

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION
BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

1. Of the 195 children housed in alternative accommodation as of the 26th of August 2019, how many were in serviced apartments that contain a kitchen and a lounge room?

I am advised that a ‘Serviced apartment’ refers to an extended stay furnished apartment providing hotel-like amenities, with additional space including private cooking facilities and separate living and sleeping areas.

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2. Where and how is the additional investment in trauma support and in support for carers being invested?

I am advised:

The NSW Government invests in a range of programs to support carers who are dealing with the trauma that children and young people in care experience. This includes:

- New training in managing trauma related behaviours currently being piloted by the Department of Communities and Justice aimed at both carers and caseworkers.
- Two specialist services that provide intensive support to children, young people and carers;
 - OurSpace, operated by the Australian Childhood Foundation working with children in care and their carers,
 - LINKS Trauma Healing Provided by Communities and Justice Psychologists. This service provides trauma treatment services to children and young people aged under 16 (and their carers).
- General trauma training for carers through My Forever Family NSW

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3. Of the seven Aboriginal children that were adopted in the past financial year how many were adopted into Aboriginal families?

I am advised that the seven children were adopted to non-Aboriginal carers.

The children and young people were aged from 5 to 17 years and three young people gave sole consent to their adoption.

All of the children had been in the care of their prospective adoptive parents from the age of 1 year old or younger.

The decision-maker which is the Supreme Court of New South Wales must be satisfied that adoption is clearly preferable to any other action that may be taken by law.

A cultural plan is developed and attached to the Registered Care Plan for any Aboriginal child placed for Adoption. The Cultural Plan requires thorough Aboriginal consultation and sets out the ways in which the child will remain connected to their culture and community

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4. What is the recommissioning process that will apply to the 1400 contracts held by 600 + services, which expire mid 2020?

I am advised:

The scheduling of contract negotiations will be coordinated across the different funding programs, and by provider.

New contracts will commence on 1 July 2020.

5. How has the sector been consulted in the design of this process?

I am advised:

DCJ has consulted with the 14 housing, homelessness, child and family and community services peaks in June and August 2019 and most recently on 4 September 2019.

Consultations have occurred with service providers who are members of an established DCJ working group.

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6. Will services that sign up to the next version of the HSA then be able to move onto a later version if in their interests to do so?

I am advised:

Yes.

7. How will DCJ ensure that service providers understand:
- a. the provisions of the HSA and their obligations under it, and
 - b. the recommissioning process to apply, the steps required of organisations to participate and how decisions will be made?

I am advised:

Information sessions for service providers about the Human Services Agreement and the recommissioning process will be rolled out from October 2019 and communication materials will be tailored to the program types relevant for each provider.

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8. Has the Megan Davis review on Aboriginal child removals been provided to the government and if so when and when will it be released?

I am advised:

The Minister's Office received updates from Professor Davis about when her overdue report will be transmitted to the Minister. The Minister has written to Professor Davis and requested the report be provided to the Minister immediately. The Minister in his correspondence to Professor Davis has noted that her written updates on drafting so far will not be accepted in place of the promised report.

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9. In the last financial year, what number and proportion of young people reaching 18 in Out-of-home Care (OOHC) remained with their carer under the Policy on provision of financial support to foster and kinship carers of young people 18 years and older completing full-time studies

I am advised:

Preliminary data shows that over 1300 young care leavers received aftercare payments to support them with a range of activities including pursuing education.

10. What provisions are in place to enable a young person who is not in full time study, due to medical, health or other reasons, to remain with their foster carer after the age of 18?

I am advised:

The term ‘leaving care’ refers to the expiration of the order allocating parental responsibility to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services. It does not mean the young person leaves the carer’s home. Any young person leaving care is able to remain with their carers after the age of 18 if both the young person and their carer agree.

Part six of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 requires the Minister to provide or arrange such assistance for care leavers aged 15 and over that the Minister considers necessary for their safety, welfare and well-being. Assistance is provided until the young person reaches 25 years with discretion to continue providing assistance beyond that age.

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11. What is the total funding allocated for the OOHC (permanency support) program in the 2019-20 Budget?

I am advised:

The budget for 2019/20 is \$664.6 million

(a) How does this compare to 2018-2019?

The budget for 2018/2019 was \$639 million (source: [2018-19 NSW budget factsheet](#)).

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12. What is the total funding allocated for intensive family preservation and restoration programs in the 2019 Budget?
- (a) How has ‘intensive family preservation and restoration programs’ been defined (i.e. which programs are included in this figure)?
 - (b) How does this compare to funding allocated for these programs in 2018-19?

I am advised that information about funding is available in the Annual Report.

https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/637243/2017-18-Volume-3-Funds-granted-to-non-government-organisations.pdf

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13. What is the total funding for early intervention programs relating to child protection and wellbeing?

How has 'early intervention programs' been defined (i.e. which programs are included in this figure)?

Answer

I am advised that information funded services can be found in the Annual Report.

https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/637243/2017-18-Volume-3-Funds-granted-to-non-government-organisations.pdf

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14. How many Family Action Plans (preservation) were made in 2017-18?
- (a) Of these how many resulted in family preservation?
 - (b) Guardianship?
 - (c) Adoption?
 - (d) Care of the Minister?

I am advised that Family Action Plans are not currently part of standard routine reporting and data is therefore not available.

15. How many Family Action Plans (preservation) were made in 2018-19?
- a. Of these how many resulted in family preservation?
 - b. Guardianship?
 - c. Adoption?
 - d. Care of the Minister?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 14

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16. How many case reviews in 2018-19 have considered the potential for successful restoration?

I am advised:

In accordance with legislation, determining whether a child can be safely restored to their family is always considered when a child first comes into care.

In line with policy, case plan reviews must occur annually for all children and where appropriate the case plan goal may change.

17. What percentage involved Aboriginal children?

(a) What percentage involved non-Aboriginal families?

Please refer to the answer to supplementary question 16

18. How many case reviews in 2018-19 resulted in successful restoration of children to their parents?

(a) What percentage involved Aboriginal children?

(b) What percentage involved non-Aboriginal families?

Please refer to the answer to supplementary question 16.

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19. How many intensive family preservation support packages were provided to Aboriginal families following restoration in 2018-19?

I am advised:

Information about the number of Aboriginal children and young people receiving an intensive family preservation service is published annually.

Data for 2018-19 will be released in 2020.

Data for previous years is available in the FACS Statistical Report at:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/statistical-report>

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20. What is the incentive-based pricing structure and amount for out-of-home-care NGO contracts with respect to family preservation?
- (a) Restoration?
 - (b) Guardianship?
 - (c) Adoption?

I am advised information on pricing is available at:

https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/437738/Blank-Schedule-3-Payment-Provisions.pdf

This information is available at the following location on the Department's external site:

www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/children-families/deliver-ppsp

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21. How many referrals to early legal advice were made by FACS in 2017-18 and 2018-19?

I am advised:

DCJ provides a variety of support services to families across its portfolio areas. While the number of referrals to early legal advice cannot be drawn from our databases the department works with Legal Aid NSW in Alternate Dispute Resolutions, adoption matters, and a variety of legal contexts, including Victims Services.

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Case Plans

22. How many children in NSW had case plans in NSW in 2017-18?

- (a) How many of these had a goal of family preservation?
- (b) Restoration?
- (c) Guardianship?
- (d) Adoption?
- (e) Long term care?

Answer

I am advised:

All accredited out of home care providers are required to case plan for children annually. Case plans. All plans are required to include information about the appropriate permanency goal for the child.

23. How many children in NSW had case plans in NSW in 2018-19?

- (a) How many of these had a goal of family preservation?
- (b) Restoration?
- (c) Guardianship?
- (d) Adoption?
- (e) Long term care?

Answer

I am advised:

All accredited out of home care providers are required to case plan for children annually. Case plans. All plans are required to include information about the appropriate permanency goal for the child.

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24. How many care applications have been made to the court since 4 February 2019?

I am advised that there have been approximately 623 initiating care applications filed in the NSW Children's Court since 4 February 2019.

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25. How many Family Group Conferences have taken place prior to an application to the court for care orders since 4 February 2019? (s 37(1A)- Requirement for ADR prior to care application took effect from 4 February 2019)

I am advised:

Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) is a term used to describe a variety of different processes used by the Department of Communities and Justice including Family Group Conferencing.

A range of ADR mechanisms can be used by Department of Communities and Justice practitioners including:

- Family Group Conferencing (facilitated by a Communities and Justice family group conferencing facilitator)
- Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) (facilitated by Legal Aid or a Family Dispute Resolution Service)
- Care and Protection Mediation (facilitated by Legal Aid)
- Mediation (facilitated by a Community Justice Centre mediator)
- Private mediation (facilitated by an accredited mediator - this could be a mediator chosen or agreed to by the family).

Data on forms of ADR other than family group conferencing is not currently available but will be reported following modifications to Open Practice and ChildStory by end 2019.

Since 4 February 2019 until end August 2019, 54 Family Group Conferences have taken place prior to an application to the court.

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26. How many children received an annual review of their case plan in 2017-18? 2018-19?
- (a) In how many of these did the child actively participate in the review?
 - (b) In how many of these to the parents actively participate in the review?

I am advised:

Annual case planning is a requirement of all accredited out of home care providers. Children and young people, their families and the people caring for them must be given opportunities to participate in case planning processes. Data for 17/18 is not available. Data for 2018-19 is not yet available.

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Guardianship and Adoption

27. How many guardianship orders have been made by consent in 2018-19

(a) How many of these relate to Aboriginal children?

I am advised:

This data is not currently available.

28. How many guardianship orders have been made by consent since 4 February 2019?

How many of these relate to Aboriginal children?

See answer to question 27.

29. How many applications were made for adoption in NSW in 2018-19?

I am advised:

DCJ does not hold the entirety of this information, the full data set would need to be provided by the Supreme Court of NSW. Information relating to adoption data can be found at <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-welfare-services/adoptions>

30. How many adoptions were there in NSW in 2018-19?

I am advised:

There were 134 out of home care adoptions were made in NSW in 2018/19. For further data relating to all adoptions, please refer to <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-welfare-services/adoptions>.

31. How many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in NSW were adopted in 2018-19?

I am advised:

There were 7 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children or young people adopted in NSW in 2018-19.

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Family Functional Therapy and Their Futures Matter

32. Family Functional Therapy (FFT) was developed in the US to reduce delinquency, criminal behaviour and illicit drug use in young people. What evidence base does the NSW government have that this model is effective with families with children at risk of removal and families affected by domestic violence?

I am advised that the NSW Government provides funding for the *Stronger Families, Better Communities* project, which provides Functional Family Therapy for families with adolescents who use violence.

<https://www.women.nsw.gov.au/commissioning/domestic-and-family-violence-innovation-fund/domestic-and-family-violence-innovation-fund-round-2>

33. How much did it cost the NSW government in 2017-18 and 2018-19 to rollout FFT – Child Welfare (FFT-CW) across NSW?

(a) What are the program's projected costs for 2019-20 and 2020-21?

34. How much did the NSW government spend in 2018-19 on providing US-based training for therapists to deliver FFT-CW in NSW?

Refer to 33a

(a) How much does the government expect to spend on training costs in 2019-20?

Refer to 33a

35. The 2019-20 NSW Budget Children and Families facts sheet announced a \$166.5 million commitment to Their Futures Matter.

(a) What was the actual spend in 2018-19 for the overall Their Futures Matter budget by program?

(b) **I am advised that as part of the 2016-17 Budget, the NSW Government committed an additional \$190 million over four years to respond to the David Tune's**

Independent Review of Out of Home Care in New South Wales

What are the 2019-20 funding allocations for the overall Their Futures Matter budget by program, including forward estimates?

(c) **See 35a**

- (d) What are the existing programs not previously funded under Their Futures Matter, but are now considered part of Their Futures Matter for the purposes of funding allocation from 2019-20 onwards?

See 35a

- (e) What is the 2019-20 funding allocation for family preservation and restoration, including but not limited to Functional Family Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy for Child Abuse and Neglect and the intensive family preservation program, including forward estimates?

See 35a

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36. How many Carers were supported by FACS through the Children's Court to obtain guardianship orders and allowance by year since 2014?

I am advised:

The Department reports the total number of children and young people under guardianship orders. The relevant figures are:

2014-15	2418
2015-16	2486
2016-17	2663
2017-18	2849

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Foster care agencies

37. Can the Minister advise on the turnover of staff employed by agencies working for foster care agencies?

I am advised:

This data is not available.

38. Does the Minister have an age profile of case workers employed by foster care agencies?

I am advised:

This data is not available.

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39. Is the Minister looking to improving access to secure and affordable rental housing to parents identified by FACS as being at risk so as to reduce the incidence of family stress and breakdown?

I am advised:

The NSW Government is trialling a rental assistance program called Rent Choice Assist. Rent Choice Assist provides rent support to low income households that have experienced a financial shock, such as loss of employment or illness, and need some assistance to either maintain their current tenancy or access affordable accommodation in the private rental market.

The Rent Choice Assist trial began in September 2018 and will help up to 200 households in the four trial locations: Blacktown, South Western Sydney, Hurstville/Burwood and Newcastle/Lake Macquarie.

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Social Housing

40. In relation to the redevelopment of current social housing in NSW, how many additional social housing units will be added to the total stock of social housing from the asset recycling process?

I am advised:

The Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy has the biggest social housing building program of any state or territory across the country through the Communities Plus \$22 billion building program, which is delivering 23,000 social housing, 500 affordable housing and up to 40,000 private dwellings over 10 years.

41. How many additional units of social housing are in the pipeline and when are they projected to come online?

I am advised:

Please refer to the response to question 40. In addition, the Social and Affordable Housing Fund will deliver over 3400 new dwellings. As at 31 July 2019, 581 dwellings were service ready while 1408 dwellings were currently under construction.

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42. What concrete actions is the government planning to halve rough sleeping?

I am advised:

On 28 June 2019, the Premier set new social priorities to tackle tough community challenges, including reducing street homelessness across NSW by 50 per cent by 2025.

The 2019/20 Budget includes funding of over \$1 billion to continue the Government's commitment to tackle homelessness through assertive outreach and early intervention, as well as in social and affordable housing programs for families and individuals in need.

The NSW Homelessness Strategy, released in June 2018, sets out the NSW Government's plan for the next five years, focusing on prevention responses that address the root causes of homelessness and early intervention responses that will reduce the longer-term impact of homelessness. Further information on the NSW Homelessness Strategy can be found on: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/reforms/homelessness>.

Since 2017, the NSW Government's assertive outreach response has supported more than 500 people experiencing street homelessness in the City of Sydney to find long-term housing. An expansion of assertive outreach is underway in Tweed Heads and Newcastle as part of the NSW Homelessness Strategy.

43. What dedicated NSW Government programs exist for older people at risk of homelessness?

I am advised:

Specialist homelessness services provide a client-centred response built around the individual client's needs, circumstances, experiences and choices. This includes providing services that respond to the needs of older people.

Further information about homelessness services and programs can be found on:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/funded/programs/homelessness/specialist-services>.

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Social Housing Supply

44. What is the breakdown of existing funding for social housing supply, including funds gained from prior sales, and the net gain from the sale proceeds to deliver new social housing supply?

I am advised:

All sales proceeds are reinvested back into social housing.

45. Is there any new capital funding investment to deliver additional social housing supply (separate to those being replaced)? How many new dwellings will be delivered?

I am advised:

The Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW strategy has the biggest social housing building program of any state or territory across the country through the Communities Plus \$22 billion building program, which is delivering 23,000 social housing, 500 affordable housing and up to 40,000 private dwellings over 10 years.

In addition, the Social and Affordable Housing Fund will deliver over 3400 new dwellings. As at 31 July 2019, 581 dwellings were service ready while 1408 dwellings were currently under construction.

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Q46 What are the 2019-20 funding allocations for specific programs under the NSW Homelessness Strategy?

I am advised:

The 2019/20 Budget includes funding of over \$1 billion to continue the Government's commitment to tackle homelessness through assertive outreach and early intervention, as well as in social and affordable housing programs for families and individuals in need.

The NSW Homelessness Strategy, released in June 2018, sets out the NSW Government's plan for the next five years, focusing on prevention responses that address the root causes of homelessness and early intervention responses that will reduce the longer-term impact of homelessness. The NSW Government has committed new funding of \$61 million over four years to implement the Strategy. This funding includes:

- \$20 million for homelessness social impact investment to reduce exits from health institutions into homelessness
- \$10.7 million for assertive outreach to proactively support people sleeping rough, providing an end to end model with increased health capability
- \$10.6 million for sustaining tenancies support, by addressing complex needs such as mental health and drug and alcohol issues
- \$9.1 million for additional transitional accommodation
- \$6.2 million to expand Staying Home Leaving Violence program to five new sites. This program prevents women and families from becoming homeless as a result of domestic and family violence by supporting them to remain in their homes, or a home of their choice, while the perpetrator is removed.
- \$4.7 million for universal risk screening and supports to respond early to young people at risk.

I am advised that information on the NSW Homelessness Strategy can be found on:

[https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/reforms/homelessness.](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/reforms/homelessness)

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ChildStory IT system

47. Is every child currently in out of home care reflected in the ChildStory IT system?

I am advised:

Yes. All data relating to child protection and out-of-home care that was recorded in KIDS has been migrated to ChildStory.

48. Is there information missing from the records of any child currently in out of home care from the ChildStory IT system, and if so:

- (a) What is the estimated percentage of children in out of home care with information missing from their records?
- (b) What process is currently underway to resolve the incomplete records?
- (c) How long will this process take to complete?
- (d) How much will this process cost to complete?

I am advised:

All data relating to child protection and out-of-home care that was recorded in KIDS has been migrated to ChildStory.

49. Is each Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child in out of home care properly identified as such on the ChildStory IT system?

- (a) If not, what is the estimated percentage of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children inappropriately identified on the ChildStory IT system?
- (b) What process is currently underway to resolve the incomplete records?
- (c) How long will this process take to complete? How much will this process cost to complete?

I am advised:

Identification of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status is a mandatory field to be completed on ChildStory. Caseworkers become aware of a child or young persons cultural background at various times throughout the course of their work.

At 30 June 2019, 6,800 children and young people identified as Aboriginal on ChildStory*.

*Data for 2018-19 is rounded preliminary data extracted on 19/08/2019 and is subject to change.

50. Shown by total cost from approval, by financial year, also broken down by cost type, what was the total cost of the ChildStory IT project to date including:

- (a) design,
- (b) implementation,
- (c) testing,
- (d) any training related to the project, and
- (e) any other relevant costs.

I am advised:

The total budget for ChildStory was \$131 million. This included design, testing, implementation and training.

51. Will the roll out and support of ChildStory be impacted by the efficiency dividend? What changes will have to be made to the implementation?

I am advised:

Efficiency dividends have not been applied to ChildStory in the 19/20 budget.

52. What is the funding allocation for ChildStory in 2019/20 and what remediation work still needs to be undertaken?

I am advised:

The allocated ChildStory budget for FY 2019-20 is \$8.5 million. ChildStory continues to make incremental enhancements in line with broader sector reform and ongoing improvements to ChildStory usability.

53. Why are some caseworkers having to rely on their colleagues to access or check KIDS records to ensure the accuracy of their work?

I am advised:

All KIDS records have been successfully migrated to ChildStory.

54. Will the Minister and Secretary give an assurance that access to KIDS will be continued for caseworkers until such time as it is clear all data remediation and other problems with ChildStory are resolved?

I am advised:

No new information has been recorded in KIDS since the end of 2017, ChildStory remains the single source of truth and is the approved client management system.

55. Why are caseworkers spending more time on their computers in the office since the introduction of ChildStory rather than providing support to children and young people at risk?

I am advised:

Preliminary data for 2018-19 show caseworkers provided a face-to-face response to more than 30,000 children reported at risk of significant harm. This is a 16% increase on the number of children seen in 2017-18 and the most children ever seen by caseworkers in a year.

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University Accommodation Grants pilot

56. How many Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students were assisted by the University Accommodation Grants in the:

- (a) 2017/18 financial year, and
- (b) 2018/19 financial year

I am advised:

The University Accommodation Grants pilot is managed by the Aboriginal Housing Office. Please redirect this question to the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

57. What are the outcomes of the University Accommodation Grants pilot program, including:

- (a) the number of recipients who have graduated university,
- (b) the number of recipients who remain at university, and
- (c) any other information that may inform as to the success or failure of the program,
- (d) broken down by financial year.

Please refer to response to supplementary question 56

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Their Futures Matter (TFM), now known as the Stronger Communities Implementation Unit (SCIU)

58. In the last year, TFM/SCIU has worked with many external consultants. In the last 12 months:
- (a) Specifically, which consultants has TFM/SCIU worked with?
 - (b) What was the contract value with each consultant?
 - (c) How much money was paid to each consultant?
 - (d) What was delivered by each consultant?
 - (e) Can you demonstrate how each consultant engaged with:
 - i. The Data Analytics Centre,
 - ii. The Mental Health Commission,
 - iii. The Advocate for Children and Young People, and
 - iv. Any other relevant funded peak bodies?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice publishes details of all consultants in its annual report.

59. In the last 12 months, in relation to organisations who have received funding from FACS by direct allocation and without any procurement/tendering/commissioning process:
- (a) How many organisations have received direct allocation funding this way?
 - (b) Which organisations have received direct allocation funding this way?
 - (c) Where were the organisations and/or their programs based who have received direct allocation funding this way?
 - (d) Why did these organisations receive direct allocation funding this way as opposed to via a procurement/tendering/commissioning process?

I am advised that this information is not available at this time.

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Sector Assistance Strategy (SAS)

60. Phase 1 SAS support to TEI funded NGOs has been extremely delayed. The 2017/18 Phase 1 SAS funding parcel of \$750,000 was released in June 2018 for delivery to TEI funded NGOs in the 2018/19 financial year:

- (a) How much funding did ACWA CCWT receive to deliver the SAS?
 - i. Who did ACWA CCWT sub-contract to deliver the SAS?
 - ii. How much did each sub-contractor receive?
 - iii. What did each sub-contractor deliver?
 - iv. How many TEI funded organisations were supported under each sub-contract?
 - v. How many individuals within TEI funded organisations were supported under each sub-contract?

- (b) How much funding did NCOSS receive to deliver the SAS?
 - i. Who did NCOSS sub-contract to deliver the SAS?
 - ii. How much did each sub-contractor receive?
 - iii. What did each sub-contractor deliver?
 - iv. How many individuals within TEI funded organisations were supported under each sub-contract?
 - v. How many individuals within TEI funded organisations were supported under each sub-contract?

- (c) Who else received SAS funding directly from FACS from this funding parcel?
 - i. How much funding did they each receive to deliver the SAS?
 - ii. What did they deliver?

I am advised:

ACWA, COSS, AMS, AbSec and a range of agencies received funding to deliver components of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Sector Assistance Strategy.

Information about what is being delivered under the Sector Assistance Strategy is available on: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/children-families/early-intervention/reform>.

61. There was a commitment from FACS for Phase 2 SAS of a further \$750,000 for the 2018/19 financial year:
- (a) How much of that funding was allocated?
 - (b) Which organisations or individuals received funding from that allocation?
 - (c) How much funding did each organisation or individual receive?
 - (d) What has each organisation or individual delivered?
 - (e) How many TEI funded organisations were supported through this funding?
 - (f) How many individuals within TEI funded organisations were supported through this funding?
 - (g) When will any remaining allocation be distributed?
 - (h) What is the process for determining to whom any remaining funding allocation will be distributed?

I am advised:

ACWA, COSS, AMS, AbSec and a range of agencies received funding to deliver components of the Targeted Earlier Intervention Sector Assistance Strategy.

Information about what is being delivered under the Sector Assistance Strategy is available on: <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/children-families/early-intervention/reform>.

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Children’s Guardian Bill

62. On August 20, 2019 the Minister introduced a new Children’s Guardian Bill that removes the reportable conduct scheme and other functions from the Ombudsman’s administration to that of the Children’s Guardian. The Minister said in his second reading speech that the purpose is to create “..a new Act consolidating the Children’s Guardian key powers, functions and responsibilities in one Act ...to address any gaps in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children in this State”

- (a) Can the Minister explain why the key function of the WWCC and child safety is left out of this bill? Why is this ‘gap’ left in the consolidation Bill?
- (b) Is this because it leaves open a future option or intention to place the administration of the WWCC in another agency?

I am advised the Children’s Guardian’s function in relation to administering the Working with Children Scheme is included in the Children’s Guardian Bill. The legislation that gives effect to that function being the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* is already a separate Act that is well known and used by stakeholders.

63. The removal of the reportable conduct scheme from the Ombudsman also removes Parliament’s oversight of that system via the Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission.

- (a) Is it the Minister’s intention that there no longer be any parliamentary oversight of the reportable conduct scheme?

I am advised this is not the case as the Reportable Conduct Scheme when transferred to the Children’s Guardian will continue to report to a Joint Parliamentary Committee.

64. Would the Minister be willing to include the Children’s Guardian Act (should it be passed) into the terms of reference of the Children and Young People Committee? Or alternatively, insert in the proposed Children’s Guardian Bill a section similar to Part 7 of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014 regarding Parliamentary oversight?

I am advised that this is provided for in the Children’s Guardian Bill in relation to the Reportable Conduct Scheme (Sch 5.2 of the Children’s Guardian Bill).

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Child Safe Principles/Standards

65. In July 2019 the Children’s Guardian released a report on its proposed child safe regulatory model. In this report it said that the OCG will monitor and enforce Child Safe standards? Many community organisations have expressed concern about the lack of clarity on HOW this will be done and the costs associated with these obligations.
- (a) How will the Children’s Guardian measure the safety of institutions?
 - (b) What will happen if an organisation such as a surf life saving club or a child care center fails to meet the Child Safe Standards?
 - (c) Will they be closed down?
 - (d) Or will the public be advised of the organisations that don’t meet the Child Safe Standards so they can choose another service?

I am advised the NSW Government tasked the Children’s Guardian to consult on the design of a regulatory framework to implement mandatory Child Safe Standards in NSW. The Office of the Children’s Guardian released a discussion paper on the proposed model and sought public comment as well as consulting with key stakeholders across government and non-government sectors.

The Regulation of child safe standards in NSW – Consultation Report: Making organisations safer for children was published in July 2019 and I am advised the Office of the Children’s Guardian continues to work with stakeholders to refine its final recommendations to government.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Working with children checks

66. What aspects of a person applying for a working with children check would deem their application as 'reviewable' by the Children's Guardian?

Information is available on the Office of the Children's Guardian website at

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/legal/support-person/risk-assessment>.

67. What aspects of a person applying for a working with children check would deem their application as subject to risk assessment?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 66.

68. What aspects of a person applying for a working with children check would deem their application subject to automatic disqualification?

Information is available on the Office of the Children's Guardian website at

<https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/legal/support-person/bar-process>.

69. Within the context of the working with children check application process, what is the function of:

(a) A risk assessment

(b) An interim bar

(c) A bar

(a) I am advised that the function of risk assessment is to determine whether, based on the evidence and by reference to the factors listed for consideration in the legislation, an applicant or holder of a clearance poses a real and appreciable risk to the safety of children.

(b) I am advised that the function of an interim bar is to disallow an applicant or holder from engaging in child related work while the person is being risk assessed and pending determination if there are concerns that the person is likely to pose a risk to the safety of children during risk assessment. All verifying employers will be notified of the Interim Bar.

(c) I am advised that the function of a bar is to refuse a working with children clearance because the person is found to pose a real and appreciable risk to the safety of children following a risk assessment or because they have been convicted or charged for an offence under Schedule 2 of the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*. All verifying employers are notified of the Bar.

70. Within the 2018-19 financial year:

- (a) How many total working with children check applications were processed?
- (b) What percentage of working with children check applications were processed within 24 hours?
- (c) What number of working with children check applications were deemed reviewable?
- (d) What number of working with children check applications were sent for a risk assessment?
- (e) What number of working with children check applications were automatically disqualified?

I am advised this information is unavailable. 2017/18 data is available in the Office of the Children's Guardian's Annual Reports at <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/about-us/annual-reports>.

71. What has caused the increase in the percentage of working with children check applications being approved within 24 hours to rise 10% from the 2014-15 financial year to the 2017-18 financial year?

I am advised as part of the Working With Children Check screening, the Office of the Children's Guardian is dependent on the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission to release national criminal history records. Since 2014 the Office of the Children's Guardian has undertaken system enhancements to improve the messaging efficiency between the two agencies. These efficiencies have resulted in faster clearance processing.

Applicants issued a clearance within 24 hours are those that typically hold no police records or records relevant to the Working With Children Check.

72. Could the increase in the percentage of working with children check applications being approved within 24 hours carry the consequence of a lower level of scrutiny as to the review of applications?

- (a) If so, please describe the way in which this would be possible and any plan to resolve this

I am advised the Office of the Children's Guardian's 2016-17 Annual Report notes that, overall, 80% of applicants with no records or non-relevant records were cleared within 24 hours. The 2017-18 Annual Report notes that, overall, 81% of applicants with no records or non-relevant records were cleared within 24 hours.

There is no significant increase in the processing of Working With Children Checks being approved within 24 hours.

73. What changes have been made that would affect the standards by which applications are deemed reviewable or subject to risk assessment since 2014-15?

I am advised in 2018, amendments to the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 further defined 'risk to the safety of children' as risk that is 'real and appreciable'. This threshold is in accordance with the well-established concept enunciated in *Commission for Children and Young People v V* [2002] NSWSC 949 and adopted by NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT). The threshold requires an applicant to present a risk that is a 'real and appreciable' risk as opposed to any risk. By real and appreciable is meant risk that is not theoretical or fanciful, but one that is real at the time of assessment and one that is supported by the available evidence to be more than "a risk", but one that raises real concerns about safety to children today.

74. What changes have been made since 2014-15 that would affect whether a reviewed or risk assessed application is cleared or refused?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 73.

75. What could explain the increase in the clearance of risk assessed working with children check applications in the 2017-18 financial year?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 73.

76. How many working with children checks referred to records review were automatically disqualified in the 2017-18 and 2016-17 financial years?

I am advised this information is available in the Office of the Children's Guardian's Annual Reports at <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/about-us/annual-reports>.

77. How many working with children checks referred to records review were sent for risk assessment in the 2017-18 and 2016-17 financial years?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 76.

78. Why did the Children's Guardian start aggregating the number of automatically disqualified working with children check applications with the number of applications sent for risk assessment in their 2016-17 & 2017-18 annual reports?

I am advised the Office of the Children's Guardian represents the data in this way as it represents the total number of people the *Child Protection (Working with Children Act) 2012* and/or the Children's Guardian has determined are not appropriate to work in a child-related role.

79. How much money did the Children's Guardian spend on legal defence and other related legal costs as a result of applicants appealing the outcome of their working with children check applications for the last 5 years, broken down by financial year?

I am advised the Office of the Children's Guardian has its own internal legal team that provides advice to the organisation.

80. How many times did the Children's Guardian appear at a court or tribunal responding to applicants appealing the outcome of their working with children check applications in the last 5 years, broken down by financial year?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 76.

81. What has led to the number of working with children check applications requiring risk assessment or automatic disqualification nearly doubling from 2302 in the 2014-15 financial year to 4330 in the 2017-18 financial year?

- (a) Have there been any staffing changes to respond to the increase in applications requiring risk assessment?
- (b) If additional staff have been hired, please provide the number of staff members hired in response, including a breakdown of temporary staff members (including their classification: casual/fixed term contract/other types of contract) and permanent staff members

I am advised over the years there has been an increase in the number of Working With Children Check applications which has contributed to the increase in assessments.

I am advised staffing information is available in the Office of the Children's Guardian's Annual Reports at <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/about-us/annual-reports>.

82. Has there been any additional funding provided to the Children's Guardian to deal with increased to legal costs for the Children's Guardian when defending against appeals to rejected working with children check applications?

I am advised legal costs are part of the Office of the Children's Guardian's overall budget. If not, what changes has the Children's Guardian made to be able to afford increased legal costs?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 82.

83. Please supply the staffing breakdown for workers conducting risk assessments of working with children check applications for the last 5 years, including whether each worker was full time, part time or casual, and whether each worker was permanently employed, on a fixed term contract or engaged via any other type of employment.

I am advised staffing information is available in the Office of the Children's Guardian's Annual Reports at <https://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/about-us/annual-reports>.

84. Please supply numbers regarding any current backlog of applications waiting to be risk assessed, as well as numbers of the backlog of applications for the last 5 years broken down by financial year.

I am advised the risk assessment process is often complex, and assessments can take varying lengths of time to complete. The Office of the Children's Guardian relies on external agencies such as NSW local and district courts, and the Department of Communities and Justice to provide information to inform the assessment process. Complex applications can take many months.

85. Please supply details regarding the current average waiting time for an application being risk assessed, as well as the average waiting times for the same from the last 5 years broken down by financial year.

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 85.

86. How will the efficiency dividend affect the staffing levels at the Children's Guardian in general and also more specifically at the office of Working with Children Checks?

I am advised the Office of the Children's Guardian, like other government agencies, is subject to the government's labour expense cap budget control measure. The application of the efficiency dividend will not impact on frontline service delivery.

87. What other changes will the Children's Guardian make to comply with the efficiency dividend?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 87.

88. How will compliance with the efficiency dividend affect the Children's Guardian's capacity to undertake the additional functions prescribed by the upcoming Children's Guardian Bill?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 87.

89. How will compliance with the efficiency dividend affect the Children's Guardian's capacity to undertake the additional functions prescribed by the upcoming Children's Guardian Bill?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 87.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Death of Mr Graeme Dennis Sullivan

90. Mr Graeme Dennis Sullivan was released from Hornsby Mental Health Ward into a unit provided by Pacific Link under the care of NSW Housing. Mr Sullivan's family were on holidays when he was released and upon their return asked NSW Police to search for him. NSW Police discovered Mr Sullivan deceased and decomposed:
- (a) Why did it take 3 weeks for Mr Sullivan's body to be discovered?
 - (b) What monitoring does the Department conduct in regard to service providers and whether they regularly check on clients?
 - (c) Does the Department have minimum standards for visitation and duty of care for clients?
 - (d) What responsibility does the Department take for deaths in care?
 - (e) What were the dates that the Department and service providers conducted visitations to Mr Sullivan in the weeks before his death?
 - (f) In regard to service providers:
 - i. What penalty do they face if found to have acted negligently?
 - ii. What compliance measures do the Department have in place to discover and assess negligent conduct in regards to service delivery?
 - (g) What reviews or investigations has the Department conducted into the death of Mr Sullivan?
 - i. If there has been a review or investigation, what were the outcomes of that review or investigation?
 - ii. What action does the Department intend to take following the death of Mr Sullivan to avoid similar future events?

I acknowledge this must have been very distressing for Mr Sullivan's family and friends.

It is the practice of the Department of Communities and Justice not to comment on individual cases.

Landlords, including social and affordable housing providers, carry out routine scheduled inspections in accordance with the Residential Tenancies Act 2010. Under the Residential Tenancies Agreement, housing providers can conduct property inspections no more than four times a year. If support needs are identified then support providers may engage more regularly with tenants as required and if the tenant consents.

The Registrar for Community Housing is responsible for registering and regulating community housing providers in NSW under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing. The Registrar has the power to take action if providers do not meet their obligations under the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH).

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Indexation

91. The amount that community organisations are required to pay under the national wage case decision is estimated to be \$17.5mil within the FACS portfolio. The figure mentioned in the Estimates hearing was for indexation review was approximately \$6.5-\$7.5mil. Will you please explain the difference in these figures?

I am advised Government grants to non-government organisations (NGOs) in the social and community services sector are escalated each year through the state budget process. The escalation factor for most grants is determined by the Sydney Consumer Price Index (excluding tobacco), which reflects changes in the economy. There was no change to the indexation methodology applied to these grants for 2019-20.

I can advise that the Government has approved additional funding to support an increased level of indexation for grants to NGOs paid by the Department of Communities and Justice in 2019-20. The indexation rate for these grants in 2019-20 will now be 2% and payments will be adjusted in October 2019.

The Treasurer and I have also asked our respective departments to review the indexation methodology applied to these grants, with a view to informing the indexation of grants for the next financial year, as part of the budget process.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Out of home care residential unit cost

92. The out of home care residential unit cost was never made available to the community service providers. Some very basic information was provided but the unit cost is not providers.
93. One example of the pressure derives from the cost allowed for direct care staff in the residential care facility uses a blended weighted average wage rate derived from the SCHADS Award pay grades: Level 2 - Pay Point 4 through to Level 4 – Pay Point 1. This is lower than any provider pays and in fact for the vast majority of people employed in these positions the job descriptions and responsibilities would mean that paying Level 2 and 3 is not permissible under the Award. The appropriate level would be level 4 and level 5. The community providers cannot identify the on costs provided for in the unit cost nor other components. There is considerable pressure on these providers.

(a) What is the reason for not releasing the unit cost detail to community service providers?

I am advised that costs were revisited during the procurement process, in light of feedback from providers considering participating in the request for tender.

(b) Will the Minister provide the full detail of this unit cost urgently to community service providers so that it can be properly assessed?

i. If not, why not?

See 93a

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Premier's Youth Initiative Projects

94. Can the Minister or the Department confirm whether the Premier's Youth Initiative Projects will continue to be funded after June 2020?

(a) If not, why has Treasury decided not to continue to fund these projects which have been successful?

I am advised that an evaluation of the Premier's Youth Initiative is underway.

95. Does the Minister and the Department understand 7 services will be defunded and a number of vulnerable young people will be left without support?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 94.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Additional caseworkers

96. In Estimates, the Secretary referred to 72 additional caseworkers. Will these be temporary or ongoing roles in the Department?

I am advised that the 72 new caseworker positions are ongoing.

97. How will the 72 additional caseworkers be distributed across NSW and will distribution of these caseworkers be informed by the Resource Allocation Model (RAM)?

I am advised that the location of roles will be determined according to the established processes for allocation of child protection caseworker resources and informed by the RAM.

98. Will any of the 72 caseworkers be allocated to the Helpline?

I am advised that the distribution is yet to be determined, but it is not expected that new caseworkers will be allocated to the Helpline.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION
BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Resource Allocation Model (RAM) and caseload ratios

99. How was the RAM developed and what is the formula?

I am advised:

The Resource Allocation Model (RAM) is a tool that optimises resource application across the state to ensure that families with the highest need (and children who are at the greatest risk) are prioritised to receive support. The RAM was developed in consultation with operations areas in the Department to ensure that the demand base and the complexity loadings best reflected the workload of caseworkers.

100. How is the RAM used to develop caseload ratios and productivity targets?

I am advised:

The RAM is not used to develop caseloads.

101. Can the Minister confirm that a caseload of 1:17 is being applied in Out of Home Care?

(a) If that is the case, how is that a reasonable workload for caseworkers given that they are required to undertake home visits for each child over the course of a month?

I am advised:

There is no set caseload for DCJ OOHC caseworkers; the caseload is determined by the work required on a particular case.

102. What is the caseload ratio for child protection caseworkers in Districts?

I am advised:

There is no set caseload ratio for child protection caseworkers. Caseworkers work with their supervisor to ensure a reasonable workload.

103. What action is the Department taking to address the excessive workloads borne by individual caseworkers?

I am advised:

Caseworkers work with their supervisor to ensure a reasonable workload.

104. How many children are living in other states and territories under the care of the Minister and how can quality casework be ensured when individual caseworkers have a caseload of 1:18?

I am advised:

Department of Communities and Justice have taken a centralised approach to the case management of children and young people who are living interstate.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Productivity savings and costs

105. If the Department is required to make \$174M in savings what productivity savings will be imposed in relation to the Communities part of the cluster?

I am advised:

The Communities part of the savings is \$57m.

106. How much did the Department spend on contingent labour in 2018/19 and how much has been allocated for 2019/20?

I am advised that the Department utilises providers that are prequalified under the Whole of Government Contingent Workforce Scheme, managed by NSW Treasury. A list of providers is available on the NSW Government's ProcurePoint website. Information on usage and expenditure of contingent labour is publically reported by NSW Department of Customer Service through the Prequalification Scheme Contingent Workforce Expenditure Report.

107. How much did the Department spend on consultants in 2018/19 and how much has been allocated for 2019/20?

I am advised that financial information about consultancy fees is made available in the Department's 2018/19 Annual Reports.

The Department is committed to deliver administrative and procurement savings, including a 20% reduction in consultants' expenses per annum, over the next four years from 1 July 2019.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

The Helpline

108. How many caseworker vacancies are there at the Helpline?

I am advised:

The June 2019 Dashboard shows that the Helpline vacancy rate is 0%. Vacancy rates are available on the FACS Website:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/FACScaseworkerdashboard/FACSCaseworkerDashboardVersion3>

109. How many times in the last 12 months was there only one caseworker on duty during the weekend taking calls for the entire State?

I am advised:

The Helpline does not have a practice of rostering a single caseworker for a shift. Helpline Caseworkers are supported by Team Managers and Manager Client Services in their role.

110. Can the Minister and Secretary give a commitment that the practice of having one caseworker at the Helpline on duty during weekend shifts will cease?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 109.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Caseworker employment

111. How many temporary caseworkers are currently employed by DCJ. How does this compare with 2018/19?

I am advised:

Information about caseworkers is available on the caseworker dashboard.

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/caseworker-statistics/dashboard>

112. How many ongoing caseworkers are currently employed by DCJ. How does this compare with 2018/19?

See response to question 111.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Privatisation

113. Are there any plans to privatise any parts of the Communities and Justice portfolio in 2019/20?

I am advised that the finalisation of social housing transfers to community housing providers and service transfers for disability services will occur in 2019/2020.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Work, Health and Safety in DCJ

114. How is the Department responding to the Government's Work, Health and Safety Sector Plan? What funding has been allocated to implement the plan in DCJ and what consultation process is proposed?

I am advised:

The Department is responding to the Government Work, Health and Safety Sector Plan in conjunction with SafeWork NSW.

Union consultation arrangements continue as per pre MoG arrangements. The former FACS representatives meet with the PSA on a monthly basis to discuss wellbeing and work health safety matters. The former Justice representatives meet with the PSA on a business stream basis.

Not all work health safety initiatives require additional funding. The former FACS allocated \$2 million over three years to reduce the cost of workers compensation premium costs.

115. How many staff in community services centres and housing offices were assaulted by clients in 2018/19?

I am advised:

There is a single category in the work health safety software that is currently available to staff to report threats and instances of all forms of threats and incidents of actual assault or abuse of staff. A threat or instance of assault or abuse of staff includes yelling and/or swearing, throwing objects, jumping front counters, physical threat or acts of violence, stalking including via social media and other forms of anti-social behaviour. In 2018/19 staff made 609 reports of threat and/or incident of assault or abuse by a client.

116. How many verbal aggression reports were made by staff in community services centres and housing offices in 2018/19?

I am advised:

Data for verbal aggression is not separately collected. Please refer to the response to supplementary question 115.

117. How many caseworkers sustained psychological injuries in the workplace in 2018/19?

I am advised that there were sixty claims made.

118. The Department has a legal obligation to ensure safe systems of work, so why has to the Department been slow to make changes to front counters and reception areas to ensure the safety of staff? What upgrades are planned for 2019/20 and what funding has been allocated for this purpose?

I am advised:

The fit out of front counters occurs in accordance with the Accommodation Design Guidelines.

119. In relation to workers' compensation claims in DCJ in 2018/19:

(a) How many claims were made by caseworkers for physical injuries, including:

There were sixty claims for physical injuries.

i. Number of claims accepted

Number of claims 'accepted' is not collected.

ii. Number of claims rejected

Number of claims 'rejected' is not collected.

iii. Number of claims pending outcome

Number of claims 'pending' is not collected. The insurer is required to provisionally accept all claims within seven days to avoid delays in the treatment of wages.

(b) How many claims were made by caseworkers for psychological injuries, including:

There were sixty claims made.

i. Number of claims accepted

Number of claims 'accepted' is not collected.

ii. Number of claims rejected

Number of claims 'rejected' is not collected.

iii. Number of claims pending outcome

Number of claims 'pending' is not collected. The insurer is required to provisionally accept all claims within seven days to avoid delays in the treatment of wages.

120. The Department has a legal obligation to ensure safe systems of work, so why has the Department been slow to make changes to front counters and reception areas to ensure the safety of staff? What upgrades are planned for 2019/20 and what funding has been allocated for this purpose?

I am advised:

There is a standard design for front counters and variations can be made at a local level where safety concerns warrant that to occur.

121. Why has the Department refused to establish a Staff Health Unit to provide additional support to caseworkers?

I am advised:

The Department has a Safety and Wellbeing Unit which remains in the new structure. This unit is responsible for the delivery of wellbeing programs throughout the Department.

122. In relation to the Department's Well-being Strategy:

(a) What was the total funding for the strategy in 2018/19?

I am advised a total of \$3.2 million in funding was made available to the former FACS over 2017/18 and 2018/19. This funding was used for training, system, pilot programs and to establish the wellbeing strategy.

(b) What funding has been committed in 2019/20?

See answer to 114.

(c) What are the initiatives that will be funded in 2019/20?

I am advised:

The focus on the funding referred to at answer 114 is to achieve a return on investment to reduce the cost of the workers compensation premium. An Injury Management Strategy is in development which will set out all initiatives and complement the existing wellbeing strategy.[insert].

(d) Are funds for the Well-being Strategy one-off or recurrent?

I am advised:

Funding for work health safety initiatives are sourced from one-off funding sources and from recurrent funding sources such as learning and development and District budgets.

(e) What is the timeframe for developing a policy and greater support for caseworkers experiencing secondary and vicarious trauma as a result of the difficult and challenging work they do?

I am advised:

The Department is using a multi-tiered approach to continue to improve wellbeing support, prevent vicarious trauma and provide tools to reduce the impact on trauma on staff. Key aspects currently include:

- Engagement of Charles Sturt University to research the levers for wellbeing of casework staff. Research phase is nearing completion and the University is currently finalising results and a report.
- Implementation of a new work health safety and injury case management solution 'SafetySuite' which is going live in April 2020.
- The injury management strategy that is in development will include initiatives aimed at prevention of psychological injury and supporting staff to recover at work earlier than currently.
- A pilot of wellbeing checks has been made available to staff in the Joint Child Protection Response unit. This pilot is under evaluation with a further check to roll out in Q2 of 2019/20.
- More than 1,200 caseworker staff received mental health, resilience and/or training in managing challenging interactions. This training is under evaluation to provide Districts with guidance on suitable and appropriate training options.

- The psychological demands on staff in casework roles has been evaluated. This information is being incorporated into recruitment, training and recover at work strategies.

(f) What action will the Department take to ensure caseworkers do not have excessive workloads?

I am advised:

Caseworkers work with their supervisor to ensure a reasonable workload. They may utilise a Workload Planner template to assist those discussions and that Workload Planner is currently under review in consultation with the Public Service Association.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Aboriginal services

122. Why did the Department cease providing a service to Aboriginal families at Yallamundi. What is planned for the former Yallamundi site in Cleveland Street?

I am advised:

Low referral rates resulted in consultation with the community led by Professor Jack Beetson. The Yallamundi site is now used as a meeting place for Aboriginal staff, a venue for undertaking supervised contact with Aboriginal children and a space for meeting with local Aboriginal families.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Aboriginal services

123. How many Aboriginal caseworkers are currently employed by the Department? What was the total number in:

(a) 2018/19

(b) 2017/18

(c) 2016/17

I am advised:

Information about caseworkers is available on the caseworker dashboard.

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/resources/statistics/caseworker-statistics/dashboard>

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Intensive Family Based Services

124. How many intensive family based services operate in NSW – where are they located and are they operated by DCJ or NGOs?

I am advised:

Information about funded services is available in the Annual Report

[https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/ data/assets/pdf file/0007/637243/2017-18-Volume-3-Funds-granted-to-non-government-organisations.pdf](https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/637243/2017-18-Volume-3-Funds-granted-to-non-government-organisations.pdf)

125. What is the total funding allocated to intensive family based services in 2018/19 and what will be allocated in 2019/20?

See response to 124.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Caseworkers as first responders

126. Why doesn't the Government acknowledge that caseworkers are first responders?

I am advised:

First responders is a term commonly used to encompass those who arrive in the first instance on the scene of an emergency such as police, fire and rescue or ambulance. Caseworkers who work in child protection are not required to fulfil this emergency role.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION
BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Asset sales

127. Are any asset sales proposed in 2019/20 – what sites and where are they located?

I am advised:

The Department reviews its asset holdings on a regular basis in line with serviced delivery requirements. There are no asset sales identified in the 2019/20 budget.

128. What assets were sold in 2018/19?

I am advised:

A total of \$42.8m of assets was sold in 2018/19 and the financial information is contained in the former Department of Family and Community Services Annual Reports.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Older women's homelessness

129. Is it correct that homelessness amongst women aged 55 and over has risen by 31% between 2011 and 2016?

I am advised that estimates on the number of homeless persons are published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on www.abs.gov.au.

130. What support does the NSW Government provide specifically to assist older women at risk of homelessness?

I am advised that specialist homelessness services provide a client-centred response built around the individual client's needs, circumstances, experiences and choices. This includes providing services that respond to the needs of older people.

Further information about homelessness services and programs can be found on <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/providers/funded/programs/homelessness/specialist-services>.

131. How many women aged 55-80 are currently on the:

- (a) Housing Waiting List?
- (b) Priority Housing Wait List?

I am advised that information on the number of social housing applicants on the NSW Housing Register as at 30 June 2018 is publicly available at

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/Objective4-Breakingdisadvantagewithsocialhousingassistance/Dashboard3>.

132. Why is the eligibility age for the priority list for public housing set at 80 years?

I am advised that the Eligibility for Social Housing Policy is available on <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/eligibility-social-housing-policy>.

133. Does the Minister support reducing that age threshold to acknowledge the additional risk of homelessness faced by older women?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice is not currently reviewing age thresholds for priority housing.

134. What other options is the Minister for Seniors considering to reduce homelessness for older women?

Please redirect this question to the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans.

135. Will the Government be funding the establishment of a state-wide older people's housing information and support service to bring together fragmented resources and reduce the risk of homelessness, particularly for older women?

I am advised that information regarding housing assistance and funded support services, including in relation to elderly persons and people experiencing homelessness, is available on the Department of Communities and Justice website:

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au>.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Seniors Housing

136. What is the total number of people aged over 55 currently living in seniors FACS housing in NSW?

I am advised:

Information on the number of Social Housing Residential Dwellings as at 30 June 2018 is publicly available at

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/SocialHousingDwellings/Dashboard?publish=yes>

137. What is the total number of people aged over 55 on the general housing waitlist?

I am advised:

Information on the number of Social housing applicants on the NSW Housing Register as at 30 June 2018 is publicly available at

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/Objective4-Breakingdisadvantagewithsocialhousingassistance/Dashboard3>

138. What is the total number of people aged over 55 on the general housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137.

139. What is the total number of people aged over 65 currently living in seniors FACS housing in NSW?

Please refer to the response to question 136.

140. What is the total number of people aged over 65 on the general housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137. Data is published for people aged 55 or older.

141. What is the total number of people aged over 65 on the priority housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137. Data is published for people aged 55 or older.

142. What is the total number of people aged over 75 currently living in seniors FACS housing in NSW?

Please refer to the response to question 136.

143. What is the total number of people aged over 75 on the general housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137. Data is published for people aged 55 or older.

144. What is the total number of people aged over 75 on the priority housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137. Data is published for people aged 55 or older.

145. What is the total number of people aged over 85 currently living in seniors FACS housing in NSW?

Please refer to the response to question 136.

146. What is the total number of people aged over 85 on the general housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137. Data is published for people aged 55 or older.

147. What is the total number of people aged over 85 on the priority housing waitlist?

Please refer to the response to question 137. Data is published for people aged 55 or older.

148. How many vacant properties are there in FACS housing dedicated for seniors?

I am advised:

The number of social housing properties that are vacant changes frequently as properties are vacated by tenants and prepared for reletting.

149. What was the total number of vacant properties in each of the past ten financial years?

I am advised:

The number of social housing properties that are vacant changes frequently as properties are vacated by tenants and prepared for reletting.

However, the Report on Government Services (ROGS) 2019, Chapter 18, Table 18A.9 has information Public Housing occupancy rates from 2009 to 2018. Table 18A.10 has occupancy rates of State Owned Managed Indigenous Housing (SOMIH) from 2009 – 2018. The link to ROGS 2019: <https://www.pc.gov.au/research/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2019>

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Dedicated Minister for Volunteers

150. Why has there not been a dedicated Minister for Volunteers since the O’Farrell Government was elected in 2011?

As the current Minister for Families, Community and Disability, the Hon. Gareth Ward, is the Minister responsible for Volunteering. The previous Minister responsible for Volunteering was the Hon Ray Williams MP.

151. How does the Minister respond to the Centre for Volunteer’s calls that a dedicated Minister for Volunteering would providing the “recognition, resourcing and accountability for supporting the volunteering sector”?

As the Minister responsible for Volunteering, the Hon. Gareth Ward, is a passionate advocate for volunteering and the contribution that volunteers provide to the community. The Minister supports the NSW Volunteering Strategy, the promotion of volunteering opportunities and support for the sector.

152. Has the Minister spoken with the Centre for Volunteering and other voluntary peak bodies and organisations regarding the need for a dedicated Minister for Volunteers?

The previous Minister responsible for Volunteering, the Hon Ray Williams MP met with the Centre for Volunteering in February 2019, where this issue was discussed. Since his appointment in April 2018, Minister Ward has reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring the continued expansion of volunteering work in community life throughout New South Wales under his portfolio. In addition, Minister Ward has met with the Centre for Volunteering on several occasions including attending the organisation’s launch and an awards ceremony.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Premier's Volunteer Recognition program

153. What is the total cost each year of running the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program?

I am advised:

The cost to the Department of Communities and Justice is \$5,000 for printing and distribution of certificates.

Staffing cost is \$57,626 to run the program for a year.

154. How does the Government measure the success of the program?

I am advised:

Since the program launch in 2015, approximately 28,600 volunteers across NSW have received a Premier's Volunteer Recognition certificate.

There is continual interest in the program with a steady increase in the number of volunteers being recognised in all categories each year.

155. How does this program differ from the NSW Volunteer of the Year Program run by the Centre for Volunteering?

I am advised:

The Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program recognises the contribution volunteers make towards strengthening the community. All volunteers nominated through this process receive a recognition certificate as an appreciation of their volunteering, there is no judging process. The certificate categories in 2019 include: student volunteering (years 7-12), significant volunteering (any age), people with over 25 years of volunteering experience, and people with a lifetime of volunteering experience (over 40 years).

The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards administered by The Centre for Volunteering is an awards program which involves an application and judging process. The award categories include: Young Volunteer of the Year, Adult Volunteer of the Year, Senior

Volunteer of the Year, Volunteer Team of the Year, Corporate Individual and Team of the Year, and Excellence in Volunteer management.

156. How many staff are employed to run the program?

I am advised:

0.5 FTE

157. What is the total amount of sponsorship provided to the program by Clubs NSW?

I am advised:

Clubs NSW do not sponsor the Premiers Volunteer Recognition Program

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Student volunteering

158. What is the total annual cost of running the up2now website where high school students can log volunteer hours?

Please redirect this question to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning.

159. How many students use the website?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 158.

160. How many schools are registered to use up2now?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 158.

161. How many students have attained a Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program Certificate in each of the past few years?

I am advised:

Between 2016 – 2018 approximately 20,755 students have received a Premier's Volunteer Recognition Certificate.

162. How many staff are employed to run the up2now website?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 158.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Volunteer recruitment portal

163. How many organisations are registered to use the volunteer recruitment portal?

I am advised:

As at 11 September 2019 there are 2228 volunteering organisations in New South Wales registered and using the recruitment portal.

164. How many volunteers access and use the volunteer recruitment portal?

I am advised:

Since its relaunch in October 2017 there have been 248,447 volunteer visits to the recruitment portal.

165. What is the total cost of operating the volunteer recruitment portal?

I am advised:

The cost of operating the portal is \$25,000 for hosting and maintenance by SEEK Volunteer.

166. How many staff are employed to manage the volunteer recruitment portal?

I am advised:

0.2 FTE

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Volunteer Strategy

167. What are the total number of funds allocated to facilitate the development of the third volunteering strategy?

I am advised:

\$200K has been allocated to the Volunteering Budget in 2019/20, which includes funds to implement the final year of the second Volunteering Strategy and \$20K to develop and launch the third Volunteering Strategy in 2019/20.

168. How many staff will be engaged in developing the strategy?

I am advised:

There are 2.5 FTE dedicated Department of Communities and Justice staff engaged in developing the NSW strategy in consultation with other government and community organisations.

169. Will the Government be moving towards a ten year strategy?

I am advised:

In July 2019, the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services approved the proposal for the third NSW Volunteering Strategy to be for ten years, 2020 – 2030.

170. What is stakeholders reaction to proposals to move to a ten year strategy?

I am advised:

Consultation on the third strategy is currently taking place. To date there have been no negative comments regarding a ten year strategy.

171. Would the Minister agree that there must be funding associated with the strategy in order to achieve its objectives?

I am advised that the NSW Government is committed to supporting the sector, this is demonstrated by the Minister for families, Communities, and Disability Services approval of the proposal for the third Strategy to be for ten years, 2020 – 2030. Consultations are currently underway with the sector and based on the outcomes of those consultations it is envisaged that a range of initiatives will be developed along with the third volunteering Strategy's priorities.

172. How much funding has been provided directly to volunteer organisations as part of the current volunteer strategy?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice does not provide direct funding to volunteer organisations as part of the current NSW Volunteer Strategy. Volunteer involving organisations are funded through a wide range of sources, such as local fundraising and cost recovery activities, periodic grants or program delivery funds from a diverse range of organisations and federal and state government agencies. The NSW peak organisation for volunteering, the Centre for Volunteering does not receive funds directly under the Strategy's budget allocation, as it receives funds under the Sector Development Program managed by the Department of Communities and Justice.

173. Over what time?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 172.

174. For what projects?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 172.

175. How much funding has been provided directly to peak bodies such as Volunteering Australia and the Centre for Volunteering NSW as part of the current volunteer strategy?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 172. The NSW Government does not fund the national peak Volunteering Australia under the NSW Volunteering Strategy.

176. What funds from previous budgets can be attributed to fulfilling the priorities of the former two volunteering strategies?

I am advised that the first NSW Volunteering Strategy, May 2012, was approved to be delivered within existing resources. No budget was allocated to the Strategy.

The funds that can be attributed to the implementation of the second Strategy are as follows and comprise both recurrent and agency sourced funds.

- 2015/16 - \$560,000
- 2016/17 - \$835,000 plus \$200,000 (recurrent)
- 2017/18 - \$600,000 plus \$200,000 (recurrent)
- 2018/19 - \$200,000 (recurrent funds only)
- 2019/20 - \$200,000 (recurrent funds only)

177. How has the \$2 million signalled in 2017 been spent?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 180.

178. What were the key learnings from the current strategy?

I am advised:

Consultations are underway to develop the third strategy, including reflecting on lessons from the current strategy.

179. Why does the Minister believe that NSW has amongst the lowest rates of volunteering of any State or Territory according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics?

I am advised:

In analysing any reports on volunteering in NSW, and nationally, consideration needs to be given to the variability in data. Many people do not identify what they are doing as volunteering and do not report it as such. This informal volunteering is estimated to be undertaken by up to 46% of the population, and includes providing assistance to family members outside of their household with domestic chores, unpaid child care for friends or neighbours, coaching, and providing emotional support and personal care.

180. What specifically has the Government done to increase the rate of volunteering in NSW?

I am advised:

As part of the second NSW Volunteering Strategy 2016 – 2020, the NSW Government:

- **launched a new NSW Volunteering Website and recruitment portal in November 2017**

- supported a continuing marketing campaign aiming to recruit more people to volunteering
- built local capacity to effectively recruit and manage volunteers through the Way2Go volunteer management training program
- established Timebanking in communities with over 6,659 volunteer members exchanging more than 53,396 hours of support to date
- supported the expansion of the Premier's Volunteer Recognition Program which has resulted in over 28,600 volunteers being recognised for their contributions across NSW to date.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Newcastle Social Housing

181. How many FTE staff were employed by the Newcastle office of Family and Community Services, Housing NSW in each of the following years:

- (a) 2011;
- (b) 2012;
- (c) 2013;
- (d) 2014;
- (e) 2015;
- (f) 2016;
- (g) 2017;
- (h) 2018; and
- (i) 2019?

I am advised:

19 full-time equivalent staff have been employed by the Newcastle office of Family and Community Services, Housing NSW every year from 2011-19.

182. As of 6/9/19 how many people are on the General Housing Register in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised:

Information on the number of social housing applicants on the NSW Housing Register is publicly available at Expected Wait Times (EWT) dashboard at:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/FACSSocialHousingExpectedWaitingTimes/EWT2018>

183. As of 6/9/19 how many people are on the Priority Housing Register in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 182.

184. What is the wait time for a studio/1 bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 182.

185. What is the wait time for a 2 bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 182.

186. What is the wait time for a 3 bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 182.

187. What is the wait time for a 4+ bedroom property in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 182.

188. As of 6/9/19 how many properties are located in the Newcastle electorate?

I am advised:

Information on the number of properties is available on the social housing residential dwellings dashboard (SHRD) at:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/SocialHousingDwellings/Dashboard>

189. As of 6/9/19 how many vacant properties are located in the Newcastle electorate?

I am advised:

The number of social housing properties that are vacant changes frequently as properties are vacated by tenants and prepared for reletting. The Report on Government Services (ROGS) 2019, Chapter 18, Table 18A.9 has information on Public Housing occupancy rates.

190. On average, how many properties does a Client Service Officer in the Newcastle office manage?

I am advised:

Information on the role of a Client Service Officer is available at

<https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/careers/join-our-housing-services-team/our-positions/chapters/join-us-as-a-client-service-officer>

191. What impact will this year's efficiency dividend have on the Newcastle office of Housing NSW?

- (a) Will there be any reduction in staff at the Newcastle Housing NSW office as a result of efficiency dividend?

I am advised:

Savings from the NSW Government's efficiency dividend are outlined in the Budget Papers.

192. How many tenants in the NN07 Newcastle zone received compensation due to maintenance issues in each of the following years:

- (a) 2011;
(b) 2012;
(c) 2013;
(d) 2014;
(e) 2015;
(f) 2016;
(g) 2017;
(h) 2018; and
(i) 2019?

I am advised:

Tenants can lodge an application with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal if they believe that the Department has breached the tenancy agreement or the Residential Tenancies Act 2010.

Information on the number of Social Housing applications lodged with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) can be found in the NCAT Annual report.

193. Does the Minister expect local Housing offices to respond to correspondence sent to them by Members of Parliament?

I am advised:

The Department of Communities and Justice responds to correspondence from Members of Parliament, the broader community and other parts of Government.

194. How many people are currently homeless in the Newcastle area?

I am advised that information about homelessness data is available on the Australian Institute of Health And Welfare (AIHW) website at www.aihw.gov.au.

195. What action is being taken to address homelessness in the Newcastle area?

I am advised:

In 2019/20, the NSW Government is investing \$210 million on homelessness programs and services, including in the Newcastle area.

Information on specialist homelessness services is available on the Department of Communities and Justice website at: www.facs.nsw.gov.au.

196. What is the average wait time for a transfer in the NN07 Newcastle zone?

I am advised:

Published data on the average wait time for a transfer in the NN07 Newcastle zone is not available.

197. How many cases of anti-social behaviour were investigated in the NN07 Newcastle zone in each of the following years

(a) 2011;

(b) 2012;

(c) 2013;

(d) 2014;

(e) 2015;

(f) 2016;

- (g) 2017;
- (h) 2018 and
- (i) 2019?

I am advised:

Information on the number of antisocial behaviour warnings and strikes issued and serious and severe illegal cases, from February 2016 onward, is available at <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/reforms/future-directions/initiatives/antisocial-behaviour/antisocial-behaviour-data-dashboard>

198. What action is being taken to reduce anti-social behaviour in Hamilton South?

I am advised:

The Department of Communities and Justice takes all allegations of anti-social behaviour (ASB) very seriously, and where instances of ASB are substantiated, the Department will take action in accordance with the anti-social behaviour policy.

Further, the Department works closely with NSW Police to reduce and prevent criminal behaviour in public housing.

Information on how the Department manages antisocial behaviour is available at <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/policies/antisocial-behaviour-management-policy>

199. Who is responsible for paying for modifications to properties for tenants with a disability, The Department of Communities and Justice or the NDIA?

I am advised:

Information on the division of responsibility between the NDIS, Commonwealth and state and territory governments is available at

<https://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/communique/NDIS-Principles-to-Determine-Responsibilities-NDIS-and-Other-Service.pdf>

200. How many tenants in Newcastle have had action taken against them for anti-social behaviour in each of the following years

- (a) 2011;
- (b) 2012;
- (c) 2013;
- (d) 2014;
- (e) 2015;
- (f) 2016;
- (g) 2017;
- (h) 2018 and
- (i) 2019?

I am advised:

Information on the number of antisocial behaviour warnings and strikes issued and serious and severe illegal cases, from February 2016 onward, is available at <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/about/reforms/future-directions/initiatives/antisocial-behaviour/antisocial-behaviour-data-dashboard>

201. How many tenants brought action against Housing NSW in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal in each of the following years

- (a) 2011;
- (b) 2012;
- (c) 2013;
- (d) 2014;
- (e) 2015;
- (f) 2016;
- (g) 2017;
- (h) 2018 and
- (i) 2019?

I am advised:

Information on the number of Social Housing applications lodged with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) can be found in the NCAT Annual report, available at https://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au/Documents/ncat_annual_report_2017_2018.pdf

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Flexible Work

202. Minister, the Premier announced on International Women's Day that the public service would all have access to flexible working arrangements by 2019.

- (a) What numbers of staff within your Department currently have flexible working arrangements?

I am advised:

The Department does not currently track flexible working arrangements as a reportable measure.

- (b) Do you centrally register staff, who have flexible working arrangements?

I am advised:

No. These agreements are arranged and agreed to at a local level.

- (c) What measures are currently in place to implement this?

I am advised:

The Department of Communities and Justice are working through a range of initiatives to implement flexible working arrangements across the department.

These pilot initiatives include (but not limited to):

- **Partnering with Grace Papers to pilot a digital coaching platform. This program provides support for new and expectant parents and their managers. This assists both staff and employers navigate the 'new world' and assists returning parents resume their role in the workforce while providing them with career advice and guidance.**
- **Team Based Flexible Working – As part of a PSC pilot, eight teams are participating in Team Based Flexible Working. This approach looks at Team arrangements as a whole opposed to Manager/Individual arrangements and assists with building a team culture of increasing communication, trust and utilising technology more effectively to minimise travel time and increase efficiency.**

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

In relation to MyHousing App

203. How much money was spent in research, development, design and labour of the new My Housing App?

I am advised:

204. **The vendor delivered two mobile apps, one for an iOS and one for an Android platform over a 12 month project duration. The research, design and development of the two apps cost \$2,763,295.00. This included the design and development of application programming interfaces (API) to allow the apps to interface with the Housing tenant management system HOMES.**

(a) Can the Minister please clarify was section of the budget this expense has been allocated to?

I am advised funding for this project came from the Housing operational budget within DCJ.

(b) In terms of the continual maintenance and management of the My Housing app can the Minister outline the expected annual cost?

I am advised that the annual cost for the support and maintenance of the MyHousing App totals \$181,512.00. This total cost covers the hosting of services to support both the iOS and Android apps.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Evictions

204. How many tenants were evicted from NSW Housing properties

- (a) 2017/2018?
- (b) 2018/2019?

I am advised:

Information on the number of Social Housing applications lodged with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) can be found in the NCAT Annual report, available at [https://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au/Documents/ncat annual report 2017 2018.pdf](https://www.ncat.nsw.gov.au/Documents/ncat%20annual%20report%202017%202018.pdf)

Information on the number of Households exiting from public housing is publicly available at <https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/Objective4-Breakingdisadvantagewithsocialhousingassistance/Dashboard1>

205. Of these evictions, how many is the result of social housing debt?

- (a) Of those evicted how many are now homeless?
- (b) Of those evicted how many had children living in the home?
- (c) Of those evicted how many were single women aged over 60?

I am advised:

This data is recorded in individual client records and aggregate data is unavailable.

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), where appropriate work with tenants to ensure they have access to safe housing.

Information on the number of Households exiting from public housing is publicly available at <https://public.tableau.com/profile/facs.statistics#!/vizhome/Objective4-Breakingdisadvantagewithsocialhousingassistance/Dashboard1>

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Tenancies

206. How many social housing properties via SAHF/SAHF 2 are currently tenanted?

I am advised:

As of 30 June 2019, 402 social housing dwellings delivered by the SAHF have been tenanted with 546 people provided with new social housing homes.

207. What was the 2018/2019 Rent Choices budget? How many people were provided with rent assistance in the private market in 2018/19?

I am advised:

In 2018-19 the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) Rent Choice budget was \$62.2 million and assisted 4,868 households across NSW with stable housing in the private rental market.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Temporary Accommodation

208. How many individuals were accommodated through the temporary accommodation program?

I am advised that 24,278 unique households were assisted with temporary accommodation in 2018/19.

(a) What was the total expense for 2018-2019?

\$28,350,426.

(b) What is the average length of time individuals are in temporary accommodation?

Average number of nights of temporary accommodation per household is 9.4 nights.

(c) Please explain what the shortfall of temporary accommodation is across the state?

The Department of Communities and Justice is unable to provide a statewide figure.

(d) Minister can you please explain how you are supporting individuals who present to Housing NSW requesting TA and local services have nothing available?

The Department of Communities and Justice offers assistance to people that are homeless or at risk of homelessness by providing information about local services, conducting assessments to determine what kind of help is needed, providing referrals to appropriate specialist homelessness services (SHS), support services and temporary accommodation. People can access assistance through the local office or Link2home.

The Department of Communities and Justice works collaboratively with private accommodation providers, government and non-government agencies to deliver assistance appropriate to the individual's needs. In instances where no accommodation is available in an area, all reasonable options are considered which may include organising transportation to the nearest available accommodation provider.

(e) What systems do you have in place to provide support to families and individuals when no temporary accommodation is available – at all?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 208(d).

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Inner City Homelessness

209. Since Martin Place (July 2017) the Department of Communities and Justice claims that it has housed over 400 people sleeping rough in the City of Sydney.

a) Can you please clarify the 2018/2019 DCJ expenditure for the operation of HOST team?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice allocated \$1 million in operational funding to the implementation of the Homelessness Outreach Support Team (HOST) in 2018/2019.

b) The 2018/2019 Temporary Accommodation expenditure in the Sydney District?

I am advised that the Department of Communities and Justice expenditure on Temporary Accommodation in the Sydney, South Eastern Sydney and Northern Sydney District in 2018/2019 was \$9.2 million.

c) The average length of time clients are accommodated in Temporary Accommodation in the Sydney FACS District?

I am advised that the average number of nights of Temporary Accommodation per household is 10.3 nights in the Sydney, South Eastern Sydney and Northern Sydney District.

d) The average cost for a client accommodated in temporary Accommodation in the Sydney FACS District?

I am advised that the average cost for a client accommodated in Temporary Accommodation in the Sydney, South Eastern and Northern Sydney District is \$197 per night.

e) The total cost of this accommodation?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 209(b).

f) Where the 400 plus individuals have been housed by the LGA?

I am advised applicants may be housed across the Sydney, South Eastern and Northern Sydney District or the state, according to individual housing requirements. A large proportion of people experiencing homelessness in the inner city of Sydney are

accommodated in the City of Sydney Local Government Area to be close to established or required support services.

- g) How many people other than the 400 have been housed by the Sydney District Housing office since Martin Place (July 2017).

I am advised that a total of 3,271 households have been housed in the Sydney, South Eastern Sydney and Northern Sydney District from the NSW Housing Register since March 2017. This figure includes people housed who were previously sleeping rough in the inner city of Sydney.

- h) What is the time for a transfer in the Sydney FACS district?

I am advised that wait times for general accommodation are listed on the Department's website at www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/applying-assistance/expected-waiting-times

- i) Is this longer than the average wait times for a transfer? If yes, please explain by how much?

I am advised that there is generally a higher demand for a transfer in metropolitan areas and as a result the wait time can be longer.

- j) Are wait times for transfers in Sydney impacted by the housing of these 400 people?

I am advised:

Data is not available. Please refer to the response to supplementary question 209(g)

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

QUESTION – Ministerial Travel/Meal Allowance

210. How many nights travel were claimed by the Minister during the 2018-19 period?

211. How many nights travel were claimed by the Minister's spouse during the 2018-19 period?

212. What was the total amount of travel allowances claimed by the Minister and their spouse (if applicable) during 2018-19?

213. What is the total amount of meal allowances claimed by the Minister and their spouse (if applicable) during 2018-19?

ANSWER:

210-213. In 2018-19, total expenditure by the Ministry on domestic travel was \$1,093,735.

QUESTION – Efficiency dividends

214. What was the forecast efficiency dividend saving for each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio in 2018-19?

215. What is the forecast efficiency dividend saving for each department, statutory agency and/or

other body within your portfolio in

(a) 2019-20?

(b) 2020-21?

(c) 2021-22?

216. What was the total efficiency dividend that was achieved for each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio between 2011-12 and 2018-19 inclusively?

ANSWER:

214-216. Savings from the NSW Government's efficiency dividend are outlined in the Budget Papers.

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

QUESTION – Ministerial Office Administration

217. How many staff are in your ministerial office?

(a) What was the average salary for staff members in your office during 2018-19?

(b) What is the estimated average salary for a ministerial staffer in your office in 2019-20 based on current appointments?

218. How many iPhone/smart phones are assigned to your staff?

(a) For each phone, how much was each bill in 2018-19?

(b) How many phones have been lost or replaced due to damage in your office?

(c) What is the cost of replacing those phones?

219. How many iPads or tablets has DPC assigned to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?

(a) What was the cost of providing iPads or tablets to your Ministerial Office in 2018-19?

(b) How many iPads or tablets have been replaced due to lost or damage in 2018-19?

(c) What was the cost of replacing these devices?

220. Has any artwork been purchased or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2018-19?

(a) What is the cost of this?

221. Have any floral displays or indoor plants or pot plants been hired or leased for display in your ministerial office in 2018-19?

(a) If so, what was the cost of these items?

222. Have any floral displays or indoor plants or pot plants been purchased for display in your ministerial office in 2018-19?

(a) If so, what was the cost of these items?

223. What was the total cost of all subscriptions by you and your staff to news services, newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals (including online services) in 2018-19?

(a) What are these services/newspapers/magazines/journals/periodicals?

(b) Who is the subscriber for each of these?

224. What was the total value of all gifts purchased for use by you and your office in 2018-19?

(a) What were the gifts purchased?

(b) Who were they gifted to?

225. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?

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(a) What is the monthly cost of this?

226. How much did your ministerial office spend on hospitality, including catering and beverages, in 2018-19?

227. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?

(a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?

228. What was the total bill for your office in 2018-19 for:

(a) Taxi hire

(b) Limousine hire

(c) Private hire care

(d) Hire car rental

(e) Ridesharing services?

229. Were any planes or helicopters chartered by you or your office and paid for with public money in 2018-19?

(a) If yes, will you please detail each trip, the method of transport and the cost?

230. Have you had media training or speech training?

(a) If yes, who paid for it?

(b) If paid by taxpayers, what was the amount paid in 2018-19?

ANSWER:

217. Ministers' Office staff numbers and salary bands are available on the DPC website. Refer to: <https://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/publications/premiers-and-ministers-staff-numbers/>

218. There were 261 smartphones and other mobile devices allocated across the Ministers' IT Network in 2018-2019. The total usage cost of these smart phones and other mobile devices (including iPads) was \$334,630, compared to 2009-10 expenditure of \$434,854 under Labor. There were 6 devices lost/stolen across the Ministerial Offices during 2018-2019. The cost of replacing any lost or stolen devices is claimed through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund. Repairs are funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Corporate and Ministerial Services.

219. There were 111 iPads allocated across the Ministers' IT Network in 2018-2019. The cost of replacing any lost or stolen devices is claimed through the NSW Treasury Managed Fund. Repairs are funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Corporate and Ministerial Services.

220. Artwork in Ministers' Offices includes art donated at no cost.

221-222. Floral arrangements purchased by the Ministry are managed within Ministerial office budgets.

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223. Ministers' offices subscribe to a modest number of publications, which are managed within Ministerial office budgets.

224. Gifts are presented to dignitaries during overseas missions and to dignitaries visiting NSW in accordance with established protocol.

225. No.

226. Expenditure on hospitality across the Ministry totalled \$27,782 in 2018-19, which includes catering for stakeholder meetings and courtesy calls with visiting dignitaries.

227. Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, other nominated public office holders and certain former office holders are provided with official cars and drivers. During 2018-19, all costs associated with these vehicles were paid from the relevant Ministerial office budget.

228. Expenditure on taxis, hire cars and ride share services in 2018-19 across the Ministry was \$119,179, compared to 2009-10 expenditure of \$175,776 under Labor.

229. Expenditure on charter flights for the Ministry totalled \$83,845 in 2018-19, compared to 2009-10 expenditure of \$281,567 under Labor.

230. No.

QUESTION - Agile Workspaces/Activity Based Working/Hot-desking

231. Have any of your departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies adopted agile working environment/activity based working practices e.g. hot-desking?

(a) If not, are there plans to introduce activity based working practices in 2019-20?

232. How much have your departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies spent in the roll-out of the agile working environment including laptops, furniture, lockers and other equipment in 2018-19?

ANSWER:

231. Accommodation planning for Stronger Communities Cluster agencies is undertaken in accordance with the Government's accommodation strategy and design guidelines. Opportunities for employees to be more flexible in their ways of working, including creating more agile working environments, will be considered where appropriate. There are no specific projects being delivered in 2019-20.

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232. In 2018-19, the former Department of Family & Community Services in Liverpool relocated to a new office at 35 Scott Street. \$151,154 was spent on agile workspace furniture and lockers.

A total of \$6.72 million was spent directly and indirectly by the former FACS and Justice departments during the 2018/19 FY to support ICT agile and mobile working.

QUESTION - Hospitality

233. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) How much was spent on hospitality, including catering and beverages, in 2018-19?

(b) Whether the department, statutory agency and/or other body has coffee machines? And if so:

i. How many?

ii. What was their purchase cost?

iii. What is their maintenance cost?

iv. Who has access to them?

v. Which staff have access to the machines?

ANSWER:

233. Expenditure on hospitality is limited to official work related purposes with any related staff benefits subject to Fringe Benefits Tax provisions.

The provision and acceptance of gifts, benefits and hospitality is subject to specific policies and agency Codes of Conduct and is strictly monitored.

QUESTION - Labour Hire Firms

234. Do any departments, statutory agency and/or other bodies within your portfolio responsibilities utilise the services of Labour Hire Firms? If yes, please advise in table form for 2018-19:

(a) The names of the firms utilised

(b) The total amount paid to each firm engaged

(c) The average tenure period for an employee provided by a labour hire company

(d) The longest tenure for an employee provided by a labour hire company

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- (e) The duties conducted by employees engaged through a labour hire company
- (f) The office locations of employees engaged through a labour hire company
- (g) The highest hourly or daily rate paid to an employee provided by a labour hire company
- (h) Who authorised the use of labour hire companies?
- (i) Do staff under these labour hire arrangements receive as much training and security clearance as permanent staff?

ANSWER:

234. Costs are managed within each agency's recurrent budget.

QUESTION - Stationery

235. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) What was the cost of stationery for the following financial years:

- i. 2015-16
- ii. 2016-17
- iii. 2017-18
- iv. 2018-2019
- v. 2019-present

(b) What brand of paper is used?

- i. Is this paper Australian made?

ANSWER:

235. Stationery purchases by Stronger Communities Cluster agencies are made in accordance with the applicable policies and procedures on procurement.

QUESTION - Credit Cards

236. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

- (a) How many credit cards are currently on issue for staff?

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- i. Please provide a break-down of this information by grade.
- (b) What was the value of the largest reported purchase on a credit card for the following financial years:
- i. 2015-16
 - ii. 2016-17
 - iii. 2017-18
 - iv. 2018-2019
 - v. 2019-present
- (c) What was each largest reported purchase for?
- (d) How much interest was paid on amounts outstanding from credit cards for the following financial years:
- i. 2015-16
 - ii. 2016-17
 - iii. 2017-18
 - iv. 2018-2019
 - v. 2019-present
- (e) How much was paid in late fees on amounts outstanding from credit cards for the following financial years
- i. 2015-16
 - ii. 2016-17
 - iii. 2017-18
 - iv. 2018-2019
 - v. 2019-present
- (f) What was the largest amount outstanding on a single card at the end of a payment period and what was the card holder's employment grade?
- (g) How many credit cards have been reported lost or stolen?
- i. What was the cost to replace them?
- (h) How many credit card purchases were deemed to be illegitimate or contrary to agency policy?
- i. What was the total value of those purchases?
 - ii. How many purchases were asked to be repaid on the basis that they were illegitimate or contrary to agency policy and what was the total value thereof?
 - iii. Were all those amounts actually repaid?
 - iv. If no, how many were not repaid, and what was the total value thereof?

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(i) What was the largest purchase that was deemed illegitimate or contrary to agency policy and asked to be repaid, and what was the cardholder's employment grade?

i. What that amount actually repaid, in full?

ii. What amount was left unpaid?

(j) Are any credit cards currently on issue connected to rewards schemes?

i. Do staff receive any personal benefit as a result of those reward schemes?

(k) Can a copy of the staff credit card policy please be provided?

ANSWER:

236. The NSW Government has implemented a PCard program to realise a number of benefits including savings from the use of cards over traditional high cost procure-to-pay processes and the enhanced capability to track and monitor expenditure.

Cards are issued to staff according to business need and are managed in accordance with Treasury Policy TPP 17-09 *Use and Management of NSW Government Purchasing Cards*.

Staff are prohibited from using official PCards for personal or other unofficial purposes and cards are not connected to reward schemes or any other program that would provide a personal benefit to the cardholder.

All NSW Government card balances are paid within bank payments terms and therefore no late fees or interest charges are incurred.

QUESTION - Media and Public Relations

237. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) How many media/communications/public relations advisers are employed?

i. What is the total salary cost for media/communications/public relations advisers in 2018-19?

(b) What is the forecast for the current financial year for the number of media/communications/public relations advisers to be employed and their total cost?

(c) What is the total cost of media monitoring services?

i. Please provide a breakdown by department, statutory agency and/or other body.

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(d) Are any media or public relations advisers currently engaged as contractors?

- i. Who are these contracts with?
- ii. What is the value of these contracts?

(e) How much was spent on media or public relations advisors in financial year:

- i. 2015-16
- ii. 2016-17
- iii. 2017-18
- iv. 2018-2019
- v. 2019-present?

ANSWER:

237. (a-b) Stronger Communities Cluster staff numbers are included in the Annual Report. Stronger Communities Cluster staff numbers undertaking media or public relations activities are commensurate with need and can go down or up as required.

(c-e) The Financial Statements, including legal, consulting and any other general costs from third party service providers, are available in the agency annual report. These are available in accordance with NSW Government Procurement Policy.

QUESTION - Facebook

238. How much did your ministerial office spend on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts in 2018-19?

239. How much did your department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio spend on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts in 2018-19?

ANSWER:

238. No taxpayer money has been spent on Facebook advertising or sponsored posts.

239. Where appropriate, social media is used by agencies alongside other forms of advertising as a cost effective medium of communication.

QUESTION - Overseas Trips

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240. Were any of your overseas trips in the last financial year paid for in part or in full by using public money?

- (a) If so, did any of your relatives or friends accompany you on these trips?
- (b) Have you undertaken any official overseas travel that was privately funded?
- (c) If so, what was the nature of these trips?
- (d) Who paid for these trips?

ANSWER:

240. Details of overseas travel including costs are published on agency websites.

QUESTION - Department/Agency Travel

241. What was the total expenditure in 2018-19 by departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies within your portfolio on:

- (a) Taxi hire
- (b) Limousine
- (c) Private car hire
- (d) Hire car rental
- (e) Ridesharing services
- (f) Chartered flights?

ANSWER:

241. Agency travel was conducted in accordance with relevant NSW Government policies and guidelines including Treasury Circular TC18-15 and ATO determinations.

QUESTION - Drivers

242. Are any of the senior executives in the relevant department, statutory agency and/or other body provided drivers?

- (a) If so, can you please specify which positions are provided drivers?
- (b) In total, how many drivers are used by senior executives in the department, statutory agency and/or other body?

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(c) What is the total cost of drivers for senior executives in the department, statutory agency and/or other body?

ANSWER:

242. No senior executives in the Department of Communities and Justice are provided drivers.

QUESTION - Consulting

243. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) How much was spent in legal costs in 2018-19?

i. For what specific purposes or matters was legal advice sought?

(b) Have departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies under your portfolio engaged any consultants to provide the following services or advice in 2018-19:

i. Social media

ii. Photography

iii. Acting training

iv. Ergonomics

(c) What was the cost of these services?

i. Social media

ii. Photography

iii. Acting training

iv. Ergonomics

ANSWER:

243. The Financial Statements, including legal, consulting and any other general costs from third party service providers, are available in agency annual report.

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QUESTION - Web Content

244. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) What were the top 20 most utilised (by data sent and received) unique domain names accessed this year?

(b) What were the top 20 most accessed (by number of times accessed) unique domain names accessed this year?

ANSWER:

244. (a) Data sent and received is not tracked as a website metric as this does not provide customer benefit.

(b) By site and page views from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019:

1. justice.nsw.gov.au; 31,580,408
2. facs.nsw.gov.au; 18,061,897
3. bdm.nsw.gov.au; 12,863,635
4. lawaccess.nsw.gov.au; 5,002,016
5. ncat.nsw.gov.au; 4,688,877
6. supremecourt.justice.nsw.gov.au; 3,917,758
7. localcourt.justice.nsw.gov.au; 3,537,942
8. correctiveservices.justice.nsw.gov.au; 3,389,009
9. courts.justice.nsw.gov.au; 3,215,283
10. jp.nsw.gov.au; 2,054,658
11. victimsservices.justice.nsw.gov.au/; 1,936,311
12. districtcourt.justice.nsw.gov.au; 1,514,667
13. coroners.justice.nsw.gov.au; 1,468,683
14. lpab.justice.nsw.gov.au; 1,327,323
15. jc.nsw.gov.au; 1,325,510
16. judcom.nsw.gov.au; 1,325,510
17. bocsar.nsw.gov.au; 1,196,456
18. lec.justice.nsw.gov.au; 917,437
19. antidiscrimination.justice.nsw.gov.au; 777,407
20. ucprforms.justice.nsw.gov.au; 690,461

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QUESTION - Department/Agency Staffing

245. How many redundancies were processed by departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2018-19?

(a) Of these redundancies, how many were:

i. Voluntary?

ii. Involuntary?

246. What was the total cost of all redundancies?

247. Have any staff who received a redundancy in the last two years undertaken any paid work or provided any paid services for the department, statutory agency and/or other body with which they were formerly employed?

(a) What was the nature of these works/services?

(b) What was the total cost of these works or services?

248. Are any staff formerly employed by your ministerial office now employed by departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies under your portfolio responsibility?

249. How many staff were dismissed from departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies under your portfolio responsibilities in 2018-19?

(a) What were the reason/s for each dismissal?

250. How much was spent advertising for recruitment for the following financial years:

(a) 2015-16

(b) 2016-17

(c) 2017-18

(d) 2018-2019

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(e) 2019-present?

ANSWER:

245. Voluntary redundancies are a component for agencies to achieve their efficiency dividends. The Labour Expense Cap introduced in the 2012-13 Budget also continues to give Secretaries as much flexibility as possible to achieve these savings in the most appropriate ways to meet the service requirements of their agencies. Frontline staff such as, nurses, police officers and school teachers and regional employees have been quarantined from this measure.

For the 2018/19 reporting period, the Department of Communities and Justice effected 194 voluntary redundancies and 26 forced redundancies.

246. For the 2018/19 reporting period, the Department of Communities and Justice paid \$18,417,290.66 in redundancy payments.

247. All recruitment practices conducted by the Department of Communities and Justice, ensure the application of due diligence so that any employee who has previously exited NSW Government employment through a redundancy process, and is subsequently rehired, complies with the re- engagement provisions contained within the NSW Government's managing excess employees guidelines, in respect to the repayment of any severance monies.

248. There are no former employees of my Ministerial office currently employed by the Department of Communities and Justice under my portfolio responsibility.

249. For the 2018/19 reporting period, 30 employees of the Department of Communities and Justice had their employment terminated. All employment terminations were compliant with the provisions of the Government Sector Employment Act 2013, and relevant employing legislation.

250. This information is not available.

QUESTION - Smart Phone

251. How many mobile phones are given to staff or board members?

(a) How many new mobile phones were purchased in the last year?

252. What is the total cost of these phones for the following financial years:

(a) 2015-16

(b) 2016-17

(c) 2017-18

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(d) 2018-2019

(e) 2019-present?

253. How many had to be replaced due to damage?

254. How many were reported as lost?

255. How many tablets are given to staff or board members?

(a) How many new tablets in the last year?

256. What is the total cost of these tablets for the following financial years?

(a) 2015-16

(b) 2016-17

(c) 2017-18

(d) 2018-2019?

257. How many phones and tablets had to be replaced due to damage?

258. How many were reported as lost?

259. How many people have both a smart phone and a tablet?

(a) What is the lowest ranked official who has both a work smart phone and tablet?

260. How many staff or board members overspent on their phone or tablet data bill?

(a) By how much?

(b) What was the average cost of data bills for tablets and mobile phones?

(c) What was the highest monthly cost?

261. Do the departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies within your portfolio have an iTunes account?

(a) What was the total expenditure in 2018-19 on iTunes?

(b) What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through iTunes?

262. Do the departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies within your portfolio have a Google Play Store account?

(a) What was the total expenditure in 2018-19 on through the Google Play Store?

(b) What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through the Google Play Store?

ANSWER:

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251-262. IT costs are managed within each agency's budget and in accordance with NSW Government's ICT and procurement policies and frameworks.

QUESTION - Merchant fees

263. Please provide a list of all transactions where customers need to pay a merchant fee on credit and/or debit card payments to a department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio.

264. Please provide the percentage and/or amount of the merchant fees applied to all credit and/or debit card payments/transactions to a department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio.

265. What was the total amount paid in merchant fees on credit and/or debit card payments to departments, statutory agencies and/or other bodies within your portfolio in 2018-19?

ANSWER:

263-265. All NSW Government agencies are required to impose surcharges to recoup their merchant interchange fees, pursuant to Treasury Circular TC12/13. The Department of Communities and Justice does not accept payment for goods and services, so the Department does not impose merchant fees.

Department of Communities and Justice staff only use their Pcards for the purchase of goods and services for official business purposes. If particular vendors elect to impose a merchant fee on card transactions, that is an unavoidable cost of doing business. It would not be possible to determine fees charges to Departmental cards, as these would either be embedded in the individual transaction cost, or if separately disclosed would require each monthly card statement for each user to be reviewed.

QUESTION - Advertising and Sponsorships

266. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) How much was spent on advertising in the following financial years:

i. 2015-16

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ii. 2016-17

iii. 2017-18

iv. 2018-2019?

267. Has your department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio engaged in any corporate sponsorships?

(a) Who were these sponsorships with?

(b) What was the purpose of these sponsorships?

(c) What was the value of these sponsorships, by case and year?

(d) What was the value of these sponsorships in the following financial years:

i. 2015-16

ii. 2016-17

iii. 2017-18

iv. 2018-19?

ANSWER:

266. The Financial Statements, including advertising and sponsorship, are available in agency annual reports. Government advertising is conducted within guidelines outlined in the NSW Government Advertising Handbook.

267. Any sponsorship arrangements are conducted within Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) principles.

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QUESTION - Probity Auditor

268. Has your office or department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio used a Probity Auditor or Probity Advisors, or similar, in the past five years? If so please list the company and/or individual, the project, the engagement dates, and their total remuneration in tabular format.

ANSWER:

268. In accordance with the NSW Procurement Board's Direction (PBD-2013-05), the Department of Communities and Justice has internal mechanisms in place to ensure that probity considerations are routinely taken into account in its procurement decisions, and the use of external probity advisers and auditors is the exception rather than the rule. The Department's Annual Report includes all consultancies including those involving probity advisors valued more than \$50,000.

QUESTION - Energy

269. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio by name, how much electricity did it consume for each of:

- (a) 2014-15?
- (b) 2015-16?
- (c) 2016-17?
- (d) 2017-18?
- (e) 2018/19?

270. What proportion of the electricity consumed by each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio by name for those years came from renewable sources? Please name each source of energy (coal, solar, wind, etc.) and the proportion of the total electricity used.

271. How much money was spent on electricity for each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio by name in each of the above financial years?

272. What was the name of the energy supplier to each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio by name for those financial years?

273. How much electricity is it estimated that each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio will consume in:

- (a) 2019-20?

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(b) 2020-21?

(c) 2021-22?

274. What proportion of that electricity is it estimated will come from renewable sources, for each year?

275. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio by name, please

provide the estimated proportion of energy to be used from each kind of energy (coal, gas, solar, wind etc.)?

276. What is the name of the energy supplier to each department, statutory agency and/or other body

within your portfolio for each of:

(a) 2019-20?

(b) 2020-21?

(c) 2021-22?

ANSWER:

269-276. Energy purchases by Stronger Communities Cluster agencies are made in accordance with the applicable policies and procedures on procurement under whole of government Contracts 776 (small sites under 100,000 kwh per annum) and 777.

Under these contracts the following suppliers are mandated:

- 776 – Origin Energy Electricity Limited
- 777 – ERM Power Retail Pty Ltd

The NSW Government Resource Efficiency Policy was introduced in 2014 to reduce the NSW Government's operating costs and lead by example in increasing the efficiency of the resources it uses.

NSW Government agencies are required to report on energy use under the Government Resource Efficiency Policy. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment publishes progress reports on compliance with the policy.

QUESTION - General Costs

277. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) Any gardening services used for indoor or outdoor pot plants/flowers maintenance?

i. Who are the contracts with?

ii. How much does each contract cost?

iii. How often do they visit?

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iv. How much was spent on this service in financial year:

- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19?

(b) Any floral displays or indoor plants or pot plants hired or leased for display in any offices?

i. Who were the contracts with?

ii. How much was each contract cost?

iii. How much was spent on this service in financial year:

- 2015-16
- 2016-17
- 2017-18
- 2018-19?

ANSWER:

277. The Financial Statements, including expenditure on any general costs, are available in an agency's annual report. Plant and related purchases by Stronger Communities Cluster agencies are made in accordance with the applicable policies and procedures on procurement.

QUESTION - Domestic Violence Leave Policies, Awareness and Usage

278. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

- (a) A copy of the entity's policy or web link to the entity's domestic violence leave policy;
- (b) Date of introduction of domestic violence leave into enterprise agreements/contracts of employment, awards as applicable;
- (c) Whether or not all employees and/or contractors are eligible for domestic violence leave;
- (d) Number of days of domestic violence leave that have been taken in each financial year since the introduction of such leave;
- (e) Number of days available for eligible staff to access domestic violence leave in each financial year;
- (f) Number of other personal days of leave that have been taken in each financial year since the introduction of domestic violence leave;
- (g) Number of sick days available for eligible staff to access domestic violence leave in each financial year;

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(h) Whether or not all staff and/or contractors have access to Employee Assistance Programs?

(i) What training has been undertaken with management and administration for those involved in approving and/or processing domestic violence leave on issues such as?

i. Privacy and confidentiality of information about domestic violence

ii. Access to emotional, psychological, financial and medical support which may be required

279. Who has provided training on domestic violence in the workplace?

280. What percentage of staff in each agency has undertaken domestic violence training?

281. What efforts have been made to ensure that perpetrators (or their accomplices) within the staffing profile are not able to access personal information of victims in order to identify their location, or other information which may assist in committing domestic violence against them, including changing or accessing records in such a way as to disadvantage them financially or legally?

ANSWER:

278.

(a) Section 6.18 of the Public Service Industrial Relations Guide provides guidance to staff and management on appropriate strategies for supporting a staff member experiencing domestic violence. This guidance further references Section 84A of the Award (leave for matters arising from domestic violence) and Treasury Circular 19-08 Domestic and Family Violence Workplace Support Policy – Guiding Principles for Agencies.

(b) Section 84A was added to the Award in 2011. The extension of this leave to all government sector employees commenced on 1 January 2019 and was enacted by Premier's Memorandum M2018-03-Support for Employees Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence.

(c) All staff members employed under the Award in a cluster agency are entitled to be absent from the workplace due to an incident of domestic violence if required. Similar clauses apply to agencies covered by their own negotiated agreements.

(d) From 1 January 2019, a separate leave type of Domestic & Family Violence Leave was made available as a separate leave type. Across relevant systems, the number of reported leave days of this type are not able to be delineated because the data is not captured in a discernible way.

(e-g) In accordance with the Premier's Memorandum M2018-03-Support for Employees Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence, NSW Government Sector employees are entitled to ten days paid domestic and family violence leave per calendar year. This leave is non-cumulative and

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can be taken in part-days, single days, or consecutive days. Staff may also utilise all available Family and Community Service Leave, Sick Leave and Carer's Leave to assist with managing domestic violence circumstances. If this leave is unavailable special leave maybe granted up to five days per calendar year.

(h) All staff, their families and contractors have access to the Employee Assistance Program.

(i) An e-learning module has been developed in consultation with Family and Community Services. The Department is working to ensure all staff are trained in line with the developed modules.

279. The previous Department of Family and Community Services was an accredited White Ribbon Workplace through White Ribbon Australia. The Department of Communities and Justice will seek accreditation as its new entity and will continue to provide ongoing support and guidance to the principal department and cluster agencies on best practice approaches to supporting women who are experiencing domestic violence.

280. An e-learning module has been developed. The Department of Communities and Justice is working to ensure all staff are trained in line with the developed modules.

281. The Department of Communities and Justice complies with the highest levels of document and privacy management consistent with the *Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998* (NSW).

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

QUESTION - Sexual harassment and Anti-bullying training and awareness programs

282. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) Date of introduction of sexual harassment and anti-bullying training and awareness programs and a copy of such documentation.

i. Whether or not all employees and/or contractors have received such training?

ii. Is this course mandatory for all employees/ contractors?

iii. How long for each session, how many sessions?

iv. Who delivers it?

v. Is the program tailored to take into consideration specific needs of LGBTQIA, ATSI and CALD or other at risk groups?

- How?

(b) What percentage of staff in each department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio have undertaken sexual harassment and anti-bullying training and awareness programs?

(c) How many complaints have been initiated in relation to:

i. Sexual harassment

ii. Bullying

iii. Workplace violence

ANSWER:

282.

(a) This training was formally introduced first in July 2013 and is regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with policies and guidance. The Department of Communities and Justice is looking at harmonising policies including the Respectful Workplace Policy.

(i) & (ii) Relevant training packages are rolled out across the cluster as necessary. The Department of Communities and Justice is looking at harmonising policies across the department.

(iii) Session times vary between trainers and agencies.

(iv) Various specialist providers as well as EAP providers. Some agencies utilise training courses organised by others within the cluster to maximise efficiencies.

(v) The needs of at-risk groups are considered in the training provided.

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

(b) Relevant training packages are rolled out across the cluster as necessary. The Department of Communities and Justice is looking at harmonising policies across the department.

(c) Complaints of this nature are addressed through in line with relevant departmental policies. Not all complaints are raised as a formal complaint and may be addressed informally and directly between the complainant and the individual being complained of.

QUESTION - Participation of women in Government

283. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

(a) What number and percentage of women are employed within the department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio?

(b) What number and percentage of women are employed within the management levels of the department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio?

(c) What number and percentage of women are employed in the top ten leadership positions of the department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio?

(d) What strategies does the department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio use to encourage women in to management and leadership positions?

(e) What is the gender pay gap within your department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio?

(f) Does the department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio report participation of women figures to Women NSW on a regular basis?

ANSWER:

283.

(a)-(c) This information is available in each agency's Annual Report.

(d) All agencies use gender balance on interview panels as well as offering flexible working arrangements to allow better management of work and home commitments. Agencies continue to promote diversity and inclusion strategies which promote a workplace free from social biases of any kind.

(e) All equivalent positions determined by an objective assessment of their work value are paid the same salary within all agencies. The relevant distribution of women in each classification of work across the sector is reported by the Public Service Commission (PSC) but is also available in the agency's Annual Report.

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

(f) The workforce profile data collected by the PSC is made available to Women NSW.

QUESTION - Professional Photography

284. How much has been spent on professional photography for the following financial years:

- (a) 2015-16
- (b) 2016-17
- (c) 2017-18
- (d) 2018-2019
- (e) 2019-present?

ANSWER:

284. The Financial Statements, including expenditure on professional photography, are available in agency annual reports.

QUESTION - Unmanned Aerial Services

285. How much has been spent on Unmanned Aerial Services for the following financial years:

- (a) 2015-16
- (b) 2016-17
- (c) 2017-18
- (d) 2018-2019
- (e) 2019-present?

ANSWER:

285. The Financial Statements, including expenditure on unmanned aerial services, are available in agency annual reports.

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

QUESTION - Seconded Staff

286. How many staff from your department, statutory agency and/or other body within your portfolio have been seconded to your Ministerial Office, for the following financial years:

(a) 2015-16

(b) 2016-17

(c) 2017-18

(d) 2018-2019

(e) 2019-present?

287. Please provide their names, their substantive work title, and their seconded work title.

ANSWER:

286-287. NSW Government sector employees may be seconded from agencies to Ministers' offices in accordance with Clause 35 of the Government Sector Employment Regulation 2014.

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-20

MINISTER WARD

QUESTION - Consultant Costs

288. For each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report, the total expenditure on consultants by financial year:

- (a) 2015-16
- (b) 2016-17
- (c) 2017-18
- (d) 2018-2019
- (e) 2019-present?

289. What are names and values of the five most expensive reports produced by consultancies for each department, statutory agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio by financial year:

- (a) 2015-16
- (b) 2016-17
- (c) 2017-18
- (d) 2018-2019
- (e) 2019-present?

ANSWER:

288-289. The Financial Statements, including expenditure on consultants, are available in agency annual reports.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

GIPA Questions to the CEOs/ Department Secretaries

290. Since March 30, how many formal GIPAs have your cluster/ department received?

I am advised:

30/03/19 to 02/09/19 inclusive = 483

291. Out of the received formal GIPAs, how many have you determined to:

(a) Grant full access to the information?

41

(b) Grant partial access to the information?

206

(c) Not grant access to the information?

7

292. Out of the GIPA where partial information or no information was granted, how many have decided to appeal?

4

(a) Out of those who have decided to appeal, how many have decided to use:

i. The agency's internal appeals' mechanism?

1

ii. Review by the Information Commissioner?

3

iii. Review by NCAT?

0

(b) How many of those GIPAs have been overturned on appeal?

0

i. Internal appeals' mechanism?

0

ii. Review of the Information Commissioner?

One s93 recommendation was made

iii. Review by NCAT?

0

293. GIPAs that have been granted full or partial access, how many appear on the agency's disclosure log?

(a) What is the rationale for not putting GIPAs on the agency's disclosure log (excluding GIPAs asking for personal information)?

I am advised:

Two GIPAs that have been granted full or partial access appear on the agency's disclosure log.

294. Has any GIPAs that appeared on the agency's disclosure log been taken down?

(a) For what reason/s?

I am advised:

No GIPAs that appeared on the agency's disclosure log have been taken down.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Lay-down change facilities

295. What are the current standards as to the definition of an adult lay-down change facility? i.e. does it require a hoist to be provided as part of the facility or any other particular equipment?

I am advised:

There are no standards for these facilities other than the applicable standard for Accessible Toilets. The current versions of AS1428.1 do not require such adult changing equipment in standard accessible sanitary facilities.

In NSW guidelines were produced to assist local councils and other parties to install “Lift and Change” facilities.

https://www.lgnsw.org.au/files/imce-uploads/90/Checklist_specifications_liftandchange.pdf

296. How many publicly accessible adult lay-down change facilities are currently available across New South Wales, with the statistics shown by:

(a) Total number

The most comprehensive centralised list of accessible toilets and lift and change facilities is on the National Public Toilet Map here: <https://toiletmap.gov.au/Find>

(b) Number of facilities on a highway

As per 296.a

(c) Number of facilities not on a highway

As per 296.a

297. What are the most common sources of funding for adult lay-down change facilities in NSW

I am advised:

The department does not keep data on the number or funding sources for lay down change facilities.

The provision of accessible public toilets in new buildings is determined by the requirements of the Australian Building Standards.

Existing facilities have been funded from a variety of sources as part of the disability inclusion agenda of Government agencies, local government, businesses and other community organisations.

It is the responsibility of these organisations to provide data to the National Public Toilet map if they choose to make the facilities available to the public.

298. How much money was allocated was in the most recent NSW budget for the installation of publicly accessible adult lay-down change facilities?

I am advised:

Existing facilities have been funded from a variety of sources as part of the disability inclusion agenda of Government agencies, local government, businesses and other community organisations.

299. Please provide a list of adult lay-down change facilities in NSW that are currently accessible, under construction, and planned in NSW. Please include the following information about each facility:

- (a) Specific location
- (b) Actual or projected cost
- (c) Source/s of funding, including proportion
- (d) Service area

I am advised:

The department does not keep data on the number or funding sources for lay down change facilities or the current schedule of construction. The most comprehensive listing available is the National Public Toilet Map.

Existing facilities have been funded from a variety of sources as part of the disability inclusion agenda of Government agencies, local government, businesses and other community organisations.

300. Has the Minister received requests for adult lay-down change facilities on highways in NSW?

- (a) If so, what locations has the Minister received requests regarding?
- (b) If so, what representations has the Minister made to advocate for the requisite funding to deliver on the requests for adult lay-down change facilities on highways?

I am advised:

On 4 July 2019 LGNSW requested funds from the State Government (through a letter sent to Gareth Ward, Minister for Disability Services) for lift and change facilities to be built on road side rest stops along major highways.

The matter was referred to the Minister for Transport and Roads as the matter falls within that portfolio's responsibilities.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Background checks for people working in the disability sector

301. The Annual report of the NSW Children's Guardian in 2018 stated: "OCG established a project team in early 2018 to undertake the design and implementation work of the NSW NDIS Worker Check. The 2017-18 Annual report for the OCG includes the NDIS Screening Unit in our financial statements and staffing numbers." It is now eighteen months since this unit was funded and established.

- (a) What is the delay in implementing the NDIS Worker Check?

I am advised a team was established and is progressing the required operational, legislative and IT work. This includes designing and agreeing nationally consistent policy and operational arrangements with the Commonwealth and all other States and Territories.

- (b) What date will the new NDIS Worker Check be operational in NSW? What is the proposed implementation timeline? Has education of the sector commenced in relation to the new check?

I am advised the NDIS Worker Check is expected to commence in NSW in 2019-20. The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission is responsible for educating providers about their registration requirements (which includes the need for certain workers to have a clearance); and the National Disability Insurance Agency is responsible for educating participants about the need to ensure the service providers they use employ workers with a clearance.

- (c) Will it be administered by the Children's Guardian? Or an independent screening Unit with appropriate expertise in disability services?

I am advised the NDIS Worker Check will be administered from within the Office of the Children's Guardian.

- (d) Other States such as South Australia, Tasmania, ACT have already put in place vulnerable person checks and Victoria has a Disability Worker Exclusion List prior to the introduction of the NDIS Worker Check?

I am advised that new NDIS worker screening has not yet commenced in any State or Territory.

- (e) Given the NSW NDIS Worker Check is taking so long what interim protections has the Minister put in place to safeguard people with disabilities over and above the limited scope of mandatory police checks (criminal convictions)?

I am advised that information about the Commonwealth's acceptable checks for registered NDIS providers delivering supports and services in NSW is available on the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission website at

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/worker-screening#08>.

302. Is it a priority for the Minister to ensure that vulnerable adults with disabilities are afforded the same protections as children with disabilities in regard to those people who are assigned to work with them?

Yes. I am advised that, once the NDIS Worker Check is implemented, people working with children with disability will be required to undertake both a NDIS Worker Check and a NSW Working With Children Check.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

National Disability Insurance Scheme Amendment (Streamlined Governance) Bill 2019

303. All States and Territories were invited to provide submissions to the Commonwealth regarding the NDIS Amendment (Streamlined Governance) Bill 2019. Why did the NSW Government refrain from submitting their views regarding their position on this Bill?

I am advised:

The NSW Government was invited to provide comment on the draft Bill in January 2019 and did so via correspondence to the former Australian Government Minister for Families and Social Services. Following this process, I am advised the Bill was updated to reflect feedback from states and territories.

304. What is the NSW Government's position on this Bill?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 303.

305. How does the NSW Government respond to concerns expressed by disability organisations that this Bill should not proceed considering the review of the NDIS Act has not been completed and the outcomes of that review may be at odds with the objects of this Bill?

I am advised there will be a legislative review of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (NDIS Act) in 2021.

I am further advised that on 12 August 2019, the Commonwealth Government announced it had appointed Mr David Tune AO PSM to conduct a review to assess the operation of the NDIS Act with a focus on streamlining National Disability Insurance Scheme processes and removing red tape for participants and providers.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION

BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Responses have been provide by the Department of Communities and Justice. The office of the Ageing and Disability Commissioner has advised that if required, they will provide answers directly to the Committee.

Ageing and Disabilities Commissioner

306. What is the total budget for the Ageing and Disabilities Commissioner?

I am advised:

\$13.9 million over 4 years.

307. Has there been a reduction in the overall funding for the Commissioner since between the time the position was announced and when the position commenced?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 306.

308. How many staff are employed by the Ageing and Disabilities Commissioner?

Under section 12(3) of the *Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019*, the Ageing and Disability Commissioner is not subject to the control or direction of the Minister. Therefore, all questions about the Ageing and Disability Commissioner should be referred to the Commissioner directly for his response.

309. How many complaints have been made to the Commissioner since the office commenced?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

310. How many of these cases pertain to:

- (a) Aged care?
- (b) Elder abuse?
- (c) Health facilities for the aged?
- (d) Housing for the aged?
- (e) Discrimination against the aged?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

311. What was the total number of people who have contacted the Elder Abuse hotline in every year since it began?

Calls to the Elder Abuse Helpline and Resource Unit since inception:

2012/13*	283
2013/14	1,200
2014/15	1,571
2015/16	2,244
2016/17	2,120
2017/18	3,463
2018/19	3,877

*** The Helpline was established in March 2013, this number reflects calls from March to 30 June 2013.**

312. Is the Commissioner empowered to investigate claims of elder abuse in aged care facilities in NSW?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

313. Why not?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

314. Is the Commissioner able to hold public inquiries regarding systemic abuse for people with disability and older residents of NSW?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

(a) Why not?

315. Given what we have learned in recent weeks and months about Bupa and other aged care facilities, isn't there a role for the Commissioner in investigating elder abuse in these settings?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

316. Why did the Government choose to exclude the Ageing and Disabilities Commissioner from the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*?

The office of Ageing and Disability Commissioner is covered by the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*. Information relating to the Ageing and Disability Commissioner's report handling, investigative and reporting functions is excluded information under Schedule 2, in the same way that similar information of other investigative and complaints-handling agencies is excluded.

317. Clause 12 of the Clause 13 (10) *Ageing and Disabilities Commissioner Bill 2019* states that the commissioner must gain the consent of a vulnerable adult to conduct an investigation unless "the

allegation is so serious that it is not necessary to obtain consent". On how many occasions have cases commenced investigation without consent of a vulnerable person having to be granted?

Please refer to response to supplementary question 308.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION
BUDGET ESTIMATES – MINISTER WARD

Ability Links

318. Will Ability Links close on 31 October 2019?

- (a) If so, why?
- (b) If so, how has this been communicated to participants in the Ability Links program?
- (c) If so, what action has the Minister taken to ensure this vital service is not lost?

I am advised the Ability Links NSW program is delivered with 295 linkers as well as 17 Aboriginal-specific linker organisations.

For 2019-20, both the NSW and Commonwealth Governments have publically committed funding for Ability Links, made up of:

- \$11.6 million funding from NSW;
- \$8.5 million from NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building funding one off allocation to NSW;
- \$20 million from NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building funding associated with the NDIS Local Area Coordinator function.

The \$8.5 million has been applied to the 17 Aboriginal-specific linker organisations and this is full year funding.

The Minister continues to liaise directly with the Federal Minister and the Disability Reform Council in relation to the full roll out of Information, Linkages and Capacity Building funding for NSW, to ensure that the people with disability in NSW are not without these important services.

319. Has the Federal Government fully funded their commitment to Ability Links?

- (a) If not, what action has the Minister taken to ensure this funding is provided in a timely manner?
- (b) If not, has the Minister written to the Federal Minister to request this funding is provided?
- (c) If so, can the Minister provide the committee with this correspondence?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 318.

320. Ability Links employs 400 people and has helped tens of thousands of participants and families, what action has the Minister take to save this vital service?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 318.

321. Will all participants in the Ability Links program be able to access the same services through the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building [ILC] program through the NDIS?

I am advised:

The NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Program is for all people with disability. Refer to ILC Policy Framework at

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/community/information-linkages-and-capacity-building-ilc>

322. Will the Minister continue to fund Ability Links until the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building [ILC] program through the NDIS is established?

Please refer to the response to supplementary question 318.

323. Will the Aboriginal Ability Links program continue past 30 June 2020?

I am advised:

It is the expectation of NSW that the Linker function will be a fundamental component of the NDIS ILC Program as it continues to roll out in 2019-20 and beyond.

Information on the current ILC grant rounds can be found on the NDIA website

<https://www.ndis.gov.au/community/grants> .