

# **Budget Estimates**

Portfolio Committee No 1 – Premier and Finance

## **JOBS, INVESTMENT, TOURISM AND WESTERN SYDNEY**

Wednesday, 10 March 2021

### **PRESENT**

The Hon. Stuart Ayres,  
Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism & Western Sydney

### **SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS**

## Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)

### Jobs

1. Can you confirm how many jobs are expected to be created by normal economic activity in Western Sydney Parklands and by when?

- (a) How are the number of jobs being created being monitored?
- (b) Are there regular reports or updates that come to you providing an update on figures?
- (c) How many have been created since 1/1/2018?
  - i. Can you provide a breakdown of what industries those jobs were in?

### Answer:

This matter was addressed at the hearing of 10 March 2021. Please refer to hearing transcript for further information.

Job projections are influenced by a range of factors, including population growth and demographic changes, and need to be revisited overtime to reflect, for example, the delivery of new infrastructure and broader economic factors and changes.

The Western Parkland City Authority has a place-based focus on driving economic growth and development across the eight local government areas of the Western Parkland City. These are Liverpool, Penrith, Fairfield, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly.

The Western Parkland City Authority is currently analysing the sectors which will contribute to jobs growth and is preparing an Economic Development Strategy for the Western Parkland City. These sectors include freight and logistics, advanced manufacturing, and tourism.

2. Can you confirm whether the government's plan to create an additional jobs (excluding those created by normal economic activity) are to be created in the entire Western Sydney region or Western Sydney Parklands?

- (a) What time frame did you set for those 200,000 jobs to be created and when did that timeframe begin?
- (b) How many additional jobs have been created to date?
- (c) Can you provide a breakdown of what industries those jobs have been created in?
- (d) How are you monitoring the number of additional jobs created?
- (e) Are regular reports presented to you detailing updated figures of additional jobs created?
- (f) What is the government doing to create those additional jobs?
- (g) Is there percentage of jobs that must go to local people and if so, how it that policed?
- (h) Will the government impose any ramifications on itself should it fail to reached the additional jobs target?
- (i) Can you provide a breakdown of how many jobs will be created in each local government area?

### Answer:

This matter was addressed at the hearing of 10 March 2021. Please refer to hearing transcript for further information. The 200,000 new jobs target is a 20-year target and it is relevant to the Western Parkland City. This encompasses the local government areas of Liverpool, Penrith, Fairfield, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly. The target forms part of the Western Sydney City Deal, which was signed in 2018.

The target is about attracting more jobs to the Western Parkland City. It is intended to rebalance Greater Sydney to provide more jobs across a wider range of industries for the residents of the Western Parkland City.

The growth in jobs, and the types of jobs, will change and evolve over time as the Western Parkland City matures. Some jobs will be linked to investment in infrastructure, including building the Western Sydney Airport and the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport, and others will be catalysed by ongoing investment attraction activities.

The Western Parkland City Authority is currently analysing the sectors which will contribute to driving jobs growth and is preparing an Economic Development Strategy for the Western Parkland City. These sectors include freight and logistics, advanced manufacturing, and tourism.

This work will assist the NSW Government and the eight local councils to make informed decisions about the steps which are needed to drive sustainable jobs growth across the Western Parkland City.

3. Explain what policies the government has in place to create jobs specifically in the following LGAs:

- (a) Georges River
- (b) Parramatta
- (c) Cumberland
- (d) Blacktown
- (e) Canterbury-Bankstown

**Answer:**

The NSW Government is bringing forward significant investment to create jobs and stimulate the economy across NSW, including in western Sydney:

- The \$250 million Jobs Plus Program, announced in November 2020, provides support to businesses which create at least 30 net new FTE jobs, and stimulating economic activity by supporting businesses to establish and expand their footprint in NSW.
- The Government has also announced major transport investment, including Metro West and the Parramatta Light Rail, and a framework agreement with the University of Sydney to establish a mixed-use, multidisciplinary university precinct in Parramatta North / Cumberland, projected to be home to 25,000 students and create over 2,500 jobs within 30 years.
- Over \$3 billion has been committed by the Government, universities and the private sector to upgrade and expand the Westmead Health and Innovation District's health services, education and medical research facilities. By 2036 Westmead will support 30,000 full-time staff and over 24,000 students.
- Work is beginning on a \$25 million viral vector manufacturing facility at Westmead, to provide trial therapies for infections, cancer and genetic diseases.
- The new Westmead Innovation Quarter will deliver over 1,000 jobs and 28,000 sqm of health, research, education and commercial space, to open by the end of 2021. The Innovation Quarter will house some of Western Sydney University's leading research institutes and the CSIRO's e-Health and Nutrition & Health programs.
- The Government funds dedicated TradeStart Advisers in Liverpool and Parramatta to support businesses across western Sydney to export and grow, supporting domestic jobs growth.

- The Western Sydney Startup Hub will be located in the Parramatta North Heritage Core, providing 1,500 sqm of affordable space and supporting programs for local startups, scaleups and businesses.

4. Have you had discussion with the Local Government Minister or any of your other Ministerial colleagues about the need to establish another council – or councils – in or around the aerotropolis?

**Answer:**

No. The Aerotropolis sits within the Liverpool and Penrith Local Government Areas.

5. Have you been provided any updates regarding the finalisation of flight paths?

(a) When do you expect the finalisation of the flight paths will be announced?

**Answer:**

Information regarding flight paths is available on the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Commonwealth) website

(<https://www.westernsydneyairport.gov.au/about/flight-paths>).

6. Information in contained in the Draft Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment (contained in the Draft Aerotropolis Precinct Plans that were on exhibition from 10/11/2020 till 12/03/2021) were heavily redacted. Can you explain why?

(a) Will the government make that information public so the public can make an informed decision regarding that technical report.

(b) Can you specifically explain why the following references in the report were redacted:

- i. Information on page 25 of the report
- ii. Figure 9 on page 34
- iii. Figure 10 on page 35
- iv. Figure 11 on page 36
- v. Figure 12 page 37
- vi. Figure 13 page 38
- vii. Most of the information on page 42
- viii. All of pages 43, 44 and 45
- ix. Most of pages 105, 106 and 107
- x. Page 122
- xi. A large section of information on page 123
- xii. Information on page 124
- xiii. Information on pages 130 and 131
- xiv. All of page 132

(c) How much were Extent Heritage paid to conduct the study?

(d) Who were the 130 people consulted in regards to the report?

**Answer:**

This report was not prepared by or for the Western Parkland City Authority. Questions regarding this report are most appropriately referred to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

**Industry monitoring and evaluation**

7. The Hon. Stuart Ayres MP discussed the “resilience” of tourism operators across the state, and said Job-Keeper program had a “profound” impact upon the industry. Is the Government tracking the impact of COVID-19 and JobKeeper on the tourism industry?

- (a) If so, what methods are being used to track the impact?
- (b) If not, why not?

**Answer:**

Tourism Research Australia continues to monitor visitation data through the International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey. Tourism Research Australia reports annually on tourism contribution to State economies in terms of tourism consumption, employment, Gross State Added and Gross Value Added. The Australian Bureau of Statistics continues to monitor overseas arrivals at Australian Airports through passenger cards administered by the Department of Home Affairs. The Australian Bureau of Statistics continues to track employment-related data through their monthly Labour Force Survey. Destination NSW continues to monitor tourist accommodation supply, demand and revenue from data sourced from private supplier, STR. Destination NSW continues to monitor international and domestic aviation performance from data sourced from the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics.

**8.** Has the Government set itself any targets in relation to the impact of COVID on the tourism industry and the success or failure of state and economic stimulus packages for the industry?

- (a) If not, why not?
- (b) How many businesses in the NSW tourism industry will lose jobs when JobKeeper ends?
- (c) How many jobs will be lost in the tourism industry when JobKeeper ends?
- (d) How many businesses will go bankrupt in the tourism industry when JobKeeper ends?

**Answer:**

There have been several State and Commonwealth government financial and non-financial industry support packages and programs delivered since the beginning of the pandemic. These are available to businesses from all sectors, including the tourism industry. With regard to (b), (c) and d) above, JobKeeper is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government.

**9.** What plans does the State Government to target a relief package for the tourism in the industry?

**Answer:**

The NSW Government is delivering a wide range of financial and non-financial industry assistance packages. These are available to businesses from all sectors, including the tourism industry. In addition, Destination NSW has announced a number of funding programs specifically for the visitor economy, through the Tourism Product Development Fund and the Regional Business Event Development Fund. The NSW Government continues to monitor the situation to evaluate support needed.

Most recently, the NSW Government announced a \$51.5 million tourism and live music venue support package, including \$20 million for up to 200,000 CBD accommodation vouchers; \$24 million to Destination NSW for a Live Music Support Package to be administered in partnership with Create NSW and the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner; \$5.5 million for a Business Events Industry Support package to assist businesses in Greater Sydney and across NSW; \$2 million for a Tourism Industry Marketing Support package through the Love NSW campaign.

10. Are there any KPIs for assessing the efficacy of the State and Federal Governments' relief packages?

- (a) If so, what are they?
- (b) if not, why not?

**Answer:**

At a macroeconomic level, the NSW Government is monitoring the impact of its relief package on supporting jobs and the economy (Gross State Product). Output metrics and KPIs are also captured at an individual measure level.

The NSW Government assesses the Commonwealth relief packages in advance of their implementation using multipliers provided by the International Monetary Fund.

11. What are the parameters of success?

- (a) Jobs retained?
  - i. And if so, what are the Government's targets?
- (b) Business insolvencies/bankruptcy rates?
  - i. And if so, what are the Government's targets?
- (c) Hotel occupancy?
  - i. And if so, what are the Government's targets?
- (d) Increased visitation in specific visitor regions?
- (e) And if so, what are the Government's targets?

**Answer:**

Please see the response to Question 8. The recently released Visitor Economy Strategy 2030 aims to return visitation and expenditure to pre-COVID levels by 2024.

12. What surveys has the Government undertaken in relation to the success of current and previous COVID tourism recovery grants?

- (a) Please table the results of any surveys including copies of the survey questions, and response rates disaggregated by sector of the industry.

**Answer:**

The majority of events that were successful under the 2020 Regional Event Fund have not yet been held. Other tourism funding programs are currently still open for applications.

13. At Budget estimates, the Minister said the ending of Job-Keeper was "appropriate", what percentage of the tourism industry agrees with you?

**Answer:**

The decision to end the JobKeeper program was a matter for the Federal Government.

### **Net Trade Deficits**

14. The Minister also commented that Australia is a net trade deficit country when it comes to Tourism. How does that relate to Australians choosing to travel within Australia. Are there more tourists leaving Sydney for other states, or more tourists visiting Sydney from other states?

- (a) Have these figures change since COVID-19?
- (b) What percentage of Queenslanders from outside Brisbane have visited the capital in the 12 months to 1 March 2021?
- (c) What percentage of Queenslanders from Brisbane have visited regional areas in the 12 months to 1 March 2021?
- (d) What percentage of people from regional NSW have visited Sydney in the 12 months to 1 March 2021?
- (e) What percentage of Sydneysiders have visited regional areas in the 12 months to 1 March 2021?
- (f) How will the Federal Government's flight packages change the net trade deficits in tourism between NSW and Queensland over the autumn and winter months?
- (g) As Merimbula was the only location in NSW included in the proposal, does the plan go far enough for NSW?
- (h) What consultations did the Minister have with his Federal colleagues regarding the package?
- (i) Did the Minister fight for more locations in NSW to be included in the plan?
- (j) What modelling was provided by the Federal Government to explain which air routes had been included in the package?
- (k) The accommodation sector has been clear that there is nothing in these proposals for Sydney and most of regional NSW? Why has the Federal Government ignored the ongoing industry advocacy to assist with occupancy rates?

### **Answer:**

In 2018/19, Australians spent \$64.2 billion overseas, and international visitors spent \$30.8 billion travelling to Australia, which represents a trade deficit of \$33.4 billion. The restriction around international travel has resulted in Australians not being able to travel overseas. This is why the NSW Government has focussed on promoting visitation to Sydney and regional NSW to the domestic market through the Love NSW campaign and the Commonwealth Government has promoted domestic tourism through its Holiday Here This Year campaign.

- (a) As above.
- (b) Data for this period is not yet available.
- (c) Data for this period is not yet available.
- (d) Data for this period is not yet available.
- (e) Data for this period is not yet available.
- (f) This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.
- (g) This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.
- (h) Minister Tehan provided a limited briefing by way of video conference with all state and territory tourism ministers the day before the Federal Government made their announcement.
- (i) The Minister provided public statements indicating that using capital cities that are suffering from a depressed tourism market should not be used to prop up regional locations, particularly those in states that have closed borders and limited the recovery of their tourism industries.
- (j) This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.
- (k) This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.

### **Zoos and Aquarium funding**

15. Given the significant underspend in the Zoos and Aquariums program, in your opinion does it make any sense to expand and continue this program?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.

**Morrison Government's Tourism Covid Package**

**16.** The North Coast of NSW was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 9th most visited regions for international tourists?

- (a) How many jobs have been lost in tourism in the North Coast in the year to 1 March 2021?
- (b) How many tourism businesses have become insolvent or gone into bankruptcy in the North Coast in the year to March 2021?

**Answer:**

- (a) Data for this period is not yet available.
- (b) Destination NSW does not collect or track this data.

**17.** The Hunter was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 12th most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

This is not a question.

**18.** The New England North West was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 24th most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

**19.** The Central Coast was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 24th most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

**20.** Central NSW was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 32nd most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

**21.** The Blue Mountains region was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 36th most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

**22.** The Riverina was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 37th most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.



23. Capital Country was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 42nd most visited regions for international tourists (and being located around Canberra).

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

24. The Murray was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 43rd most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

25. The Snowy Mountains was not on the list of 13 regions to receive funding, despite being ranked as the 44th most visited regions for international tourists.

**Answer:**

I refer to my answer to question 17.

26. Many tourism regions in NSW have been devastated by drought, fire, floods and COVID in the last three years, why did the Federal Government not grant them any funding as part of the tourism package?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.

27. The 13 locations on the list correspond with marginal electoral seats, is the Federal Government more focused on pork-barrelling to win votes than helping Australians in need?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Commonwealth Government.

**Dine & Discover Vouchers**

28. In Budget Estimates, it was reported that there was 98% positive feedback amongst business owners, and 96% amongst patrons for the Dine and Discover Voucher program. Was this for the registration process or another aspect of the voucher?

**Answer:**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

29. How many vouchers have been used in the scheme?

**Answer:**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

30. Please disaggregate by category of business the voucher was used at and location?

**Answer:**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

31. Why didn't the Government choose to include accommodation in the Dine and Discover Voucher?

**Answer:**

The Government has announced a \$20 million support package to provide up to 200,000 in \$100 accommodation vouchers to NSW residents to be redeemed at hotels in Sydney's CBD, which will be available from June 2021.

32. How many tourism businesses in each category of the Dine and Discover businesses have been registered?

**Answer:**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

33. How many have applied but been rejected?

**Answer:**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

34. How many have had vouchers presented to them?

**Answer:**

This question should be directed to the Minister for Customer Service.

35. The Government's "Dine and Discover" stimulus package is half the size of Victoria's, it can't be spent on accommodation or organised tours, and hasn't even started to operate. Pretty much all of the other states have some kind of voucher system, most of them more generous and most of them have been operating since October. Why has it taken so long for NSW to get these vouchers out?

**Answer:**

The Dine & Discover scheme was approved in the 2020-2021 budget in November 2020. The digital infrastructure for the vouchers had to be built and security tested and aligned supports put into place to ensure a seamless customer experience for the over 6 million eligible adults in NSW. The scheme started piloting in February 2021 and is rolling out across the State.

36. Victoria announced their initiative at around the same time as NSW. Why hasn't our voucher system been rolled out?

**Answer:**

Dine & Discover started piloting in February 2021 and is rolling out state-wide.

**Regional Event Fund**

37. The CEO of DNSW reported that only 3 of the 59 events given monies by the Regional Event Fund actually took place.

- (a) How did the State Government keep track of the events?
- (b) What processes were put in place to ensure the money was used as intended?
- (c) Who was responsible for liaising with event organisers?
- (d) Have any event organisers returned the grants?
- (e) If so, how many?

**Answer:**

- (a) Destination NSW's Regional Event Team was, and continues to be, in regular contact with event organisers to track the status and/or progress of funded events.
- (b) Destination NSW has contractual obligations in place with event organisers to ensure reporting on use of funds.
- (c) Destination NSW's Regional Events Team.
- (d) No.
- (e) See answer to (d) above.

38. When were the guidelines changed to allow for postponement?

**Answer:**

In late March 2020, the NSW Government imposed restrictions on mass gatherings. Due to the direct impact of the restrictions on events, Destination NSW gave successful applicants the option to defer their grants to 2021. Destination NSW communicated this to applicants when they were notified of their success.

39. Have any of the Event organisers who have not operated events under the fund received funding?

**Answer:**

No.

40. Have all grants received been acquitted?

**Answer:**

No.

41. Which of the 59 events that were funded in the Covid response were:

- (a) Postponed
- (b) Held online
- (c) Cancelled

**Answer:**

(a) The only events held live in 2020 were Hello Koalas Festival, Cowra Christmas Festival, and Beats in Bruxner (renamed from the Peter Allen Festival). The other 56 events, announced on 26 June 2020, were postponed.

(b) Some events deferred funding to 2021 but held online events in 2020, for which the grant funding was not used.

(c) None.

42. What has happened to the grant monies that were provided to the postponed, held online or cancelled events?

- (a) Have the monies been returned to Destination NSW?

**Answer:**

There are currently no refunds required as, to-date, all events plan to proceed in 2021 or 2022.

43. Wasn't one of the criteria of the funding that the money would have to be spent within the period?

**Answer:**

No. See answer to Question 38.

44. How is it fair that organisations that could put together a funding application in the short time frame could get funding, even if they didn't hold events, whilst other organisations that couldn't get their funding applications in on time, but managed to hold events didn't get the opportunity for funding?

**Answer:**

The Regional Event Fund has always been open for four weeks for event organisers to submit their applications. Destination NSW promotes the opening of applications widely and sends regular reminders of the closing date during the application period. Destination NSW is not aware of event organisers who were unable to submit an application on time but held an event in 2020.

45. Was the funding deadline was unrealistic as there was general uncertainty as to when or how the lockdown would lift?

**Answer:**

Please see response to Question 44 above. Applications for the Regional Event Fund opened on 21 February 2020 and closed on 25 March 2020. The NSW Government published the initial Public Health (COVID-19 Restrictions on Gathering and Movement) Order 2020 in late March 2020. Most applications would have been submitted prior to the announcement of a general lockdown.

46. Given the slamming DNSW got from the Auditor General about the transparency around major event funding, is it appropriate that the Annual Report from Destination NSW had just one paragraph about the Regional Event Fund, which listed the 59 events that were successful in gaining funding, but there was no reporting as to what events were actually held, which were postponed, which were held online and which were cancelled?

**Answer:**

At time of writing, Destination NSW's 2019/20 Annual Report contained up-to-date information regarding the Regional Event Fund.

47. Given the pitiful record of the Berejiklian Barilaro government relating to transparency around grant funding, how can the Minister guarantee tourism businesses that their applications for grants are treated in a fair and equitable manner and determined on their own merits?

**Answer:**

Destination NSW has a rigorous assessment protocol for the Regional Event Fund, which is reviewed by Government Auditors as part of the annual audit of Destination NSW's activities.

**Quarantine**

48. NSW has the highest quarantine rates in the country, at \$3,000. We know that tourism has been the hardest hit sector, with more than 51 per cent of international visitors to Australia coming to NSW. That market, which is worth \$7.7 billion to the state's economy, was turned off overnight. Have you done anything to reduce the quarantine costs for visitors coming to the state?

**Answer:**

The NSW Government is committed to keeping people, businesses, and communities safe from COVID-19. This includes requiring international arrivals to undertake mandatory quarantine in

managed hotel facilities for 14 days on arrival. On 18 July 2020, NSW introduced fees for returning travellers. These fees are only a contribution to the overall costs of quarantining in NSW. Current passenger caps, and Australia's current border restrictions, have a much stronger impact on international tourism than quarantine costs.

### **Dine & Discover Vouchers**

49. In the Budget Speech, the Treasurer announced "half a billion dollars in stimulus for NSW restaurants, visitor sites and cultural attractions through the Out and About voucher". I know this voucher has subsequently been renamed the Dine and Discover Voucher, why hasn't the Government applied the vouchers to tourism accommodation?

**Answer:**

See response to Question 31.

50. Isn't tourism accommodation an important part of the visitor economy?

**Answer:**

The NSW Government is committed to supporting the tourism sector, which constitutes an important component of the state's economy. The Government announced a \$20 million support package to provide up to 200,000 in \$100 accommodation vouchers to NSW residents to be redeemed at hotels in Sydney's CBD, which will be available from June 2021.

51. Tamworth City Council had to make the difficult decision to cancel its Country Music Festival in January this year. What is the tourism occupancy in Tamworth for providers who have lost their key tourism period, and aren't eligible for the Dine and Discover Vouchers?

**Answer:**

The occupancy rate for all accommodation providers in Tamworth in January 2021 was 56.8 per cent (Source: STR).

52. What has the take up been of all tourism providers (visitor experiences such as cellar doors, theme parks, zoos, tours, etc)? Please disaggregate the following questions by tourism category as at 12 March 2021:

- (a) How many tourism providers have registered with the program?
- (b) How many tourism providers have applied for the program
- (c) How many tourism providers have been successful in applying for the program?

**Answer:**

Please see answers to Questions 32 and 33 above. Service NSW would be best placed to provide detailed information specific to tourism providers.

53. The Northern Territory's vouchers are worth up to \$400, and can be spent on accommodation and on fuel to encourage regional visitation to areas outside of the capital and Alice Springs. Has the NSW considered a similar package for NSW?

**Answer:**

The Dine & Discover program and the recently announced Sydney CBD accommodation vouchers provide extra support to the hospitality, tourism and entertainment sectors in NSW and the Sydney CBD. These vouchers are designed to support and encourage private sector spending in both the Sydney CBD, Greater Sydney and across NSW. The design of these vouchers matches

the unique circumstances, including the well managed health and economic response of the NSW Government.

54. Do you think people would travel for over 4 hours to Parramatta or Penrith when they can get only \$25 off a dinner and say \$25 off a cinema ticket?

**Answer:**

Dine & Discover is available throughout NSW and there are businesses registered throughout the state, including in Parramatta and Penrith. The scheme is designed to encourage both intra-state tourism and spending by local residents in their local area.

55. Wouldn't a higher value voucher encourage tourism for those who may not be able to afford it?

**Answer:**

Dine & Discover is designed to stimulate the economy, particularly in hospitality and tourism, by supporting expenditure with local businesses. Its design encourages both intra-state tourism and spending by local residents at businesses and attractions in NSW.

The value is split across four \$25 vouchers in order to encourage multiple visits to businesses and multiple uses. The total value and split of vouchers encourages private expenditure (e.g. individuals, families) beyond the Government's support through the voucher scheme.

56. The Government has said that the Dine and Discover NSW program would be piloted with businesses at Broken Hill and the Rocks in Early February. Has the pilot been completed and what were the outcomes?

(a) How has that changed the rollout for other destinations?

(b) The pilot was then to be extended to the Sydney CBD, the Bega Valley and the Northern Beaches from Late February. How have those pilots gone?

(c) Is the program on track to roll out across the state before the end of March 2021?

**Answer:**

A Dine & Discover Pilot commenced in The Rocks and Broken Hill on 11 February 2021.

Advice from Service NSW is that feedback from customers and businesses was collected and prioritised to make improvements to the scheme.

a. No major issues were identified and the rollout for other destinations was able to proceed as planned.

b. The Dine & Discover pilot commenced in the Sydney CBD, Northern Beaches and Bega Valley on 22 February 2021. This pilot was also successful with no major issues identified. Feedback from customers and businesses was collected and prioritised to make improvements to the scheme.

c. The program is on track to roll out across the whole state by the end of March 2021.

57. Do you know how many tourism businesses that Service NSW has written to inviting them to register for the Dine and Discover Vouchers?

(a) How did they select the businesses?

i. What was the criteria?

ii. What ABN numbers were listed as being relevant?

(b) How many businesses inquired about registration?

i. Can you please disaggregate by month since announcement?

- (c) How many businesses registered?
  - i. Can you please disaggregate by month since announcement?
- (d) Are wineries included in the vouchers?
  - i. When were they included
- (e) Are all coach tour operators included in the vouchers?
  - i. When were they included?

**Answer:**

- a) Service NSW emailed relevant businesses likely to be eligible for Dine & Discover inviting them to register. Service NSW would be best placed to provide an answer about the number of tourism businesses invited to register for Dine and Discover, including how the businesses were selected.
- b) Service NSW would be best placed to provide information about the number of inquiries received.
- c) Please see answer to Question 32. Please refer to Service NSW for number of business registrations disaggregated by month.
- d) Wineries that provide dine-in meals and tours that do not involve alcohol are eligible for the scheme. They have been able to register for the scheme since late January and as such they have been included in the scheme since piloting commenced in February.
- e) Coach tour operators are included if they come under the category of scenic and sightseeing transport. They have been included in the scheme since it launched to business registration on 15 January.

**Transparency and Leadership to Industry and the Parliament**

**58.** At an industry round table hosted by the Labor Opposition Shadow Minister for Investment and Tourism with coach tourism operators in June 2020, there was widespread confusion about the rules relating to how coach tourism operators could operate. Advice subsequently received from the NSW Department of Health was that there were no strict numbers or social distancing requirements within which coach tourism could operate, but that it would be “understandable if coach tour operators thought they couldn’t operate, or that it would not be profitable to operate, as there were limits on having more than ten people gathering at that time.” On the other hand, the Office of the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads responded that coach tour operators could not operate any tours. What was the correct advice?

- (a) What had you done to communicate the correct advice to industry before June 2020?
- (b) If you had done nothing – why not?
- (c) If so, what had you done?
- (d) What if any, attempts have you made to assist coach and group tour operators in interpreting the Public Health Orders?
- (e) Soon after the Department of Health advice that coach tour operators had no limits on the number of people on a coach was made public a so-called party bus was fined under the Public Health Orders. Are party buses part of the visitor economy?

**Answer:**

Bus and coach operations are not the responsibility of the Minister for Tourism.

- (a) Please see above. COVID-19-related information for industry continues to be provided on the NSW Government’s website: [www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19](http://www.nsw.gov.au/covid-19). In addition, Destination NSW has links on its corporate website, Destinationnsw.com.au, to the NSW Government’s COVID-19 webpage.
- (b) Please see answer to 58(a).

- (c) Please see answer to 58(a).
- (d) This is a matter for the Minister for Transport and Roads.
- (e) The bus and coach sector contributes to the visitor economy.

**59.** How often have you met with BusNSW or other bus industry representatives during the pandemic?

**Answer:**

All relevant meetings are declared as part of the Minister's diary disclosure obligations.

**60.** Why did it take more than four months before Destination NSW held its first webinar for tourism operators after the Summer bushfires and the pandemic started?

**Answer:**

Industry feedback to Destination NSW was that operators were at capacity managing cancellations and refunds throughout March and April 2020, with limited staff to participate in any events. To enable tourism businesses to better access advice during this unprecedented period, Destination NSW created seven online Quick Tips guides, relating to the management of COVID-19 challenges.

**61.** Why didn't Destination NSW, or the Minister, attend the NSW Local Government Tourism Conference in Jindabyne in March this year?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question on Notice LA2645.

**62.** Destination NSW was supposed to present a bushfire recovery module there, why didn't they turn up to the Conference?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 61, above.

**63.** NSW National Parks presented at the Conference as did Tourism Australia. Don't you think it was important that you as the relevant Minister or Destination NSW should have attended to support the industry at that local Government level?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 61, above.

**64.** There were less than 500 at the LGNSW Tourism conference, and in fact, they had a presenter from New Zealand present via a pre-recorded video. Why didn't the Minister or Destination NSW do the same?

**Answer:**

Destination NSW was not provided the opportunity to present via video link.

**65.** What kind of message do you think that gives the sector, when the message about COVID from the beginning has been "we're all in this together"?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 61, above.



66. How many briefings have you given to Members of Parliament relating to the impact on tourism businesses of the bushfires or Covid-19?

- (a) If so, how many,
- (b) Have you included all parties in those briefings?
- (c) If not, why not?

**Answer:**

Members of Parliament are able to contact the Minister's office at any time.

67. Travel agents and Group Tour Operators have complained about the language used by Government Ministers and the Premier when encouraging people to resume their tourism activities. Travel agencies, particularly, have spent many months, much of it unpaid, rearranging their clients' travel itineraries, to get them home safely, or to rebook their tours for later, or obtain refunds that are often difficult to obtain due to multiple and conflicting terms and conditions. While travel agents have survived the continued disruption of the internet, they need support during this time. Why has the Government advice continued to emphasis "booking online" to the detriment of travel agencies?

**Answer:**

Destination NSW works with major travel agent networks to ensure that its partnership activities reach the thousands of local travel agents across NSW and Australia that are part of these networks. This business model delivers strong results for travel agents, the NSW tourism industry and the visitor economy, driving more visitors to NSW destinations and supporting jobs.

**New Chair of Destination NSW**

68. The appointment of Christine McLoughlin to the board of Destination NSW was announced on 8 March as John Warn has stepped down from the board of Destination NSW after two and a half years. What was the selection process for the position?

- (a) Did the Minister call for expressions of interest for the role of Chair?
- (b) If so, how many applications did you receive?
- (c) If not, why not?

**Answer:**

Christine McLoughlin was appointed by Cabinet and publicly announced on 8 March 2021.

**Auditor General's Report into Destination NSW's Support for Major Events – Released 9 April 2020**

69. Key findings of the Auditor General's report into Destination NSW's Support for Major Events was released on 9 April 2020. Key findings of the Auditor General's report were around a lack of transparency in relation to how spending happens. Has the Minister made improvements to his recording of decision making and outcomes of investment in events?

- (a) How many recommendations of the report were supported by the Government?
- (b) How has DNSW and the Minister's office implemented those recommendations?
- (c) How has DNSW and the Minister's office improved the Ministerial briefings as part of those recommendations?

**Answer:**

- (a) Destination NSW provided comments to each key finding, which were published in the NSW Audit Office final report.
- (b) See answer to Question 69a.

(c) See answer to Question 69a.

**\$3.5 million Tourism Funding Grants – too little, too late.**

70. The Queensland Government provided loans of up to \$250,000 as part of its COVID-19 Jobs Support Loans, with no repayments or interest payable for the first year. Plus two years of interest only rates, with principal and interest repayments commencing only after the third year, for the remainder of the term of the loan. This kind of loan structure was particularly helpful for tourism operators without the cashflow to pay fixed expenses over the last year. Why didn't the NSW Government look at a similar program for tourism operators early in the pandemic?

**Answer:**

The NSW Government has committed over \$8.3 billion in measures to support business and the economy in response to the pandemic. This includes a \$1 billion Working for NSW fund to sustain business, create new jobs and retrain employees. NSW Government measures are wide ranging, aimed at increasing cashflow, boosting business liquidity, retaining employees and building resilience.

71. Tourism operators have been working to pivot their businesses for more than a year now with the bushfires and the pandemic, why did the Government wait until February 2021 to release any grants?

**Answer:**

Please see the answer to Question 70. Following the closure of international borders on 20 March 2020 and the relaxation of non-essential travel in 2020, it was critical to first drive bookings and visitors to tourism businesses across the State. The NSW Government ramped up its domestic tourism marketing activities to reignite the State's visitor economy, through a range of marketing campaigns, including the dedicated recovery campaign, *Love NSW* and *Sydney Love It Like You Mean it*. The NSW Government then released its Tourism Product Development Fund to assist regional tourism operators to refresh or renew their product and experience, or develop their product.

72. Some of these grants only have six weeks to apply, but require development applications which may take much longer to approve. Wouldn't it have been better to open the grants earlier and keep them open for longer to enable operators to apply and meet their planning conditions?

**Answer:**

Applicants can submit their applications without having an approved development application. Should their applications be successful, a copy of the approved development application will be required.

73. Some of the funding requires matched dollar-for-dollar funding. How are operators who have had little to no income, who lose JobKeeper on 28 March possibly be going to be able to afford these grants?

**Answer:**

At time of writing, there has been significant interest in this stream of funding with many applications already fully submitted.

74. And what about operators who have managed to invest in their businesses over the last 12 months, but now when JobKeeper ends will find themselves without any support?

**Answer:**

There continues to be a range of Commonwealth and NSW Government financial and non-financial industry support and programs which are available to the tourism industry.

75. The Government's grants packages provide no funding to cover upgrading vehicles, boats, tents or other mobile facilities and equipment, despite group and transport based travel being hit particularly badly by the pandemic. Why isn't the Government funding initiatives for product development to improve vehicles or cruise vessels for example?

**Answer:**

Items such as upgrades to vehicles or mobile facilities and equipment have never been eligible under Destination NSW product development funding programs as they can be used to deliver services outside of NSW and outside the visitor economy.

**Regional Business Event Development Fund**

76. Given that many of the events that were supposed to occur via the Regional Event Fund last year never happened, how will DNSW ensure that the half a million dollars put into the Regional Business Event Development Fund grants program is expended on events that actually happen?

**Answer:**

The eligibility criteria of the Regional Business Event Development Fund does not require events to occur within a certain time period.

**\$10 million Tourism Recovery Package – Announced 8 February 2020**

77. The Government announced a number of tourism recovery packages in 2020, what quantum of support in that package did the Government give to small individual sole trader tourism businesses or small and family businesses?

**Answer:**

Of the 59 recipients of the 2020 Regional Event Fund, only 14 are not sole traders or small and family businesses (which includes community organisations, chambers of commerce, charities, peak bodies and educational organisations). Of the 14, 13 are local councils and one is an established business.

78. What has been the take up of these grants so far?

- (a) Please advise the number applications to date
- (b) When will the grants be announced so successful grantees expect to be able to start their projects?

**Answer:**

- (a) The 2020 Regional Event received 394 applications across its two streams.
- (b) Successful applicants to the 2020 Regional Event Fund were announced on 26 June 2020.

**Destination NSW's success in Major Event Funding Bids**

79. How many major events has Destination NSW bid in the last three years?

**Answer:**

Event bids are commercial-in-confidence.

80. How many of those applications have been successful? Please disaggregate by

- (a) Name of the Grant Program
- (b) Name of the Event
- (c) Amount of the grant funding allocated to the event?
- (d) Matched funding
- (e) Date of the event
- (f) Date of application for grant funding

**Answer:**

Information about major events secured is available in Destination NSW annual reports.

**Services to Businesses from Destination NSW**

**81.** On page 11 of the Annual Report, Destination NSW has some information about its brand development and management, strategic partnership programs, co-operative marketing programs etc. How many tourism businesses does Destination NSW offer these services to?

- (a) Is there a break down of the costs of providing each of these services by operator?
- (b) Or even by the area of work?

**Answer:**

Destination NSW engages and collaborates extensively with a large number of tourism businesses and operators from multiple sectors of the industry to realise NSW's vision to be the premier visitor economy in the Asia Pacific.

- (a) Destination NSW does not break down the investments by cost of activity per operator or area of work.
- (b) See answer to Question 81(a).

**NSW Wine Industry**

**82.** The NSW Wine Industry has some 520 wineries, 380 cellar doors and 34,000 hectares of vineyards. Given the challenges that have been facing the industry from smoke taint, to a reduction in exports to China, what specific strategies have you taken to assist cellar doors in their tourism businesses?

**Answer:**

Destination NSW has continued to deliver a wide range of initiatives for the tourism food and wine sector as part of its Food and Wine Tourism Strategy in partnership with the NSW Wine Industry Association. This includes delivering domestic and international marketing campaigns and partnership activity, PR, capability building, content development and trade distribution initiatives.

**83.** Were cellar doors initially included in the Dine and Discover Voucher program?

- (a) If not, why not?

**Answer:**

Cellar doors have been included for the scheme since it commenced pilot if they offer dine-in meals or tours that do not involve alcohol. They were not included in the first few weeks of business registration which opened in January prior to pilot, because vouchers cannot be redeemed for purchase of alcohol which is the main business of cellar doors.

**84.** Were cellar doors given specific advice about Covid Safe operation taking into consideration the unique nature of their operations?

- (a) If not, why not?

**Answer:**

Service NSW has been providing information to industry about COVID-safe operations on their website at [www.service.nsw.gov.au](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au). Destination NSW has been referring businesses to Service NSW's COVID-19 webpage through its corporate website, [destinationnsw.com.au](http://destinationnsw.com.au), as well as through its industry newsletter *Insights* and corporate social media channels.

**Regional Tourism Awards**

85. Minister the Regional Tourism Awards have been around since 2004 and we've seen first hand what a difference the awards have made to many regional tourism businesses and events across the state. Sadly, the event didn't proceed last year as it failed to secure a major sponsor. On the NSW Tourism website it advises that the Tourism NSW awards will return in 2021 but there doesn't appear to be a commitment regarding the Regional Tourism Awards. Has the NSW Government provided funding for the 2021 Regional Tourism Awards?

- (a) If not, why not?
- (b) Was the NSW Government approached to fund the event?
  - i. If so how much was requested?
- (c) Regional Tourism Awards organisers admitted that "in the past we've seen a dip in entries for the NSW Tourism Awards when there has been no Regional Tourism Awards." Are you concerned that without support for the Regional Tourism Awards the NSW Tourism Awards may become unfeasible?
- (d) If so, how much funding will the Government provide?
- (e) Has the NSW Government committed to sponsor the event in future years?
- (f) If so, what is the length of time and value of that commitment?
- (g) If not, why not?
- (h) When will the event be held?

**Answer:**

Business NSW runs the NSW Tourism Awards. Destination NSW sponsors the NSW Tourism Awards and has done so since 2004. The annual awards program acknowledges and celebrates tourism excellence across the State. The annual NSW Tourism Awards is open to all tourism businesses across the State. The NSW Government does not run a tourism awards program.

- (a) Please see answer to Question 85, above.
- (b) No.
- (c) Please see answer to Question 85, above.
- (d) Please see answer to Question 85, above.
- (e) Destination NSW continues to sponsor the NSW Tourism Awards.
- (f) Please see answer to Question 85, above.
- (g) Please see answer to Question 85, above.
- (h) This is the responsibility of Regional Tourism Awards Inc.

**Coach Tourism Operators – Vehicle registration and other relief**

86. Has the CEO of DNSW read the industry briefing from the Bus Industry Confederation which surveyed the bus industry in April 2020?

**Answer:**

Yes.

87. Noting the extremely high number of operators in NSW who had to mothball their vehicles, take up bank incentives and the high number of operators either relying on JobKeeper or letting

staff go to remain in business, what has the NSW Government done to assist this sector of the tourism industry?

**Answer:**

There have been a number of State and Commonwealth Government financial and non-financial industry assistance packages delivered since the beginning of the pandemic. These are available to businesses from all sectors, including the bus and coach sector.

**88.** Other jurisdictions have provided registration relief for coach tourism operators who have had to park their vehicles up for more than a year since the 2019 Bushfires began. Coach Registration can cost up to \$10,000 per vehicle in addition to vehicle repayments of up to \$10,000 per month. Whilst some have suspended their registration and/or insurances, this will also be problematic for them when they have to re-register and re-insure them as they will have to get and pay for inspections again. Other states have introduced a regime where the operator takes a photo or uses company records of their registration numbers at the commencement of COVID-19, to show that the vehicle has had little to no use afterwards. Why has the NSW Government not provided any similar kind of registration relief to tourism coach operators who have not had any coach tours going for now well over 12 months.

(a) With the loss of inbound tourism, coach transfers doing airport and cruise shuttles have come to a complete stop. Many operators have not been able to afford their coach repayments, which may cost as much as \$7,000 per month. What assistance has the Government provided to these operators?

(b) Has DNSW or the Minister advocated for operators to be able to “pause” their vehicle registration rather than having to cancel it and re register?

**Answer:**

This is the responsibility of the Minister for Transport and Roads.

**Waiver of Bus Operator Accreditation Scheme (BOAS) Financial Viability and Audit Requirements for Coach Tour Operators or providing grant relief for audits**

**89.** Coach Tour Operators currently have to show financial viability as part of the Bus Operators Accreditation Scheme (BOAS), and must pay for an independent audit at least once every three years. During COVID-19, most uncontracted bus or coach operators would have difficulty in satisfying the financial viability criteria due to the uncertainty around the resumption of touring. The Federal Government’s Coronavirus Economic Response Package Omnibus Act 2020 provides a “new safe harbour from the director’s duty to prevent insolvent trading”, using temporary amendments to “provide relief for directors from potential personal liability for insolvent trading”. Has the State Government provided similar relief for coach operators in the NSW Bus and Coach industry by waiving the financial viability of the BOAS and providing some grant relief for them to undertake audits if they are due within the period of COVID-19

**Answer:**

This is the responsibility of the Minister for Transport and Roads.

**90.** Has the NSW Government waived the BOAS fees for coach tour operators who do not have contracted public transport services with the NSW Government?

**Answer:**

This is the responsibility of the Minister for Transport and Roads.

### Waiver of National Parks Fees for Tourism Operators

91. Tourism operators have to pay fees to operate in National Parks, and many other industries have had such government fees waived. The Government could waive the fees for bushwalking, snow play or other national parks activities for a period of time to assist operators with their recovery?

**Answer:**

This is the responsibility of the Minister for Energy and Environment.

### The \$3,000 Small business marketing grant

92. How many tourism businesses applied for the \$3,000 small business marketing grant?

- (a) How many of them were successful?
- (b) What support was supplied to those who were unsuccessful?
- (c) What was the average processing time for tourism businesses?

**Answer:**

There were 27,111 applications from businesses in tourism-related industries for the \$3,000 COVID-19 Small Business Recovery Grant.

- (a) 25,981 applications from businesses in tourism-related industries have been paid.
- (b) There was a range of other COVID-19 support available to businesses unsuccessful for the \$3,000 grant including:
  - Personalised advice and workshops through Business Connect
  - Payroll tax waivers and deferrals
  - The \$10,000 Small Business Support Grant
  - The Southern Border Grant if the business was located on the New South Wales-Victoria border
  - Rental protections under the COVID-19 Commercial Leases Regulation
  - Waiving several NSW Government fees and charges for small businesses
  - Destination NSW marketing campaigns
- (c) The average processing time for applications from tourism-related industries for the \$3,000 COVID-19 Small Business Recovery Grant was eight days.

Tourism-related industries are detailed below:

Industry	Total Applications	Paid Applications
Accommodation	1,379	1,295
Administrative Services	2,995	2,888
Adult Community and Other Education	2,305	2,207
Air and Space Transport	36	32
Creative and Performing Arts Activities	717	685
Food and Beverage Services	9,478	9,094

Gambling Activities	96	94
Heritage Activities	44	43
Motor Vehicle and Motor Vehicle Parts Retailing	311	298
Non-Store Retailing and Retail Commission-Based Buying and/or Selling	803	772
Other Goods Wholesaling	1,280	1,241
Other Store-Based Retailing	4,519	4,332
Other Transport	297	291
Preschool and School Education	243	236
Road Transport	49	47
Sports and Recreation Activities	1,962	1,871
Tertiary Education	567	525
Water Transport	30	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,211</b>	<b>25,981</b>

93. Some tourism operators complained that due to the way that their ABNs had been registered meant that they could not receive the \$3,000 marketing grant as they were ineligible due to not being identified as tourism businesses. A number of businesses had to try a number of times to even get the \$10,000 grants, despite losing 100 per cent of their bookings. Why was it so difficult for them to access the grant?

**Answer:**

Only businesses operating in ANZSIC codes highly impacted by the Public Health Order were eligible for the Recovery Grant. Some businesses had outdated ANZSIC codes that did not reflect they were in a tourism-based industry. These businesses could change their ANZSIC code via the Australian Business Register and re-apply. Businesses applying for the \$10,000 COVID-19 Small Business Support Grant were required to have experienced a 75 per cent decline in turnover. This threshold ensured the grant was available to businesses most impacted by COVID-19.

94. Bus, coach and group charters were told they were not on the list of “highly impacted” industries for the \$3,000 COVID-19 business restart grant. They were devastated to have gone through the application process and be presented with this response to their application. How many complaints have you had in relation to that?

(a) One tourism operator said he would have been able to get a marketing grant if he was a brothel. Why was the Government unprepared to assist tourism operators?

**Answer:**

Only businesses operating in ANZSIC codes highly impacted by the Public Health Order were eligible for the \$3,000 Small Business Recovery Grant. Bus operators in the Scenic and



Sightseeing Transport ANZSIC code were eligible for this grant. Bus operators in other ANZSIC codes may not have been.

Service NSW was responsible for delivering the Recovery Grant. Service NSW has advised it received six complaints from bus operator businesses unable to access the grant because they were not included in the list of “highly impacted” industries.

(a) The NSW Government understands the tourism industry was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government provided significant support to small business tourism operators throughout 2020 including through the \$3,000 Small Business Recovery Grant.

Out of more than 36,000 small businesses that received the Recovery Grant, over 25,000 applicants (70 per cent) were in tourism-related industries. Tourism operators in accommodation, transport, food and beverage services, creative and performing arts, and other tourism-related industries received more than \$77 million under the Recovery Grant program.

The NSW Government recognises that some industries, including tourism, will remain impacted by the pandemic more than others. The NSW Government will continue to monitor the impacts of ongoing restrictions and may consider further support if necessary.

#### **Snowfields 2020 and 2021**

95. New Zealand ski resorts opened in June 2020 and the Victorian Government permitted snow sports to continue in May 2020. In Victoria, the Government gave specific advice regarding snow sports and travel to the snowfields allowing day trips to the ski fields, and they have set a hard date for their opening as 22 June 2020. In New Zealand, government and the industry have agreed to a number of specific guidelines which will allow ski resorts to operate safely, why didn't the NSW Snow Season start until July?

#### **Answer:**

On 28 May 2020, the Deputy Premier and CEO of the Australian Ski Areas Association announced the opening of the NSW Ski fields from 22 June 2020. The opening of the ski season was delayed to provide ski resorts enough time to implement health and safety measures to comply with COVID-19 Public Health Orders.

96. NSW tourism operators and tourists were told that overnight travel could start from 1 June 2020, but even a week before that date, there was no clear advice about when or how our ski fields, one of the jewels of regional NSW tourism, could open. Why was there such a delay for the ski season, given that none of the ski fields ended up being able to open by the traditional start of the long weekend?

(a) What action did the Minister take to try and assist the industry?

(b) Why did it take longer to get this organised in NSW than in either Victoria or New Zealand?

#### **Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 95, above.

97. Given that the industry generates about 23,000 jobs and \$2.4 billion in annual economic impact across Australia, what was the economic impact of the delay?

(a) Were any jobs lost?

(b) If so, how many?

**Answer:**

Destination NSW does not collect or track this data.

(a) Please answer to Question 97, above.

(b) Please see answer Question 97, above.

**98.** The resorts got together under the banner of the Australian Ski Areas Association and presented a covid-safe operating plan to the health authorities and the NSW government in or around April 2020, yet it wasn't until late May that they were told that when they were "Covid ready" they could open. Why did it take so long to organise an approval for one of the major winter tourism regions to operate in their peak season?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 95, above.

**99.** Given that Vail Resorts which owns lifts at Perisher and in Victoria, said that contact tracing was an area where ski resorts had an edge over other industries as passes for ski lifts at all the major resorts work on a RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) system so skier movements can be tracked and traced according to time and location. Why did it take so long for visitation to ski resorts to be approved?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 95, above.

**100.** The delays in the announcement meant that when the announcements were made that resorts could open, many people struggled to get their lift ticket bookings and their accommodation matched up. How many tourists were stranded at resorts unable to access the snow or alternatively having tickets but not being able to access the resort accommodation?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for individual ski resort operators.

**101.** What will the Government do differently in 2021 to make sure that there is a more orderly opening of the ski season?

**Answer:**

The opening of the 2021 ski season will be in line with the COVID-19-related Public Health Order at the time, if any.

**102.** Will the resorts be free to open on the June Long Weekend in 2021 as is the tradition?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 101, above.

**Assistance and Notice for Tourism Operators to restart**

**103.** Pubs and Clubs in NSW were given approximately 2 days' notice that they would be able to recommence operations. Why didn't the Government provide a structured recovery plan for the Tourism Industry?

**Answer:**

This is the responsibility of the Minister for Customer Service.

**104.** Some other sectors of the hospitality industry appeared to have quite clear avenues for a restart. Why didn't tourism operators?

**Answer:**

COVID-19 Public Health Orders are a matter for Minister for Health.

**Failure to look at Product Development funding rather than marketing during 2020**

**105.** During COVID lockdowns, many tourism operators had staff on Jobkeeper. Why did the Government focus on marketing grants (\$3,000) rather than product development to say help them pivot their business model towards higher yield activities for a post-covid restart? For example, a tourism chocolate factory starting to do cooking classes for smaller groups than large tour groups?

**Answer:**

The \$3,000 Small Business Recovery Grant was designed to help small businesses and not-for-profits meet the costs of safely re-opening or scaling up their operations as they recovered from COVID-19. The Recovery Grant was not limited to covering marketing expenses but was available for a broad range of expenses detailed in the programs guidelines including:

- Fit-out changes and temporary physical changes (e.g. plastic barriers at checkouts);
- Staff training and counselling (e.g. health & safety risks and mitigation strategies);
- Business advice and continuity planning;
- Cleaning products and additional cleaning services;
- Additional equipment necessary to comply with social distancing or other public health measures;
- Marketing, communications and advertising (e.g. to let the community know the business is operating again); and
- Digital solutions (e.g. e-commerce or business websites).

**106.** Why did the Government fail to invest in place activation and continue to focus on marketing activities?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to question 105, above.

**Caravan & Camping**

**107.** During the initial lock down period in April and May, caravan parks with fully self contained cabins or self drive RVs with facilities were prevented from operating as "hero accommodation". Why was that?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Minister for Health.

**108.** Some in the industry have pointed out that being discrete accommodation, these providers would have been able to more adequately accommodate people in a covid safe way. Why weren't these parks approved for accommodation for nurses, doctors, and other pandemic heroes who needed to visit other locations?

**Answer:**

Please see answer to Question 107, above.

**109.** Were any private caravan park operators on crown lands or National Parks provided with any rent relief during the COVID shut down by the NSW Government?

(a) If so, which ones?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

**Employees**

**110.** Minister, for each department, agency, State-owned corporation or other body, and for each division of those bodies, if any, in your portfolio:

(a) What is the gender pay gap, both generally and across those employees in SEB or SEB-equivalent bands?

(b) What is the highest remuneration for female employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?

(c) What is the lowest pay received by female employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?

(d) What is the average remuneration received by female employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?

(e) What is the highest remuneration for male employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?

(f) What is the lowest pay received by male employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?

(g) What is the average remuneration received by male employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?

(h) How many female and how many male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees are there?

(i) What is the highest number of direct reports to female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(j) What is the lowest number of direct reports to female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(k) What is the average number of direct reports to female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(l) What is the highest number of direct reports to male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(m) What is the lowest number of direct reports to male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(n) What is the average number of direct reports to male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(o) What is the highest number of staff managed by female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(p) What is the lowest number of number of staff managed by female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(q) What is the average number of number of staff managed by female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(r) What is the highest number of staff managed by male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(s) What is the lowest number of number of staff managed by male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(t) What is the average number of number of staff managed by male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?

(u) In providing answers to questions (a) to (t), please provide the information for each SEB band or band equivalent.

(v) What steps are you taking to eliminate the gender pay gap?

(w) What timeframe have you set to eliminate the gender pay gap?

**Answer:**

Information on senior executives and other associated information is publicly available in the agency's annual report. In addition, the NSW Public Service Commission's State of the NSW Public Sector and Workplace Profile reports provide annual data relating to the proportion of women in the NSW public sector by cluster, remuneration, and grade. Both reports are available at [www.psc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au). The Public Service Commission also provide guidelines to Departments and agencies on organisational design, including executive reporting layers and direct reports. More information is available in the Senior executive remuneration management framework. NSW Treasury has an action plan in place for driving gender equality across the department including in senior leadership, in response to the Premier's Priority for a World Class Public Service which includes a target that 50% of senior leadership roles will be held by women by 2025.

**111.** Cluster Secretary – for each department, agency, State-owned corporation or other body, and for each division of those bodies, if any, in your Cluster:

- (a) What is the gender pay gap, both generally and across those employees in SEB or SEB-equivalent bands?
- (b) What is the highest remuneration for female employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?
- (c) What is the lowest pay received by female employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?
- (d) What is the average remuneration received by female employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?
- (e) What is the highest remuneration for male employees– both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?
- (f) What is the lowest pay received by male employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?
- (g) What is the average remuneration received by male employees – both generally and for SEB/SEB-equivalent employees?
- (h) How many female and how many male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees are there?
- (i) What is the highest number of direct reports to female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (j) What is the lowest number of direct reports to female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (k) What is the average number of direct reports to female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (l) What is the highest number of direct reports to male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (m) What is the lowest number of direct reports to male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (n) What is the average number of direct reports to male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (o) What is the highest number of staff managed by female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (p) What is the lowest number of number of staff managed by female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (q) What is the average number of number of staff managed by female SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (r) What is the highest number of staff managed by male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (s) What is the lowest number of number of staff managed by male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (t) What is the average number of number of staff managed by male SEB or SEB-equivalent employees?
- (u) In providing answers to questions (a) to (t), please provide the information for each SEB band or band equivalent.
- (v) What steps are you taking to eliminate the gender pay gap?
- (w) What timeframe have you set to eliminate the gender pay gap?

**Answer:**

Information on senior executives and other associated information is publicly available in the agency's annual report. In addition, the NSW Public Service Commission's State of the NSW Public Sector and Workplace Profile reports provide annual data relating to the proportion of women in the NSW public sector by cluster, remuneration, and grade. Both reports are available at [www.psc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au). The Public Service Commission also provide guidelines to Departments and agencies on organisational design, including executive reporting layers and direct reports. More information is available in the Senior executive remuneration management framework. NSW Treasury has an action plan in place for driving gender equality across the department including in senior leadership, in response to the Premier's Priority for a World Class Public Service which includes a target that 50% of senior leadership roles will be held by women by 2025.

### **Questions from the Hon Mark Latham MLC**

**Questions please to Minister Ayres:**

**112.** What has the government done at the Aerotropolis to implement the commitment given by the then Planning Minister Anthony Roberts in October 2018 such that:

- a) "No land holder will be disadvantaged"
- b) "It is the Government's intention to acquire land in this precinct directly from existing landowners prior to any rezoning"
- c) "No current landowners (will be) impacted, either positively or negatively, by any decision to rezone land"
- d) "Land will be acquired at fair value on valuations based on its current rezoning"?

**Answer:**

Planning and related activities for the Western Sydney Aerotropolis are the responsibility of the Western Sydney Planning Partnership and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

The draft Aerotropolis Precinct Plans were on public exhibition from 10 November 2020 to 12 March 2021. It is understood that stakeholder feedback is currently being reviewed.

These questions are most appropriately referred to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

**113.** When does the Government now expect the Catholic STEM High School at Luddenham announced by Premier Berejiklian in March 2017 to open?

**Answer:**

This matter was addressed at the hearing of 10 March 2021. Please refer to hearing transcript for further information.

**114.** Given that Infrastructure Australia has revealed a small BCR for the North-South Metro, why hasn't the government proceeded with the bigger BCR and employment-creating Leppington line extension as its top priority?

**Answer:**

Questions specific to the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport are most appropriately referred to the Minister for Transport and Roads.

**115.** Why has the Government sacrificed tens of thousands of new jobs in the South-West Sydney corridor (Liverpool to Campbelltown) for the sake of a low-BCR rail line running through the Sydney Science Park?

**Answer:**

Questions specific to the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport are most appropriately referred to the Minister for Transport and Roads.

**116.** What representations did Stuart Ayres make to (State and Federal) government ministers, departments and agencies (and also Penrith Council) for the Sydney Science Park:

- (a) Rezoning
- (b) Luddenham Metro location
- (c) St Marys Metro route passing through SSP land
- (d) A State developer contribution exemption for SSP's education land
- (e) The SSP/CSIRO Urban Living Lab
- (f) State Government announcement of the Luddenham STEM high school
- (g) The 2017 SSP/Westmead medical research agreement
- (h) The SSP Autonomous Vehicle Hub collaboration with Transport for NSW
- (i) To Minister Pavey for the SSP water announcement in December 2020
- (j) SSP/Nepean-Blue Mountains Local Health District partnership
- (k) SSP/The Penrith Quarter partnership
- (l) Preventing a State public hospital site being identified in the Aerotropolis LUIP, in competition with SSP plans for a hospital
- (m) SSP requests for increasing its retail floor space to 130,000sqm
- (n) SSP requests for lifting the residential height limit at its Luddenham Metro
- (o) Lifting the SSP GFA non-residential cap
- (p) lifting the SSP residential cap to 30,000+
- (q) Including the Celestino North Luddenham land in the Northern Gateway precinct, and
- (r) ensuring the Northern Gateway precinct was in the first group of precincts to be developed

**Answer:**

I am advised that no written representations have been made in relation to Sydney Science Park.

**Questions to Simon Draper, Infrastructure NSW:**

**117.** What assessment has Infrastructure NSW made of the benefit-cost of possible rail links to the Badgerys Creek airport site? What does this assessment show about the relative merits of the various options studied?

**Answer:**

Infrastructure NSW conducted a Gate 2 Business Case Review of the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport project. The business case evaluation summary, which includes an options identification assessment, is publicly available on the Infrastructure NSW website and found consistent with the NSW Government's Infrastructure Investor Assurance Framework. Infrastructure NSW has undertaken all required Gateway Reviews to date, project reporting and project monitoring activities on Sydney Metro - Western Sydney Airport (Sydney Metro WSA).

**118.** What involvement did Infrastructure NSW have in the:

- (a) Badgerys Creek Airport-St Marys Metro route determination, and
- (b) siting of the Luddenham Metro station? What are the details?

**Answer:**

Infrastructure NSW was not involved in the (a) Badgerys Creek Airport-St Marys Metro route determination, and (b) siting of the Luddenham Metro station.

**Questions to Sarah Hill, CEO WPCA:**

**119.** Is Natalie Camilleri, Executive Director, Infrastructure, in any way related to the owners of the Sydney Science Park? What are the details?

**Answer:**

Ms Camilleri is currently a staff member of the Greater Sydney Commission.

## **WESTERN SYDNEY**

### **Questions from Mr Justin Field MLC**

**Warragamba Dam**

**120.** Is the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement for the raising of the Warragamba Dam Wall being funded through the Climate Change Fund under the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Risk Management Strategy allocation?

(a) If not, where is funding for the development of the EIS coming from?

**121.** How much was spent in each of the following years on the development of the EIS for the Warragamba Dam Wall raising project?

- (a) FY18
- (b) FY19
- (c) FY20
- (d) To date in FY21

**Answer to 120 and 121:**

The NSW Government committed \$58 million in funding from the Climate Change Fund to deliver Phase One of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Valley Flood Strategy, of which \$30 million was to undertake detailed concept designs, environmental impact assessments for the Warragamba Dam raising proposal.

A further \$19.8 million was allocated as supplementary funding from consolidated funds for 2019-20 and 2020-21 to complete detailed concept designs and the EIS for the Warragamba Dam raising proposal.

**122.** What was the total value of the contract with SMEC for their work in the preparation of the EIS?

**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

**123.** Have there been any contract changes agreed as a result of the delay in the EIS process?

(a) If yes, when have those changes been agreed and what has been the costs of those changes?



**Answer:**

This is a matter for the Minister for Water, Property and Housing.

**124.** Are all meetings that you have had with non-Government parties about the Warragamba Dam Wall raising proposal listed on your Ministerial Diary Disclosure?

**Answer:**

Relevant meetings are disclosed as part of the Minister's diary disclosure obligations.

**125.** Please provide a list of meetings or discussions, either formal or informal, that you have had with either State or Commonwealth Ministers or Members of Parliament; or State or Commonwealth Officials; in relation to the Warragamba Dam Wall raising project since 1 January 2020 including:

- (a) The date of the meeting/discussion
- (b) The nature of the meeting/discussion
- (c) The topic of the meeting/discussion

**Answer:**

Ministerial discussions have taken in place in the preparation of Cabinet submissions.

**126.** Have you ever met with or discussed with, either formally or informally, the proceedings of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee in regards to the Warragamba Dam Wall raising project with the Foreign Minister, the Hon. Marise Payne MP?

**Answer:**

No. My informal discussions with the Senator the Hon. Marise Payne have related to the need for improved flood mitigation for communities in the Hawkesbury/Nepean Valley.