a breach of privacy.

Despite that, the department has implemented additional security protocols for courier services.

FACS has also recently moved some services to a different provider and is reviewing its courier contracts.

I am advised that information about departmental expenditure is available in the FACS Annual Report.

FACS complies with its Privacy Management Plan, which is a publicly available document. See attached link:
https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/594787/FACS-Privacy-Management-Plan-2018.pdf

I am advised that FACS complies with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998, which deals with the protection of personal information as well as the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 which deals with the protection of children and also contains provisions which relate to information and data protection, retention and disclosure.

I am advised that the total FACS 2017/18 spend on courier services provided by Toll is \$741,808.02 (incl GST).

PAGE 3 - REDRESS

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: We do. Perhaps you can tell me how many persons currently in FACS care or formerly in FACS care are now seeking compensation for abuse. Do you have any statistics around those?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: We do. We have a register of civil claimants. I have a figure in my mind, but to be cautious, again, I need to confirm it with our legal team and respond to you. They are mostly survivors of historic abuse.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Again, I would be interested to know whether there has been an increase in those numbers since the royal commission.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Yes, there most certainly has.

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Obviously, raw numbers and percentages would be useful.

Ms PRU GOWARD: We could provide that.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Yes, we could.

ANSWER: I am advised that since the Royal Commission commenced in April 2013 the number of claims FACS has received from persons seeking compensation for abuse has increased. The following breakdown provides further detail:

- The number for the 2013-14 financial year - 5 new claims
- The number for the 2014-15 financial year - 78 new claims
- The number for the 2015-16 financial year - 179 new claims
- The number for the 2016-17 financial year - 242 new claims
- The number for the 2017-18 financial year - 315 new claims

PAGE 10 – SPENDING ON PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION FOR DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: You have the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2017-2021, what is the percentage of spending in this strategy on primary prevention as opposed to services?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will ask the secretary if he can give you the details.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: I will invite my colleague, Ms Mulkerin, to address that please.

Ms MULKERIN: We will need to take on notice the specific question about how much funding of the total domestic violence spend is on primary prevention.

ANSWER: In the 2018/19 Budget the NSW Government has invested more than \$390 million over four years in supporting victim-survivors to rebuild their lives and holding perpetrators to account. This investment is in addition to the hundreds of millions of dollars the Government spends each year to combat domestic and family violence through mainstream and other services in justice, police, health, child protection, social housing and homelessness services.

The NSW Government was the first state in Australia to launch a \$20 million Innovation Fund, with a particular focus on prevention and early intervention initiatives.

PAGES 10-11 – CHANGE THE STORY FRAMEWORK

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: What are some of the differences that you personally see between the Change the Story framework and the strategy that the New South Wales Government has chosen to adopt instead about the way in which Change the Story focuses on gender equality? What are some of the core differences that you see between your approach, Minister, and the rest of the country's?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Before I ask the secretary to answer that—and I am not sure that it is possible to give an answer today—might I say that the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research [BOCSAR] data demonstrates that New South Wales has a reduction in the rate of victimisation for domestic and family violence much more significant than elsewhere in Australia, where in fact the victimisation rate has gone up. Grievous bodily harm associated with domestic violence over the eight years to 2016-17 has reduced by 15½ per cent. BOCSAR—a very credible, criminal statistical organisation—would confirm that what we are doing in domestic violence is absolutely on the right track.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Has the New South Wales Government developed a specific violence prevention strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children in New South Wales that is led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Again, I will refer to my colleague.

Ms MULKERIN: I think we would need to take that on notice in order to correctly answer that.

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: That sounds like a "no".

Ms PRU GOWARD: No, it means we will take it on notice.

ANSWER: The NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2022 and the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2017-2021 Blueprint both cater to all women and children in our community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Information about the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy is available at http://www.women.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/388846/dfv-prevention-intervention-strategy.pdf

PAGES 11-12 – LEAVING CARE PLANS

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Absolutely, given the tragic result of those who end up on the street in some sort of exploitation or trafficking. It is very important to get them off the street. Minister, the Committee heard about leaving care plans being completed by only 30 per cent of the non-government organisations [NGOs]. This came from the recommendations of the inquiry about NGOs having more accountability to ensure that they have completed care plans for youth leaving care. Has there been an increase in that?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would like to ask the secretary if he can answer that.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: New permanency support reforms have seen us both recontract with non-government providers of care and also ask them to deliver different services, explicitly family preservation and family unification. As I recall, as part of that recontracting we have introduced some additional measures of performance, and one of those is making sure that both FACS, as an accredited out-of-home care provider, and non-government partners track and report on and help to account for the preparation of quality leaving care plans.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I will keep going. I have many questions for this session.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: And to the question of how we are performing; we are happy to take that question on notice and provide a response.

ANSWER: I am advised that as at 30 June 2017, 71.6% of children and young people in OOHC had a current and approved leaving care plan. FACS is working to improve the scale and quality of leaving care planning across the sector, including conducting 14 master classes across NSW attended by over 600 caseworkers and managers to increase the number and quality of leaving care plans.

PAGE 12 – NGO CONTRACTS

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Minister, how many organisations working with children and families have had funding agreements terminated before the end of their contracted term?

Ms PRU GOWARD: You are referring to the non-government sector?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Yes.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I have some material on that.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: You can take that on notice.

Ms PRU GOWARD: As you know, I have always believed in the importance of the non-government sector and the contribution it can make.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Absolutely.

Ms PRU GOWARD: We have partnerships with a great number of NGOs, small and large, all over New South Wales. We fund them in child welfare and foster care, we fund community housing providers, we fund specialist homelessness services, we fund domestic violence services, we fund early intervention and community strengthening services, and in fact historically they have always played a significant role. Our oldest non-government organisations have provided services and support for well over a century. They include the Benevolent Society, Barnardo's, St Vincent de Paul, and the wonderful Wayside Chapel more recently.

Non-government organisations have evolved to provide some of the most valued services. We have a particularly strong partnership with non-government organisations in the out-of-home-care sector. Thanks to the recommendation of Justice Wood, we have managed to transfer a significant amount of out-of-home care to the non-government sector. In the 2017-18 financial year, we funded more than 1,500 service providers across almost 2,900 contracts, and the value of that funding was \$1.2 billion. I will ask the secretary to provide additional information.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: We will have to take that question on notice.

ANSWER: I am advised that in 2017-18 six contracts for child and family services were terminated for convenience by agreement between FACS and the service provider before the end date of the contract. Three were due to a merger/acquisition and three voluntarily relinquished funding.

PAGE 13 – LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL INQUIRY INTO CHILD PROTECTION

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: The question was how many of the recommendations have been implemented. Do you have a figure?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: We have a copy of our response to the Legislative Council that provides a status update on the implementation of each of the recommendations.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I simply want to know how many of the recommendations you have implemented.

Ms PRU GOWARD: As you know, some have been implemented.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I simply want the numerical total. If you do not have it here, I am happy for the question to be taken on notice.

The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS: Do you want the document tabled?

Ms PRU GOWARD: It was tabled in the Parliament at the end of August.

The Hon. Dr PETER PHELPS: Is that the original response?

Ms PRU GOWARD: No, it is the response tabled in August this year.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: It would be helpful if we could have that number.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will see if we can get it by the end of the day.

ANSWER: The NSW Government has now tabled a whole-of-government progress report on the implementation of the NSW Government's response to the Legislative Council General Purpose Standing Committee No. 2 (the Committee) – *Child Protection*. The progress report provides an update on the implementation of initiatives relevant to recommendations of the Committee that were supported by the Government, as well as the status of work related to recommendations that were not supported. All 28 recommendations have been addressed in the progress report.

PAGE 16-17 – VACANT PROPERTIES

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: My question is: How many vacant properties are in New South Wales at the moment? I am not interested in the turnover rate. I am interested in how many vacant properties are sitting there as 60,000 people languish on the public housing waiting list.

Ms PRU GOWARD: At any point in time, as you can imagine, that number would vary considerably.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Yes, but the Productivity Commission report says that it is 2,094.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: No. Sorry, I do not mean to debate a point without having the counting rule in front of me but it does not translate that way. We do not right now have 2,094 vacant properties and there is never a day on which we do. We can provide a response on notice, point in time.

Ms SKEWES: It is a very precise question and I think it is probably best to provide a response to you on notice once we have the data in front of us.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Okay. I am interested in knowing, Minister, why so many properties—because this is a significant decrease, and if we want to talk about records, when Labor was last in government it was 99.9 per cent was the vacancy rate according to the Productivity Commission—

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Actually that figure was wrong and was subsequently corrected.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: The 99.9 per cent?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: The 99.9 per cent was wrong and was subsequently corrected by the Productivity Commission.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Anyway, to your point, we have got vacant properties. Our purpose is to ensure that vacant restoration is achieved as quickly as possible. We have to stop vandalism. Any unnecessary delays in the re-letting process mean, as you say, people wait on the housing list. We want people to take up their residences as soon as possible but we are a responsible landlord. Sometimes significant property damage is incurred and that takes time to repair.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: We will wait to see that information provided on notice.

ANSWER: I am advised that information about vacancies is available on the Productivity Commission's website at www.pc.gov.au. I am further advised the 99.9 per cent public housing occupancy rate as at 30 June 2011 was inaccurate.

PAGES 17, 25 – AUDITOR-GENERAL’S REPORT ON ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Did you release the internal evaluation that has formulated that view for you?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to ask if we released anything publicly,

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I want to come back to antisocial behaviour in social housing. Minister, from February 2016 to December 2017, 6,755 incidents of antisocial behaviour were recorded in public housing tenancies. Of those, 4,028 had no recorded outcome. I am quoting from the Auditor-General's report. These are remarkably large figures when you say that every tenant should be happy that this policy is now in place.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Ninety per cent of tenants say they are, according to our survey. Obviously some of those reports are not able to be substantiated but I will ask the secretary to—

Mr Coutts-Trotter: I will invite Mr Vevers who is into the detail of this to respond.

Mr VEVERS: Those cases were investigated and concluded but some of our staff failed to complete an administrative step. We explained this to the Audit Office and you will find that the Auditor-General's report outlines that and outlines the fact that those cases were closed and dealt with. So it is incorrect to say there was no outcome for those cases.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Perhaps you could provide on notice where that was clarified.

ANSWER:

I am advised that the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) response to the NSW Auditor General’s Report into Managing Antisocial Behaviour in Public Housing is contained within the Report. For further information please refer specifically to page 12 of that report where it states:

“FACS informed us that ‘no outcome’ generally relates to cases which are under investigation, or where administrative steps such as closing duplicate reports in HOMES-ASB have not been finalised. Subsequent to providing these data to us, FACS advised that it has reviewed all of these cases and they have been dealt with under the policy except in instances where the case is still open, under investigation, or awaiting further information.”

PAGES 20-21 – ABORIGINAL IDENTITY OF CHILDREN IN OOHC

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I have had repeated concerns to my office from lawyers, including people within the department, about the increase in de-identification, the number of Aboriginal children who are having their Aboriginal identity removed following a decision by the department. It is for that reason that I asked for the data. I think you would agree with me that data would be important, Minister?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will ask the secretary to answer. I think, Mr Shoebridge, that we will have to take it on notice.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: I will let you know what happened. I am happy for you to take it on notice and I appreciate it. When I asked for the data I was told in a decision that I really just received, I think either yesterday or the day before, that this data was not captured; it was not in the department and that the department has advised that it would be required to interrogate the internal audit log in the key information directory system for all children that identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. There are currently no standard reports that enable it to extract that information and it would have to employ special technical skills.

Ms PRU GOWARD: So what are you suggesting, Mr Shoebridge?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: What I am suggesting is that this information should be known and captured and if it requires a small additional amount of resourcing to capture and find information, I was just hoping you would take that on board?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I can certainly consider that. I would want to be convinced, and I do not know the resourcing implications of changing our data systems, but I do know how significant an issue it is.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: As I understand it, it is not a question of changing your data systems; it is just writing the program to extract the data from the current system.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Right. Well, if it is as simple as that, what do you think, Mr Coutts-Trotter?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: I think we will provide advice to you very quickly on whether we can do it.

ANSWER: I am advised that FACS has reviewed these concerns and am further advised that the preliminary findings are as follows:

- A preliminary data examination of ChildStory indicates that there is no evidence of systemic bias in changing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status values to Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status values (for all children and young persons records, not just out of home care).
- There is no evidence that ChildStory users are changing records in order to reduce the number of children and young people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Such changes to records typically occur to reflect additional information that has become available, or to correct information that was incorrectly entered.

This is a preliminary analysis only. FACS is undertaking a more comprehensive analysis of the underlying information and advise of the findings when they are available.

PAGES 21-22 – COMMUNICATION FROM SECRETARY AROUND ABORIGINAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: There are real concerns across other parts, so where have LAGs been established and where are they likely to be established?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: There are 13 LAGs at the moment and I do not have a locational list in my mind. As you would probably be aware, we meet regularly; I meet regularly with Grandmothers Against Removal [GMAR] NSW. If there are any concerns expressed about particular locations, I would be more than happy to receive them to see if we can act on it. I, at the request of GMAR, have produced communications internally to explain what the guiding principles require of us and that is essentially that we work alongside and walk alongside Aboriginal people in keeping kids safe. Our responsibility is to respond positively where local Aboriginal communities come to us and ask us to establish a LAC.

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: If you could tender that correspondence—

Ms PRU GOWARD: A redacted—

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: —or at least a representative subset of that correspondence with whatever necessary redactions are appropriate, I would appreciate that.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Okay. Sorry, the correspondence?

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: Well you said you correspond with the department and you advise it in writing about the importance of this.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Oh, sure. It was a video and related material.

ANSWER: I am advised that the materials referred to by Mr Coutts-Trotter can be found at the following link: <https://youtu.be/VJvMD2VggVY>. They were uploaded to the FACS Intranet in May 2017. Additional material is available at <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/reforms/aboriginal-outcomes/guiding-principles/chapters/local-advisory-groups-lags>.

PAGE 22 – CASEWORKERS REQUIRED TO SEE EVERY CHILD AT ROSH

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: How many caseworkers would be required to provide a response to every substantiated report?

Ms PRU GOWARD: As you know, we have expanded the number of caseworkers in this year's budget, as we did last year, and that is why we are confident we can see more children. As you know, there are other children who are reported via mandatory reports and they of course are in services so they are, in a sense, being seen. I will ask the secretary to answer.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: It might be helpful if we took it on notice and provided you with the details.

ANSWER: I am advised that the number of additional caseworkers required would depend on a range of factors. I am advised there have been significant improvements over the last seven years to see more children. 15 000 more children were seen in 2016-17 than under the former Labor Government in 2010-11. The NSW Government has funded and introduced new evidence-based therapeutic programs to keep families together including Functional Family Therapy Child Welfare and Multi-systemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect which will help 900 families a year. In addition, there are a range of reforms underway to improve the service system to respond to the needs of children who are at risk.

PAGE 24 – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LINE

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Thank you. Minister, how much funding is currently allocated to the Domestic Violence Line? I will ask a few questions and you can maybe refer to all of them. How many domestic violence calls were made during the 2017-18 period? How many of those calls were referred to the NSW Police Force? How many of the calls relate to repeat offenders? How many of the cases required emergency accommodation? How many of these people were turned away from emergency accommodation due to shortages in accommodation?

Ms PRU GOWARD: There are a number of questions there.

Ms MULKERIN: We might have to give some of the detail on notice.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: That is fine. How many calls were received by the Domestic Violence Line during the 2017-18 period?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: I would need to confirm that.

ANSWER: I am advised that the NSW Government has allocated \$1.7 million for the Domestic Violence Line in 2018-19.

I am advised that 16,228 domestic violence calls were made to FACS DV Line in 2016-17. I am advised that 2,771 domestic violence calls made to the FACS DV Line in 2016-17 were referred to the NSW Police Force.

Further information about referrals to the Domestic Violence Line is available at <https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/DomesticandFamilyViolence/Dashboard>.

PAGE 27 – DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

The Hon. ADAM SEARLE: Turning to the private sector, uptake is low largely because private sector employees do not have the right to paid leave for this purpose. Under the Fair Work Act, the States are left with the responsibility of providing leave for victims of crime. Do you have any plans to ensure that all employees in New South Wales, including in the private sector, have access to paid leave for reasons of domestic violence?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Would you allow me to take that up with my colleague the Attorney General?

ANSWER: The NSW Government strongly supports initiatives that enable workforce participation, as well as ensuring access to leave. I note the Fair Work Commission decision of 26 March 2018 to provide five days' unpaid leave to employees on modern awards experiencing family and domestic violence. The Fair Work Commission has said it will look at the issue of family and domestic violence leave again in three years' time.

PAGES 27-28 - WDV CAS

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I am told that, as a result of these changes, there might be reductions on the North Coast, in Western, far South Coast and South Coast resulting in a reduction in full-time equivalent staff. Is that totally a matter for Legal Aid. That is not something that FACS would find concerning?

Mr Coutts-Trotter: No.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: This is a question for the Minister: A reduction in full-time equivalent staff is not something that you would find concerning?

Ms PRU GOWARD: It is a hypothetical question at this point. I will get back to you with some further information.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: No, Minister. I am informed that, as a result of the tender, this is going to occur. We are going to see a reduction—in some cases, by half—on the North Coast of full-time equivalent staff.

Ms PRU GOWARD: I will have to take that on notice because it is not my understanding and I will make sure I give you the right answer.

ANSWER: Legal Aid manages the WDV CAS program. I am advised that a tender closed on Sunday 9 September 2018. The tender process has now been discontinued.

PAGE 32 – CHILDREN IN OOHK BECAUSE OF PARENTAL INCARCERATION

Mr DAVID SHOEBRIDGE: To the extent that you can get some data, can you provide that on notice? Of both restoration and numbers.

Ms WALKER: If I could take a further look at what we have got available, that would be great.

ANSWER: Children enter out-of-home-care when they are at risk and when they are not safe at home. I am advised that a child with appropriate family supports and who is not at risk of significant harm would not enter out-of-home-care as a result of a parent being incarcerated. I am advised that FACS does not collect data relating to entries in to care as a result of parental incarceration.

PAGE 33 – MALE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Can you still indicate to me what the Government is doing to provide domestic violence court advocacy service for male victims to support them through the criminal justice system?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I would have to ask Michael Coutts-Trotter.

Mr Coutts-Trotter: In turn, I will ask Deirdre Mulkerin or Melinda Norton.

Ms NORTON: That support is provided through Victims Services. So I would have to take the question on notice for the exact number, but Victims Services provides that support.

ANSWER: I am advised that under the Safer Pathway framework, all men identified by the NSW Police Force as victims of domestic and family violence are automatically referred to Victims Services for support. I am advised that the NSW Government is investing \$13 million over four years to provide support to male victims through Safer Pathway. This includes \$3.1 million in the 2018/19 Budget. Between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2018, the 43 operational Safer Pathway sites received a total of 47,826 referrals for male victims of domestic and family violence.

PAGE 34 – ROUGH SLEEPERS IN WINTER

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I noted when I travelled to New York and looked at homelessness that once it reaches a certain temperature—below freezing, I think it was—basically the authorities cannot leave the homeless on the street, which virtually makes zero homelessness for one night. Have you looked at any initiatives where we could apply such strategies, given the mid-winter situations such as that?

Ms PRU GOWARD: It is across New South Wales. We see people sleeping on trains.

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: But on our coldest nights.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes, and I think that is one of the reasons we assertively encourage people to take hotel accommodation, to stop them being cold overnight. We have supported temporary emergency accommodation. What I am trying to do is encourage them to see that you do not just leave the hotel in the morning and check out and go back onto the street; that we can help with health problems, addictions and illness. That then enables us to work with the homeless to put them in permanent accommodation where they do not break a tenancy, but I will ask the secretary—

Mr Coutts-Trotter: We do—

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: I have got one more question within 20 seconds, sorry. I will take that other one on notice, Mr Coutts-Trotter; I would love to hear the answer.

ANSWER: I am advised that FACS has conducted 84 intensive outreach efforts across eight locations in the inner city of Sydney, on overnight trains and in four locations in Parramatta since March 2017. Since that time our intensive outreach for people sleeping rough in Sydney has meant that more than 270 people previously sleeping rough are now in permanent long-term accommodation. The 2018/19 Budget committed more than \$1 billion on homelessness services over the next four years which includes \$3.8 million for additional assertive outreach to proactively support rough sleepers. I have asked my staff to examine the New York model and the relevance to NSW.

PAGE 34 – STAYING HOME LEAVING VIOLENCE

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: What is the Government doing to increase efforts of relocating the perpetrator, whilst the victim seeks treatment or goes to court, so victims and survivors of domestic violence can feel safer in their own homes and not resort to refuges or homelessness services?

Ms PRU GOWARD: Perpetrators of domestic violence?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Perpetrators.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Relocating them?

The Hon. PAUL GREEN: Yes, relocating them instead of the victims—who on most occasions, as you know, are women.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Staying Home Leaving Violence is a program where the victim, usually a woman, stays in the home and the perpetrator has to be relocated. If you would like the specifics of what we are able to do—

Mr Coutts-Trotter: Take it on notice, perhaps.

ANSWER: Staying Home Leaving Violence supports victims of domestic and family violence and their children to stay safely in their own home or a home of their choice, while police remove the perpetrator. Staying Home Leaving Violence currently operates in 27 locations in NSW, with five new sites to be added as part of the NSW Homelessness Strategy. These five new sites will be Griffith, Port Stephens, Albury, Richmond Valley and Coonamble/Walgett. I am advised that further information is available online at <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/domestic-violence/services-and-support/programs/staying-home-leaving-violence>

PAGES 34-35 - CORRESPONDENCE

The CHAIR: Very quickly before we go, Minister, have you been able to progress a matter that I believe has been raised with you by the member for *[EVIDENCE EXPUNGED BY RESOLUTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2018]*

Ms PRU GOWARD: What was your question?

The CHAIR: Have you been able to progress the matter?

Ms PRU GOWARD: I might need to give you that advice—of course there are whole confidentiality concerns there.

The CHAIR: Just let me finish. It has reached a crisis point. I wrote to you on 20 July seeking urgent attention. I have not even received a letter of acknowledgement. I am raising it now formally to see whether we can move it along. It is very urgent.

Ms PRU GOWARD: Yes, thank you.

ANSWER: I am advised that a response has been provided to this correspondence.