



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-2020 Supplementary Questions**

**Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment**

### **ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT**

Hearing: Friday 6 March 2020

**Answers due by: Monday, 6 April 2020**

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## ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

### Questions from Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC

#### Regional Forest Agreements

1. What are the implications of the impacts of the 2019-20 fires on the forested estate on the environmental calculations that underlie the existing Regional Forest Agreements?
2. What steps will the NSW Government and Commonwealth take to assess the ecological sustainability of the Regional Forest Agreements?

#### Salvage logging and IFOA conditions

3. How will the EPA enforce the site specific conditions for forestry operations in fire-affected areas at Mogo State Forest compartment 174A and South Brooman State Forest compartment 60A in southern NSW?
  - (a) Will the EPA audit these two operations?
  - (b) What will this audit involve?
  - (c) Will this be a model for salvage logging operations across NSW?
  - (d) Does the EPA intend to apply these recommendations more extensively before logging operations are resumed in all burnt areas?
  - (e) Does the EPA have the financial and personnel resources to enforce site specific conditions across the state?
4. Does there need to be a modification of the IFOA for salvage logging operation to go ahead across the state?
  - (a) If so, will there be public consultation?
  - (b) What is the process for these changes being made?
  - (c) Who has to approve these changes at a Ministerial level?
  - (d) What, if any, changes can the EPA make without Ministerial sign off?
5. The EPA approved 75 compartments to be logged under the old IFOA rules in December:
  - (a) Will these approvals be updated to include site specific conditions?
    - i. If not, why not?

- (b) Given there is currently no specification to manage the impacts of severe fire seasons (such as the one we have just experienced) in the IFOA - is the Government considering making changes to the IFOA that will help manage post fire environmental considerations for forest operations in the future?
  - i. If yes, will these changes involve public consultation?
  - ii. If not, why not?

### **National Parks vegetation management**

- 6. What legal constraints apply to the damage or removal of native vegetation from reserves gazetted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act?
  - (a) Do these constraints prohibit the use of vegetation for commercial purposes?
- 7. What assessments have or will be conducted to determine whether vegetation that has been modified by fire operations, including the construction of control lines, should be left in situ or removed?
- 8. Are trees that have been felled in National Parks for fire breaks being removed by FCNSW or associated contractors?
  - (a) Will these trees be sold for profit?
- 9. What legal powers would be evoked to allow commercial operations in National Parks?

### **Mangrove Mountain**

- 10. On 19 February 2020, following heavy rainfall in early February, the operator of Mangrove Mountain Landfill was observed to be deliberately discharging sediment-laden water potentially containing unknown pollutants from a holding pond into Stringybark Creek. This creek flows into Ourimbah Creek, which is a source of water for the Central Coast potable water supply. Why, when this was brought to the attention of the EPA by Mountain Districts Association on 21 February 2020, did the EPA choose to pass it on to the Central Coast Council?

### **Post-Bushfire Wildlife and conservation recovery**

- 11. How much is the government spending on post bushfire wildlife and conservation recovery?
- 12. How much is the government spending on post bushfire feral animal control?
- 13. In addition to the post-fire feral animal control program, have other measures been considered to bolster the protection of native animals in their remaining habitat such as introducing artificial refuge and cover?

## **Biodiversity Conservation Trust**

14. Has the 2019 - 2020 bushfire season reduced the availability of biodiversity credits under the Biodiversity Conservation Act?
  - (a) By how much?
  - (b) How is the Biodiversity Conservation Trust determining the impact on biodiversity credits as a result of this season's bushfires?
    - i. Who is being contracted to undertake this work?
    - ii. What is the timeframe for this work?
15. How many areas of outstanding biodiversity value have been determined under Part 3 of the BC Act?
  - (a) What are they?
  - (b) How many hectares do they cover?
  - (c) When were they determined?
  - (d) How many applications are currently being considered by the BCT to be determined as areas of outstanding biodiversity values?
    - i. How many hectares are covered by these applications?

## **Sydney flora and fauna**

16. How will the NSW government measure the increase in tree canopy in Sydney as proposed by the Greater Sydney Commission?
17. Given the devastation of this summer's bushfires and loss of flora and fauna, Sydney's bushland is now a sanctuary for many species and safeguarding biodiversity. What measures is the NSW government now taking to give extra protection to endangered or vulnerable species in these areas?

## **Narrabri CSG - Fugitive emissions and air toxins, disposal of salt waste**

18. Following the release of Santos' response to submissions in July 2018, the NSW EPA indicated it was not satisfied with the information provided by Santos about fugitive emissions and recommended the then-Department of Planning and Environment request additional clarification on "the characterisation and assessment of fugitive emissions, including methane, volatile organic compounds and air toxins" and detail on Santos' proposed leak detection and repair program. In that July 2018 letter, the EPA also requested, for the second time, specific information from

Santos and the Department of Planning about the capacity of nearby landfill facilities to deal with this. Has the EPA received any additional information from Santos or the Department of Planning about fugitive methane and air toxics from the proposed Narrabri gas field since July 2018?

19. Has the EPA received any additional information from Santos or the Department of Planning about details of its plans to dispose of tens of thousands of tonnes of waste salt from the proposed Narrabri gas field since July 2018?

### **SEPP (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019**

20. How many hectares of land does the new SEPP (Koala Habitat Protection) 2019 apply to?
21. How many hectares of land that have koala habitat does the koala SEPP not apply to?
22. Why is it that some areas of NSW with known koala habitat have been excluded from the new koala SEPP?
23. Of land mapped as potential koala habitat through the Site Investigation Area map, what percentage do you expect to be confirmed as core koala habitat through expert investigations (as required in the SEPP)?
24. What is the time frame and the process for updating the Native Vegetation Regulatory Map?

### **Bushfires Impacts on Aboriginal Culture**

25. Given the devastating impact of the bushfires on places and landscapes of Aboriginal cultural significance, what is the Government doing to:
  - (a) Map the specific impacts of the bushfires on culturally significant sites, and
  - (b) Protect or remediate these sites over the short and long term.
26. What existing measures are in place to support Aboriginal people to practice cultural burning across tenures across NSW, specifically in relation to:
  - (a) Infrastructure and equipment for Aboriginal fire practitioners
  - (b) Investment into Aboriginal cultural burning to help mitigate wildfire risk, enhance habitat and biodiversity and protect cultural heritage
  - (c) Investment into cultural awareness training and opportunities for collaboration between existing fire and land management agencies

### **Monitoring Fire Recovery**

27. One of the constantly occurring issues in bushfire response discussions is the need for the establishment of scientifically-based, systematic inventory and monitoring programs to assess the impacts of the recent fires, monitor recovery over time and apply adaptive management where required. Another issue is the availability of baseline data against which to gauge initial impacts and assess monitoring results. To be most effective, assessment and monitoring programs should be directed to areas where reliable pre-fire baseline data are available. Crucial to the establishment of such programs will be the sourcing and dedication of adequate funds to enable them to provide meaningful results. What funds are available to ensure that fire recovery projects are established and monitored for the long-term?

### **Dingoes and Wild Dogs in NSW**

28. What scientific evidence or justification formed the basis of the NSW ‘wildlife and conservation bushfire recovery response’ plan targeting ‘wild dogs’ aka dingoes?
29. Was the work of Geary et al. 2018 (J Appl Ecol. 55: 1594–1603) considered or reviewed in the creation of this bushfire recovery plan?
30. Have studies been carried out to ascertain the non-target impacts on native fauna from 1080 aerial and ground baiting in burnt landscape?
- (a) If so, when were these studies carried out, by whom and what were the results
31. How are non-target impacts on native predators such as quolls, goannas and dingoes being minimised?
32. What safeguards are in place to protect bushwalkers dogs, companion dogs, farm working dogs or livestock guardian dogs from ingesting baits dropped as part of this bushfire recovery plan?
33. The NSW ‘wildlife and conservation bushfire recovery response’ plan states that 1 million 1080 baits will be aurally deployed across 60,000 kms of transects?
- (a) Where exactly will these baits be deployed?
- (b) What is the baiting dosage (density and bait type) that will be used?
- (c) Is this baiting to be instead of or in addition to annual ‘wild dog aerial baiting’ activities carried out by NSW State Government and Local Land Services?
- (d) What is the target of the aerial baiting?

34. There is strong scientific evidence that dingoes play a role in suppressing and modifying the behaviour of introduced mesopredators such as foxes and cats, how does killing dingoes demonstrate evidence-based conservation management for bushfire recovery?
35. Ultimately what are the key processes that have determined dingoes (wild dogs) to be targeted as threats to native species following the 2019/2020 bushfire season?
  - (a) What advice/consultation is this based on?
36. What DNA testing has been done in NSW by the NSW Government (DPIE) and what percent or number of animals were: pure dingoes, probable pure dingoes, greater than 75% dingo, greater than 65% dingo and greater than 50% dingo?
37. From the DNA testing work carried out by NSW Government (DPIE), what percentage of the population were feral dogs or animals with less than 50% dingo ancestry? Were these animals more common in peri-urban or remote areas?
38. How has knowledge from DNA testing about the ancestry of wild dingoes been incorporated into management plans?
39. In 2019, Cairns et al. published a study identifying three hot spots of high dingo ancestry near: Myall Lakes, North of Port Macquarie and Washpool National Park. What practical steps have been taken to protect these populations from lethal control and hybridisation with domestic dogs?
40. Are there any plans to make an exception for aerial baiting around populations of known 'high dingo purity'?
  - (a) If so, which areas are these?
  - (b) What knowledge or information would be required for such considerations to take place?
41. Which conservation reserves have been identified, based on best available science and genetic testing, to support conservation management of the genetic integrity of dingoes?
42. Does the conservation of dingoes (and their ecological role) feature as a key process in the NSW bushfire recovery plan?
  - (a) What are the motivations behind indiscriminate non target specific broad scale killing of dingoes?
  - (b) What advice/consultation is this based on?

- (c) Is the baiting density to be 40 baits per kilometre across the board or is the dosage higher or lower in different areas? What baits will be deployed (4 or 6 mg 1080)?
  - i. How is this decided?
  - ii. Under what consultation?
- 43. What surveys have been undertaken across burnt habitat to estimate the population of surviving dingoes (wild dogs), quolls and other native animals prior to aerial or ground baiting programs.
- 44. What is the overall population size/goal for dingoes in baited areas?
  - (a) Upon what evidence/justification or advice is this based upon?
- 45. Is the targeting of dingoes (wild dogs) as part of the NSW Bushfire Recovery Plan a result of advice from the Department of Agriculture?
  - (a) In NSW, over the past 3 years, how many livestock have been verified as killed or harmed by dingoes (wild dogs)?
  - (b) How was it demonstrated that this was the result of dingoes (wild dogs) rather than feral or roaming pet dogs?
  - (c) What percent livestock loss does this represent out of the total number of livestock reared/held in NSW?
  - (d) What non-lethal management strategies are in place to limit the impacts of dingoes (and other predators) on livestock?
  - (e) What processes are in place to ensure that livestock producers make steps to limit risk to livestock before resorting to lethal management?
  - (f) What evidence is there than aerial baiting practically and substantially reduces livestock predation?
- 46. What is the budget for 'wild dog' control in Kosciuszko National Park?

#### **Maules Creek Whitehaven Coal Mine**

- 47. Concerning the Clean-Up Notice Number 1591771 dated 21 February 2020 issued by the NSW EPA against Maules Creek Coal Pty Ltd, which relates to serious pollution of the waterways which constitute part of the Namoi River catchment,
  - (a) The Clean-Up Notice states that a complaint was received from a property owner "on or around the 9 February 2020". Why is there no certainty of when the complaint was received?



- (b) Precisely when did the licensee Maules Creek Coal itself report the pollution event, and can you please provide the exact details of what was self-reported, if at all?
  - (c) What is known about the quantity of the expandable polystyrene balls (EPBs) that escaped from the Maules Creek Coal mine, (i) in cubic metres, (ii) in estimated numbers, and/or in any other metric used to measure them?
  - (d) What measures are being taken by the EPA to assess the harm to aquatic animals and birds who ingest the EPBs?
48. Concerning an inspection by the EPA of the Maules Creek Coal mine on 8 August 2019 in which the EPA observed that the EPBs were not being contained within the explosives depot,
- (a) wherein fact were they being stored, including the location and the kind of receptacle?
  - (b) In the light of the successful prosecution earlier in March 2019 of the Rocglen coal mine, also a mine owned and controlled by another Whitehaven Coal company (Werris Creek Coal), for blasting violations, why did the EPA consider that a mere verbal instruction to contain the EPBs within the explosives depot was sufficient action on their part?
  - (c) Did the EPA conduct a follow-up inspection or in any other way take action to ensure that the verbal instruction had been adhered to? If so, please provide details of any reporting back by the mine to the EPA, any follow-up inspections, or other measures to ensure that the EPBs were stored correctly?
  - (d) What was the level of seniority of EPA staff who inspected on the 8 August? And who has conducted the investigation of this matter so far?
  - (e) Can you provide details of the so-called Mobile Mixing Unit and its known location at the time of the pollution event?
49. As it is alleged that the pollution which is the subject of the Clean-Up Notice occurred as a result of a storm event on Saturday 8 February 2020, but the EPA's investigation did not commence until Tuesday 11 February, what are the After Hours and weekend arrangements for staffing the Armidale Branch of the EPA that prevented the EPA from taking immediate action on Sunday 9 February?
50. What are the After Hours and weekend arrangements for staffing the Armidale Branch of the EPA that prevented the EPA from taking immediate action on Sunday 9 February?

## **Trees and Carbon**

51. Please provide the detail of what work the Government is doing to measure the amount of carbon stored in National Parks and other trees and vegetation around NSW?.
52. Is there a target to retain carbon in vegetation in NSW?
  - (a) If so, what is the target?
  - (b) If not, are there plans to do so?

### **Private Native Forestry**

53. How many breaches of the Private Native Forestry Code have been reported in the past 12 months?
  - (a) How many of these were investigated?
  - (b) What were the results?

### **National Parks Estate**

54. What is the total funding budgeted to achieve the Government's goal of expanding the National Parks' Estate by 200,000 hectares?
55. What is the total additional funding budgeted to support the National Parks and Wildlife Service to manage this additional land?

### **Acquisition of Koala habitat at Mt Gilead**

56. What revenue has been spent/ allocated for the acquisition of actual and potential koala habitat east of the Appin Rd (in the Mt Gilead vicinity) and further north in the George's River corridor (from Campbelltown to Glenfield and beyond)?
57. What measures and funding commitments have been made specifically to address the protection and management of the South West Sydney koala colony?
58. Is the Government planning to establish a Koala Care facility in the MacArthur region?
  - (a) If so, will it include permanent on-site staff?

### **Emissions Reductions**

59. Last year, what were the total carbon emissions attributable to NSW government services?
60. What specific NSW-based emissions reduction initiatives are being allocated funding under the January 2020 bilateral agreement with the federal government?
61. What level of funding is allocated to supporting or upgrading coal fired electricity?

## ENERGY

<b>Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition)</b>
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### **Nuclear Power in Newcastle**

62. Does the Minister support the use of nuclear power in NSW?
63. Does the Minister support mining of uranium in NSW?
64. Will the Minister rule out a nuclear power reactor in the Hunter region?
65. Will the Minister rule out a nuclear waste storage facility in the Hunter region?

### **Smart Batteries for Key Government Buildings program**

66. How many smart batteries have been rolled out under the Smart Batteries for Key Government Buildings program?
  - (a) Please provide a list of all sites.

### **Empowering Homes Solar Battery Loan Scheme – Hunter Region**

67. Is the Newcastle LGA eligible for the Hunter Region's Empowering Homes Solar Battery Loan scheme?
  - (a) If not, why not?
  - (b) If not, what scheme(s) is the Newcastle LGA eligible for to purchase solar battery systems?
  - (c) If not, will you reverse the unfair decision to exclude the Newcastle LGA from this scheme?
68. By postcode, how many applications for the Empowering Homes Solar Battery Loan scheme have been received?

### **All Roles Flex**

69. 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 access to a flexible role?
  - (b) Do you centrally register staff, who have flexible working arrangements?
  - (c) What measures are currently in place to implement this?

## ENVIRONMENT

### Questions from the Hon Mark Pearson MLC

#### Kangaroos

70. What examples and evidence can the Minister provide to show how the Department is protecting kangaroos?
71. There are various scientific assertions made about the lifespan of kangaroos in the wild, ranging from six to sixteen years.
- (a) Can the Department advise what research it relies upon to calculate lifespans when estimating kangaroo populations?
  - (b) What assumptions are being made about kangaroo fertility, both under good conditions and drought conditions, and about the infant and adult mortality of kangaroos?
72. Several studies including a 20 year longitudinal study at Yean Yan Reserve in Victoria, showed that kangaroo populations, when human interventions such as managed slaughters and commercial 'harvesting' are withdrawn, ultimately stabilise in equilibrium with their environment.
- (a) Is the Department aware of this research?
  - (b) If so, are 'culling' programs undertaken on the premise that it is for the benefit of kangaroo population's sustainability or for the benefit of farmers to reduce grazing competition with farmed animals?
73. Research undertaken by ecologist Ray Mjadwesch estimated that the current kangaroo population in NSW is only about 11% of what it was at the time of European settlement.
- (a) Is the Department aware of the work of Ray Mjadwesch?
  - (b) If so, does the Department support Mjadwesch's findings?
  - (c) If not, why not?
74. Taking into account the post-European settlement mortality factors (loss of habitat, climate change causing longer and more severe droughts and fires, loss of water sources and other forms of ongoing climate destabilization, plus "harvesting: and "culling"):
- (a) Is the Department concerned that local kangaroo extinctions might become universal and irreversible?

- (b) Does the Department accept that a widespread collapse of kangaroo populations will impact adversely on other native biodiversity?

## **Quotas**

- 75. Given the ongoing drought and the recent unprecedented bushfires, why has the quota for kangaroos increased from 1,838,646 in 2019 to 2,126,176 for 2020?
- 76. According to the 2020 Quota Report Table 3 Actual take to 9 October 2019, none of the quotas have been filled. They range from 0% at Tibooburra, less than 10% at Broken Hill and Bourke, with the highest at 48% for the Upper Hunter Management zone.
  - (a) Has the Department determined why the percentages for quota fills is so low?
  - (b) Has the Department contacted kangaroo harvesters to understand whether there was a paucity of kangaroos available for slaughter?
  - (c) Is the Department concerned that that ongoing drought is having an impact on the numbers of kangaroos available for slaughter?
- 77. Killing a female is likely to result in multiple deaths; an embryo, a pouch joey and a joey at foot- as well as the mother.
  - (a) How can this be seen as environmentally sustainable?
  - (b) More specifically, how is it taken into account in the population estimates and quota calculations?
- 78. Can the Minister explain whether the population estimate method used for setting the quota changed in the years between 2015 and 2020 and if so, when and how?
- 79. I refer to the report to the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage: “Design and analysis of helicopter surveys of kangaroo populations in the South East NSW kangaroo management zone, 2018”. The report states that during the surveying that a total of 13,731 Eastern Grey kangaroos were sighted, 4.8% of the zone was surveyed and the population estimate was 1,721,400.
  - (a) Is the Minister confident that with only 4.8% of the zone surveyed that you have an accurate figure?
  - (b) The density per square kilometers multiplied by the number of square kilometers in the zone gives 1,726,741, not 1,721,400. Can the Department explain the difference; what method was used for this adjusted figure?

80. In 2010 the number of kangaroos in Tibooburra was estimated at 636,037. In 2019 the number of kangaroos had reduced to 79,346.
- (a) Is the Department concerned about this plummet in the population?
  - (b) Does the Department have an explanation for why the quota was realised at 4% for Eastern Greys and 12% for Western Greys.
  - (c) Has the Department considered that the low take was because the original population estimates were inaccurate?
81. In the neighbouring zones of Broken Hill, the estimated numbers increased from 855,368 in 2010 to 1,124,115 in 2019. This is despite the severe drought and the drying out of Menindee lakes. How does the Department explain this increase?
82. In the Lower Darling, the kangaroo population has more than tripled from 193,930 in 2010 to 691,119 in 2019. How does the Department explain such a flourishing kangaroo population during a period of drought, and at a time when neighbouring zones are showing significant reductions in population?
83. According to the 2020 Quota Report Table 3 Actual take to 9 October 2019, none of the quotas have been filled. They range from 0% at Tibooburra, less than 10% at Broken Hill and Bourke, with the highest at 48% for the Upper Hunter Management zone.
- (a) Has the Department determined why the percentages for quota fills is so low?
  - (b) Has the Department contacted kangaroo harvesters to understand whether there was a paucity of kangaroos available for slaughter?
  - (c) Is the Department concerned that that ongoing drought is having an impact on the numbers of kangaroos available for slaughter?
84. Can the Minister confirm that the 2017-2020 quotas for kangaroo slaughter in the Northern Tablelands is based on a survey from 2016- a period of time before the drought started to significantly impact on numbers?
85. The Northern Tablelands figures are annotated by the statement that “Densities have been multiplied by 1.85, as suggested by Cairns (2004).”
- (a) Without an actual survey, wouldn't this cause increasing inaccuracy over a period of time?
  - (b) What was the rationale for Cairns' multiplier in the first instance?

86. The Central Tablelands have not been surveyed since 2017. Has there been any on the ground assessment whether the ongoing drought in the last three years impacted upon the accuracy of the population estimates?
87. Is the Department concerned that the relaxation of the licensing requirements (drop and let lie) for non-commercial harvesting is having a significant impact on the numbers of kangaroos available for commercial slaughter given that in the 2019 Budget Estimates, the Department advised that the numbers of non-commercial kills have soared from 107,575 killed in 2016, up to 279,454 in 2019, (figures were only available for the period January to September 2019).
88. Have commercial quotas been adjusted to take account of the escalation of non-commercial slaughter?
89. Is the Department concerned that the relaxation of the licensing requirements (drop and let lie) for non-commercial harvesting is having a significant impact on the numbers of kangaroos available for slaughter given that in the 2019 Budget Estimates, the Department advised that the numbers of non-commercial kills have soared from 107,575 killed in 2016, up to 279,454 in 2019, (figures were only available for the period January to September).
90. Have quotas been adjusted to take account of the increase in non-commercial slaughter?
91. In the 2020 Quota Report, it is stated that all “quotas are considered conservative with low impact on kangaroo populations”.
- (a) Does the Department still have this view given that moratoriums on commercial kangaroo slaughter were declared in several kangaroo management zones?
  - (b) Is the Department concerned that the recent fires will have impacted adversely on remaining kangaroo populations?
92. The 2020 Quota report indicates that more than 90% of kangaroos killed were male.
- (a) What impact is this gender selection having on the genetics and leadership in mobs?
  - (b) Is the Department concerned about related problems such as inbreeding, small males who are mistaken for females, loss of adult males to display adult males behaviour to young males?

### **Suspension of harvesting**

93. The Department has suspended harvesting in four zones due to lack of kangaroos. In Bourke the Department has suspended the killing of Eastern and Western Grey kangaroos. Based on the quota report, the percentage of the quota taken of Eastern and Western Grey kangaroos was 4%.

In the neighboring zone of Broken Hill there was similarly, only 4% of the quota of eastern greys taken and 12% of Western Greys.

Based on the above quote report, why has the Department chosen to suspend the killing of Eastern Greys in Bourke and not Broken Hill?

### **Fires/numbers – the Central Tablelands North and Central Tablelands South**

94. The following relates to information presented in the NSW KMP 2020 quota report for the Central Tablelands North and Central Tablelands South surveyed in 2017.

Can the Minister provide a reason as to how the kangaroo populations have remained stable in three years of drought and why the Central Tablelands North population has more than quadrupled in the past 10 years and the Central Tablelands South has doubled?

95. I would like to draw the Minister's attention to the attached map of fire impacted areas. The burnt areas are referenced from the Bureau of Meteorology. There is significant fire damage in both these zones. The 2017-2021 management plan states that the precautionary principle will be applied to the commercial management of kangaroos.

Would the Minister agree that on this basis, the situation warrants an immediate moratorium based on the precautionary principle?

### **Kangaroo Management Panel**

96. I refer to the 'Kangaroo Management Advisory Panel' meeting minutes from 28 November 2018 Agenda Item 11: item The Code of Practice review. The following is stated: 'Highest levels of Welfare – Focus on Animal Welfare -Improvements on dependent young -standard operating procedure - Reference to avoiding females has been removed from the code'

- (a) Can the Minister elucidate what this means in practice?
- (b) What improvements in welfare have been made?
- (c) Why have none of the 2019 minutes been made publicly available?
- (d) What are the criteria for inclusion on this panel?

### **Research and reports on which the government relies**

97. I refer to the NSW 2017-2021 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan - Table 2: Threats and issues pertinent to the conservation status of kangaroos.

- (a) Why is fire is not included in the list of potential threats to kangaroos?
- (b) In the same table, drought is listed but deemed not to be threat to kangaroos; why is that?



98. Under the NSW 2017-2021 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan “Habitat loss and Modification” it states: “The three largest species of kangaroos have benefited from habitat modification. Population size has generally increased and distribution of species has increased in area, due principally to pasture availability. Conversely, kangaroo populations have generally declined where there is intensive agriculture, urbanisation or extensive clearing. Despite more than 200 years of heavy exploitation and clearing of the land, the larger kangaroos have maintained or increased in abundance. Habitat loss and modification are not considered threats to the conservation status of kangaroos.’

What habitat modification have kangaroos benefited from when they have experienced adverse impacts from intensive agriculture, urbanization or extensive land clearing?

### **Climate change**

99. The NSW 2017-2021 Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan states that ‘Impacts on kangaroos from climate change are not well documented. Effects on individuals include changes to forage composition, seasonal events, fecundity, survival and behaviour, while effects on populations include changing species abundance, distribution, and genetics. Tim Flannery has stated that increasing temperatures and heat waves are having an impact on kangaroo sperm and there are fears that they changing climatic conditions will lead to infertility in kangaroos.

Has the Department considered this fertility issue and the impact on kangaroo populations?

100. The scientific papers referenced in the 2017-2021 Management Plan are old. The most recent reference is from 2011 with some going back to 1970 and 1980. A review of the research reports included on the Department’s website shows the following links:

- Federal Department of Agriculture, water and environment website ‘Commercial Harvesting of Kangaroos in Australia’ 1999.
- ‘Situation Analysis Report: Current state of scientific knowledge on kangaroos in the environment, including ecological and economic impact and effect of culling’ November 2000.
- ‘Harvest Management of Kangaroos during Drought’ February 2003

Is the Minister concerned that the current Kangaroo Management Plan is based on such dated research and information?

### **Licence to Harm**

101. What measures is the government taking to ensure that the killing of every individual kangaroo under the relaxed licensing requirements complies with the relevant Code of Practice and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act?
102. Who decides whether a licence to harm should be issued?
103. Is the applicant required to show that humane alternatives are not available? In other words, if there is a humane alternative available, will the licence to harm be refused?
104. What methods of 'harm' are allowed to be used to kill animals under these licences.
- (a) Are they restricted in any way, or can the animals be killed in any way the landholder chooses?
  - (b) Is any consideration given to the suffering of the animal involved?
105. The Department has published on its website Public Register of Landholder's Licences to Harm Native Animals for the period August 2017 - July 2019. According to the register, there were 938 licences to harm issued during this period.
- How many animals were killed under these licences?
106. The Department has issued thousands of licences to harm protected native animals to local councils. Have any restrictions been placed on the ability of councils to kill native animals in the wake of the bushfires?
107. The Department issued 8975 licences to harm kangaroos between August 2017 and July 2019. How many kangaroos were killed in that time?

### **Audits**

108. I refer to the Commercial Kangaroo Harvest Management Program 2017-2021 - Table 4: 'Methods used by OEHL to comply with the RSPCA Australia Sustainable Use model. Number 4 Auditing - verify compliance of operators - harvester returns field audits inter-governmental MOUs.
- Can you please provide us with all audit reports undertaken including information regarding the number of field audits and any compliance breaches?

### **Bushfires, Damage to Forests**

109. Given the fire damage caused to the World Heritage listed rainforests of the north coast, what plans does the Department have to protect this rare, remnant rainforest and in particular;

- (a) Nightcap Range which represents the highest-value forest in NSW and has more concentration of threatened species than anywhere in Australia.
- (b) Protection for the recently discovered (20 years ago) Nightcap Oak in Nightcap Range which is even more rare and endangered than the Wollemi Pine
- (c) Barrington Tops National Park world heritage area – how much of the rare and endangered Antarctic Beech forest was lost to fire?

## Questions from Mr Justin Field MLC

### **Save our Species**

110. How many of the projects funded under the Saving Our Species program since 2016 have been impacted by the bushfires?
- (a) How many have been destroyed?
  - (b) What is the value of the projects impacted or destroyed?
111. Saving Our Species currently lists 102 species on the Keep Watch management stream which means they don't have to be actively managed or subject to the same monitoring requirements as other endangered species. A 2018 government review of the program, undertaken by Macquarie University, found that 74 of these species should be allocated to another management stream because the threat of extinction is too high.
- (a) Why haven't these species been reassigned?
  - (b) Has there been any reassessment of the Keep Watch list in the wake of the fires?

### **Land clearing**

112. The woody vegetation data set for 2017/18 shows a tripling in clearing, from 9,200ha in 2013-14 to 27,100ha in 2017-18:
- (a) How much koala habitat was cleared in this time?
  - (b) How much threatened species habitat was cleared in this time?

### **Land clearing prosecutions**

113. Since 25 August 2017 when reforms to the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and the Local Land Services Act 2013, including the Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code, commenced:

- (a) How many, and what kind of enforcement actions have been commenced? What is their status?
  - (b) How many investigations have commenced? How many have been finalised?
  - (c) How many prosecutions for breaches under this legislation have been commenced?
114. In regards to the Government's 'Policy for resolving investigations under the now repealed Native Vegetation Act 2003' found at <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Native-vegetation/policy-resolving-investigations-under-repealed-native-vegetation-act-190462.pdf>
- (a) How many potential breaches of the Native Vegetation Act 2003 have been assessed under this policy?
  - (b) How many of these potential breaches are yet to be finalised?
  - (c) How many new set asides, Conservation Agreements, or other alternative mechanisms, have been secured as a result of this policy? Please provide details of what has been secured.
  - (d) How many matters have gone before each of the following committees:
    - i. the Native Vegetation Investigation Review Group
    - ii. the Compliance and Enforcement Panel
    - iii. the Assessment and Review Committee.

### **Responding to the fires**

115. How are the impacts of understory fires being assessed, noting that aerial photos do not capture the impacts of understory fires?
- (a) Is there a budget for ecologists to perform on ground surveys?
    - i. If yes, how much has been allocated?
116. Over the past summer, how many bushfires that resulted in burns of more than 200 hectares started in national parks?
- (a) Please provide a list of the National Parks where these fires started
  - (b) If known, please provide details of how they started.
117. How much of the National Park estate was burnt as a result of fires that started in National Parks and how much was burnt as a result of fires that started outside of National Parks?

118. The Victorian Government's 'Bushfire emergency: Biodiversity response and recovery' found at: [https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0034/449746/Victorias-bushfire-emergency-Biodiversity-response-and-recovery-Version-1-23-January-2020.pdf](https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0034/449746/Victorias-bushfire-emergency-Biodiversity-response-and-recovery-Version-1-23-January-2020.pdf) provided significantly more detail than the NSW Wildlife and Conservation Bushfire Recovery immediate response report and included analysis of impacts on:
- The CAR reserve system
  - Heritage listed areas
  - EPBC listed communities
  - Ecological vegetation classes across the state
  - Vegetation communities that have been subject to multiple historical burns
- (a) Is the NSW Government going to provide similar detail in its medium to long term responses as referred to in the hearing?
- i. When will this work be complete and made public?
- (b) The Victorian Government's response also identified key unburnt refuges and populations that require immediate protection:
- i. Is the Government engaged in identifying any unburnt areas now in need of protection? If so, will this be made public?
  - ii. What processes are occurring to protect unburnt areas?
119. The Federal Government, in its *'Provisional list of animals requiring urgent management intervention'* identified 113 animal species that have been significantly impacted by bushfires and recommended protecting remaining unburnt habitat of these species:
- (a) Will the NSW Government now exclude logging from the modelled habitat and the vicinity of records of these species, and from upstream of identified aquatic species?
  - (b) What work is the NSW Government doing to assess the current status of each of these species that occur in NSW?

### **Logging after the fires**

120. In regards to the new site specific conditions for Mogo and South Brooman State Forests:
- (a) Will these site specific conditions be rolled out elsewhere across the state? What regions?

(b) Does there need to be a modification of the Integrated Forestry Operations Approval for these site specific conditions?

(c) What auditing will occur on these two sites? Will these be made public?

121. Does the EPA consider that since the fires, logging both undertaken, and planned to be undertaken, by the Forestry Corporation of NSW is consistent with section 6(2) of the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991*?

(a) Please explain why or why not?

122. Has the EPA raised any concerns within government or with the Forestry Corporation of NSW that logging activities after the fires may not be consistent with the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991* or other legislation?

(a) If so, please provide details of concern and relevant legislation.

### **Fire risk in state forests**

123. In the [Forestry Snapshot Report](#) for 2017–18, the EPA gave an official caution to the Forestry Corporation of NSW for non-compliances in Mogo State Forest related to felling of hollow-bearing trees, leaving harvesting debris around retained hollow-bearing and recruitment trees

(a) What was the outcome of this caution?

(b) Was there any follow up investigation and compliance action?

124. In regards to Protocol 23.3 of the Coastal Integrated Forestry Operations Approval, relating to restrictions around leaving wood debris near retained trees:

(a) What is the penalty for a breach?

(b) Has the EPA ever sought for this penalty to be increased?

(c) Does the Government consider that a breach of this Protocol may lead to an increased risk of fire?

i. Will the Government consider an increase in penalty for a breach of this Protocol?

### **Impacts on native animals from baiting**

125. How has the Government assessed the likely impacts of aerial baiting on native carnivores and what is the anticipated mortality of species such as Spotted-tailed Quolls and Dingos?

### **Biodiversity Conservation Trust**

126. Since the inception of the Biodiversity Conservation Trust and in regards to private land reserved under conservation agreements:
- (a) What is the annual average cost of land per hectare?
  - (b) What is the annual average cost of land per hectare, broken down by the different types of conservation agreements?
  - (c) What is the annual average cost of land per hectare, broken down by the vegetation type?
  - (d) What is the annual average cost of land per hectare, broken down by LLS Region?
127. What is the total hectares of private land under permanent conservation covenants in NSW?
- (a) Please also provide this breakdown by LLS Region.

<p><b>Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition)</b></p>
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**Feral Animals**

128. How many feral horses have been removed from Kosciuszko National Park?
129. How many feral horses have been rehomed from Kosciuszko National Park?
130. What has happened to the horses that have been removed from Kosciuszko National Park but not rehomed?
131. What specific methods are being employed to remove feral horses from Kosciuszko National Park?
132. From which specific areas within Kosciuszko National Park are feral horses being removed?
133. From which other national parks are feral horses currently being removed?
- (a) How many from each national park, and how are they being removed?
134. What is the budget of the government's recently-announced feral pest eradication program?
135. Are there any contract workers being employed for the purposes of the feral pest eradication program?
- (a) If yes, how many contractors were previously employed by the NPWS?
136. Which areas across NSW are feral pests being targeted under the feral pest eradication program, and which feral species are being targeted?

137. What specific methods are being employed to kill feral species under the feral pest eradication program?
138. How many native animals does the Department expect will be poisoned by the NPWS feral pest baiting program? Which native animals are expected to be impacted?
139. Please list the areas that have been targeted by the feral pest baiting program.
140. What assessment and evaluation process will take place as part of the feral pest baiting program?

#### **Wildlife carers**

141. How many national parks are currently closed to wildlife carers?
142. What strategy is the Government employing to assist injured wildlife in areas that are still closed to wildlife carers?
143. Has the Government undertaken any assurance work to assess the reach and capability of wildlife carer organisations, and identify areas without resources to care for injured animals?
144. How much of the Government's \$1 million bushfire wildlife rehabilitation funding, announced in November 2019, has been spent?
  - (a) Which specific organisations have received funds, and how much?
  - (b) How much of the additional \$1 million has been spent on administration costs?
  - (c) How much of the additional \$1 million has been allocated to programs undertaken by the Department?
145. How many wildlife carer organisations hold a wildlife carer licence in NSW?
146. Which organisations hold a wildlife carer licence in NSW, and which area/region do they cover?
147. Are there any areas in NSW that are not covered by an organisation holding a wildlife carer licence?
  - (a) If so, which areas?
148. How much money did the Government spend assisting wildlife carer organisations in:
  - (a) 2011
  - (b) 2012
  - (c) 2013
  - (d) 2014



- (e) 2015
- (f) 2016
- (g) 2017
- (h) 2018
- (i) 2019

### **Coal Ash**

149. Has the Government undertaken any risk assessments of any coal ash dams in NSW?
- (a) If so, which ones and when?
150. Is the Government aware of any risk assessments undertaken by operators of coal ash dams in the last ten years?
- (a) If so, is the Government in possession of those risk assessments?
151. Are there any coal ash dams in NSW that pose any safety risk?
- (a) If so, which ones?
152. Has the Department considered excavating and remediating any coal ash dams and shifting the waste to lined dams, similar to the process being undertaken in the United States?
153. Does the Government have a plan to deal with a coal ash dam failure?

### **Waste Programs**

154. How much waste levy is the Government expecting to raise in 2019/20?
155. How much waste levy is the Government expecting to raise in 2020/21?
156. How many staff positions within the Department are funded from waste levy revenues?
- (a) Which staff position titles are funded from waste levy revenues?
157. How many discrete program funding grants have been paid to the Department from Treasury in 2019/20 to undertake environmental programs? For instance, \$20 million grant to the Biodiversity Conservation Trust.
- (a) Please list the grants, including beneficiary, program, and amount.
158. Did the Government provide financial support to any recycling industry assets in 2019/20?
- (a) Please list the projects and the amount.

## **Agency Staffing**

159. Within the National Parks and Wildlife Service, please list the existing job title classifications and the most recent number of FTE staff in each classification.
160. Within the Environment Protection Authority, please list the existing job title classifications and the most recent number of FTE staff in each classification.
161. Within the NSW Resources Regulator, please list the existing job title classifications and the most recent number of FTE staff in each classification.
162. Within the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust, please list the existing job title classifications and the most recent number of FTE staff in each classification.
163. Within the Taronga Conservation Society, please list the existing job title classifications and the most recent number of FTE staff in each classification.
164. Within the Department's Environment, Energy and Science Group, please list the existing job title classifications and the most recent number of FTE staff in each classification.
165. Is the Department planning to permanently increase staff numbers within the National Parks and Wildlife Service?
166. How many redundancies were paid to NPWS staff in 2016/17?
167. How many redundancies were paid to NPWS staff in 2017/18?
168. How many redundancies were paid to NPWS staff in 2018/19?
169. How many redundancies have been paid to NPWS staff in 2019/20?

## **Ministerial Staffing**

170. How many FTE staff are employed in Minister Kean's ministerial office?
171. Please list all the current job title classifications in Minister Kean's ministerial office and the number of FTE in each classification?
172. How many redundancies were paid to Minister Kean's ministerial staff in 2018/19, while Minister for Energy and Environment?
173. How many redundancies have been paid to Minister Kean's ministerial staff in 2019/20?

## **Return and Earn Scheme**

174. How many Container Deposit Scheme deposits were received in 2018/19, and what was the total value of receipted deposits?

175. How many Container Deposit Scheme deposits have been received in 2019/20, and what is the total value of receipted deposits?
176. How many Container Deposit Scheme deposits were refunded via redemption in 2018/19, and what was the total value of redemptions?
177. How many Container Deposit Scheme deposits have been refunded via redemption in 2019/20, and what is the total value of redemptions?
178. How many complaints have been received about the location of Container Deposit Scheme reverse vending machines since the program launched?
179. Does the NSW Government receive any revenue from the Container Deposit Scheme?
- (a) If so, what was the revenue in 2018/19?

**Environment Protection Authority**

180. How many prosecutions did the EPA commence in:
- (a) 2011
- (b) 2012
- (c) 2013
- (d) 2014
- (e) 2015
- (f) 2016
- (g) 2017
- (h) 2018
- (i) 2019
181. How many EPA prosecutions were successful in:
- (a) 2011
- (b) 2012
- (c) 2013
- (d) 2014
- (e) 2015

- (f) 2016
- (g) 2017
- (h) 2018
- (i) 2019

182. How much fine revenue did the EPA receive in:

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

183. How many redundancies were paid to EPA staff in 2016/17?

184. How many redundancies were paid to EPA staff in 2017/18?

185. How many redundancies were paid to EPA staff in 2018/19?

186. How many redundancies have been paid to EPA staff in 2019/20?

### **Hazard Reduction Briefings**

187. Has the Department provided any briefings to Deputy Premier John Barilaro regarding hazard reduction activities?

- (a) If so, on which date?

188. Has the Department provided any briefings to Minister Adam Marshall regarding hazard reduction activities?

- (a) If so, on which date?

189. Has the Department provided any briefings to Minister Andrew Constance regarding hazard reduction activities?

(a) If so, on which date?

190. Has the Department provided any briefings to Parliamentary Secretary Michael Johnsen regarding hazard reduction activities?

(a) If so, on which date?

191. Has the Department provided any briefings to any other Government Members of Parliament regarding hazard reduction activities?

(a) If so, on which date?

### **Emissions Reductions Targets**

192. What is the Government's emissions reduction target for 2030?

193. What is the Government's emissions reduction target for 2050?

194. What is the difference between an emissions reduction target and an 'aspirational objective'?

### **Land Clearing**

195. How many hectares of private land have been cleared in NSW in:

(a) 2018

(b) 2019

### **Air Quality**

196. Does the Government accept that increased PM10 levels lead to poorer health outcomes, including increased death?

197. Does the Government accept that increased PM2.5 levels lead to poorer health outcomes, including increased death?

198. Is the Government aware of how many deaths in NSW each year are attributable to air quality issues? If so, how many?

### **Renewable Energy**

199. How many MWh were produced by renewable energy sources operated on government buildings or land in:

(a) 2016

(b) 2017

(c) 2018

(d) 2019

### **Grant Programs**

200. How many discrete grant programs does the Department operate for environmental purposes?

(a) Please list the specific grant programs, the intended class of recipient, and the total grant program funding amount.

### **Bush fire preparation in the Illawarra**

201. How much did the Government spend on bush fire hazard reduction in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area in the financial years:

(a) 2017/18

(b) 2018/19

(c) 2019/20 to date

202. Will the Government conduct bush fire hazard reduction in the Illawarra Escarpment in 2020/21?

203. How much money will the government spend on bush fire hazard reduction in the Illawarra Escarpment in the 2020/21 financial year?

204. How much did the Government spend on maintaining fire trails in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area in the financial years:

(a) 2017/18

(b) 2018/19

(c) 2019/20 to date

205. How much money will the Government spend on maintaining fire trails in the Illawarra Escarpment in this financial year? In 2020/21?

206. Will the Government review the existing strategies for hazard reduction and fire trail management in the Illawarra Escarpment as a result of the recent bush fire crisis?

207. Will the Government increase the amount committed to hazard reduction and fire trail management in the Illawarra Escarpment as a result of the recent bush fire crisis?

### **Bush fire recovery in the Illawarra and South Coast**

208. What strategies will the Government implement in 2020/21 to assist the recovery of the environment in national parks and reserves on the South Coast following the bush fire crisis?

209. How much will the Government spend on these recovery activities and when will activities commence?

### **Walking Tracks in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area**

210. In 2019/20, how much has the Government spent on extending, upgrading and improving walking trails and visitor facilities in the Illawarra?

211. What proportion of the \$149.5 million investment over four years announced in this year's budget for improving NSW national parks will be spent on national parks and walking trails in the Illawarra?

212. Will the Minister commit to funding a continuous walking experience along the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area, including:

- (a) a connection with Royal National Park at Otford in the north;
- (b) a continuous walking trail to Mount Kembla in the South, in line with plans developed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (The Illawarra Escarpment Walking Track)?

### **Flood mitigation**

213. What flood mitigation work will be funded by NSW Government in the Keira electorate in 2019/20 and 2020/21?

### **EPA – Newcastle**

214. How many warning letters were issued in Newcastle LGA by the EPA in:

- (a) 2015
- (b) 2016
- (c) 2017
- (d) 2018
- (e) 2019?

215. How many penalty notices were issued in Newcastle LGA by the EPA in:

- (a) 2015
- (b) 2016
- (c) 2017
- (d) 2018

(e) 2019?

216. How many fines were issued in the Newcastle LGA by the NSW EPA in:

(a) 2015

(b) 2016

(c) 2017

(d) 2018

(e) 2019?

217. What was the fine revenue from fines issued in the Newcastle LGA by the NSW EPA in:

(a) 2015

(b) 2016

(c) 2017

(d) 2018

(e) 2019?

218. How many enforceable undertakings in the Newcastle LGA were entered into by the EPA in:

(a) 2015

(b) 2016

(c) 2017

(d) 2018

(e) 2019?

219. How many prosecutions for breaches in the Newcastle LGA were launched by the EPA in:

(a) 2015

(b) 2016

(c) 2017

(d) 2018

(e) 2019?

## **Marine Park Sand**



220. Can sand within a marine park be extracted for conservation purposes or for the purpose of preventing the risk of serious injury to a person or harm to the environment?
- (a) If so, can this sand be used for conservation purposes or for the purpose of preventing the risk of serious injury to a person or harm to the environment outside of the marine park?
  - (b) If so, is serious coastal erosion considered a conservation purpose or for the purpose of preventing the risk of serious injury to a person or harm to the environment?

### **Stockton Erosion**

221. Does the Minister support offshore sand extraction for beach nourishment purposes at Stockton?
222. What support has the Minister or the Department provided to the coastal erosion at Stockton?

### **Cooks River**

223. What actions has the NSW Environment Protection Authority taken to improve the health of the Cooks River:
- (a) In the last 12 months; and
  - (b) Since March 2011?
224. How much money has the NSW Environment Protection Authority spent to improve the health of the Cooks River:
- (a) In the last 12 months; and
  - (b) Since March 2011?
225. How many grants have been provided by the Environmental Trust to improve the health of the Cooks River:
- (a) In the last 12 months; and
  - (b) Since March 2011?

### **Bush fire preparation in the Illawarra**

226. How much did the Government spend on bush fire hazard reduction in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area in the financial years:
- (a) 2017/18;
  - (b) 2018/19;

(c) 2019/20 to date?

227. Will the Government conduct bush fire hazard reduction in the Illawarra Escarpment in 2020/21?
228. What type of hazard reduction activities are conducted in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area?
229. How much did the Government spend on maintaining fire trails in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area in the financial years:
- (a) 2017/18;
  - (b) 2018/19;
  - (c) 2019/20 to date?
230. What type of work will take place to maintain fire trails in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area in 2020/21?
231. Will the Government review the existing strategies for hazard reduction and fire trail management in the Illawarra Escarpment as a result of the recent bush fire crisis?
232. Will the Government increase the funds committed to hazard reduction and fire trail management in the Illawarra Escarpment as a result of the recent bush fire crisis?

### **Bush fire recovery in the Illawarra and South Coast**

233. What strategies will the Government implement in 2020/21 to assist the recovery of the environment in national parks and reserves on the South Coast following the bush fire crisis?
234. How much will the Government spend on these recovery activities on the South Coast?
- (a) When will activities commence?

### **Walking Tracks in the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area**

235. In 2019/20, how much has the Government spent on extending, upgrading and improving walking trails and visitor facilities in the Illawarra?
236. What proportion of the \$149.5 million investment over four years announced in this year's budget for improving NSW National Parks will be spent on national parks and walking trails in the Illawarra?
237. Will the Minister commit to funding a continuous walking experience along the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area, including:

- (a) a connection with Royal National Park at Otford in the north;
- (b) a continuous walking trail to Mount Kembla in the South, in line with plans developed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (The Illawarra Escarpment Walking Track)?

**Flood mitigation**

238. What flood mitigation work will be funded by NSW Government in the Keira electorate in 2019/20 and 2020/21? How much will it cost?

**All Roles Flex**

239. 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 access to a flexible role?
- (b) Do you centrally register staff, who have flexible working arrangements?
- (c) What measures are currently in place to implement this?