



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions**

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

### **ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT**

Hearing: Tuesday 26 October 2021

**Answers due by: 23 November 2021**

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## ENVIRONMENT

### Questions from The Hon Mark Banasiak MLC

#### Control of Horses in Kosciuszko National Park

1. Is the NSW government planning to engage professional shooters from New Zealand to shoot horses in Kosciuszko National Park?
  - (a) What is the status of these plans/contracts?
  - (b) Have contracts been awarded?
    - i. What is the value of the contracts?
    - ii. What is the number of animals contracted to be removed?
    - iii. Do the contracts include removal of any species other than horses?
    - iv. Which other species?
    - v. Does the contract specify that carcasses will be removed from KNP?
    - vi. How will carcasses be disposed of?
    - vii. When will shooting operations commence and conclude?
    - viii. Will shooting operations be conducted from the air, ground, or both?
2. Was a tender for this work prepared and advertised in Australia inviting professional Australian shooters the opportunity to bid?
  - (a) If yes, where and when?
  - (b) If no, why not?
3. Are the firearms and ammunition to be used specified in the contract?
  - (a) If yes, what are the firearm specifications (make, model, calibre, actuation method) and ammunition specifications (make of cartridges, bullet weight, bullet type)
  - (b) Will the New Zealand contractors be using their own firearms?
  - (c) If yes, are these firearms 'Prohibited' firearms in NSW?
  - (d) What capacity magazines will be used in the firearms?
  - (e) Has Australian Border Force given approval, and issued permits, for the New Zealand contractors to bring their own firearms, magazines and ammunition into Australia?
  - (f) Has NSW Police Firearms Registry issued permits for use of these firearms in NSW?

## Questions from the Hon Mark Pearson MLC

### Kangaroos

4. Can the Minister explain
  - (a) why the Kangaroo Advisory Management Panel minutes of the 14th April 2021 have not been uploaded onto the DPIE website and
  - (b) when will they be published on the DPIE website?
5. In the NSW 2021 kangaroo management quota report on p.15 DPIE announced the expansion of two commercial harvest zones being the Griffith zone and the South East zone. The Griffith Commercial Zone was expanded to include the non-commercial zone of Wagga Wagga.
  - (a) Can the Minister explain the reasoning behind DPIE's decision to expand this zone?
  - (b) Does the Minister acknowledge that by including an additional 24,480 sq Km to the zone it will make inaccurate any calculation based on the previous data?
  - (c) Does the Minister acknowledge that by adding a new area to the zone, it will give the false impression that the kangaroo population has remained stable or appeared to increase?
  - (d) Does the Minister acknowledge that the quota report which included this new expanded zone, was last surveyed in 2019 and does not take into account the drought that persisted until 2020?

## ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

### Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

### Coal Fired Power Stations

6. How much money is being assigned to address the recommendations from the Coal Ash inquiry report?
7. Why did the EPA issue a penalty notice to AGL for the most recent coal ash spill in April this year, rather than taking other regulatory action? Especially given this was a similar incident to the spill in 2019, which attracted a \$1 million enforceable undertaking.
8. Where is the EPA up to with its investigation into coal ash environmental impacts in Lake Macquarie, given it indicated that it was undertaking this during the coal ash inquiry during the course of its evidence?
9. The owner and operator of Bayswater Power Station, AGL Macquarie Pty Limited, has entered into an Enforceable Undertaking worth \$1.1 million with the NSW EPA following the pollution

of a local creek. Part of that undertaking was for AGL Macquarie to deliver \$500,000 towards local environmental projects which were still to be determined. The local environmental projects were to be for the benefit of the local community and approved by the EPA.

- (a) Which projects were selected
  - (b) What is their current status
  - (c) How much of the \$500,000 has been delivered so far?
10. Has a load reduction agreement been entered into between the EPA and the owners of Vales Point Coal Fired Power Station, under Division 4 of Part 1 of Chapter 2 of the Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2021?
    - (a) What were the terms of that agreement?
    - (b) Have the terms of that agreement been fulfilled?
  11. What were the conditions placed upon Vales Point in order for them to be granted an exemption from emissions standards in 2012, and again in 2017?
  12. Vales Point and Liddell power station were required to prepare Pollution Reduction Studies to “undertake a review of international best practice measures to minimise the generation, and emission, of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) from coal fired electricity generation. The Vales Point report, delivered in 2017, identified Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) as the most effective control to reduce NO<sub>x</sub>. Their licence is currently being reviewed for renewal, will that renewal include an enforceable undertaking to install emissions reductions technology such as SCR?

### **Net Zero Plan**

13. Does the Net Zero Plan and the plan to 2030 include an increase in fossil fuel production and consumption?
14. Has the quantum of fugitive emissions from recently greenlit coal mining operations been factored into the NSW Net Zero Plan?
15. Does the Net Zero Plan have a strategy for reducing emissions from agriculture and land use?
16. How will the Net Zero Plan be enforced?
17. How many Expressions of Interest to develop clean manufacturing precincts (CMPs) decarbonisation roadmaps have been received so far?
18. Who attended the CMP EOI online briefing session on Wednesday 20 October?
19. Who attended the CMP EOI online briefing session on Tuesday 26 October?
20. How many people attended the information session on 13 October for the Clean Technology Research and Development Grants Program?

## **Waste tyre disposal**

21. What barriers are there to recycling end of life heavy mine tyres?
22. The NSW Government has recently awarded \$4 million in infrastructure grants to three different projects dedicated to waste tyre recycling. Does the government agree with Whitehaven's assertion that recycling waste heavy vehicle tyres is not feasible in Australia?
23. Why was Whitehaven Coal only given a caution after the EPA found instances of tyres being buried without necessary licence conditions at various times between 2014 and 2020?
24. Will the EPA make recommendations to vary the rehabilitation requirements and bond amounts for the mines found to have been illegally burying thousands of large mining tyres, to account for the foreseeable impact on groundwater and local environment?
25. Will the EPA make recommendations to vary the rehabilitation requirements and bond amounts for Maules Creek, following their application to bury large mining tyres on site rather than recycle them?

## **Load Based Licencing**

26. In 2014, the EPA sent an online survey to the approximately 167 organisations which at that time held the 250 licences in the LBL scheme, with seventy responses received. Were responses received from:
  - (a) Delta Electricity/Sunset Power International
    - i. Did they describe the scheme as an appropriate way to encourage emission reductions?
    - ii. Did they agree that the LBL scheme has been an incentive in reducing their own emissions reductions?
    - iii. Did they state their LBL fees were significantly lower than the cost of upgrading equipment to reduce emissions?
  - (b) AGL Macquarie
    - i. Did they describe the scheme as an appropriate way to encourage emission reductions?
    - ii. Did they agree that the LBL scheme has been an incentive in reducing their own emissions reductions?
    - iii. Did they state their LBL fees were significantly lower than the cost of upgrading equipment to reduce emissions?
  - (c) Energy Australia NSW

- i. Did they describe the scheme as an appropriate way to encourage emission reductions?
  - ii. Did they agree that the LBL scheme has been an incentive in reducing their own emissions reductions?
  - iii. Did they state their LBL fees were significantly lower than the cost of upgrading equipment to reduce emissions?
- (d) Origin Energy
- i. Did they describe the scheme as an appropriate way to encourage emission reductions?
  - ii. Did they agree that the LBL scheme has been an incentive in reducing their own emissions reductions?
  - iii. Did they state their LBL fees were significantly lower than the cost of upgrading equipment to reduce emissions?
27. Since seeking public feedback on the load-based licencing review issues paper in late 2016, what additional information has been sought from other parties?
- (a) Did those parties include any operators of coal-fired power stations?
- i. If yes, which operators were asked for additional information?
  - ii. What information was requested of them? What evidence did they provide?
28. Which actions that were intended to be taken by the EPA as a result of the review of the load-based licencing were tested?
- (a) Did the tested actions modelled result in a reduction of air pollution from coal-fired power stations?
- (b) Will those tested actions remain in the final version of the reviewed load-based license scheme?
- i. If no, why not?

### **Other**

29. Has the Korea Electric Power Corp. (KEPCO) made any representations to the Minister regarding the Bylong Valley, specifically regarding a prospective hydrogen project in the valley?
30. How much is the sum of money held in conservation bonds for biodiversity offsets?
- (a) Is it appropriate that biodiversity offsets are accounted for under a system of Net Present Value when there are no cash flows associated with offsets?

## Questions from Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC

### **EPA Pesticides**

31. How many notifications were made to the EPA in the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 regarding pesticide or chemical pollution incidents in NSW where damage to non-target vegetation was reported?
32. Which regions of NSW have reported incidences of non-target vegetation damage as a result of pesticide or chemical pollution drift and how many reports were made per region?
33. What measures have been taken by the EPA to investigate each reported incidence of non-target vegetation damage as a result of pesticide or chemical pollution drift?
34. Has the EPA identified any misapplication of pesticides or chemicals that have resulted in damage to non-target vegetation in NSW? If yes, which pesticides or chemicals were identified and what actions were taken?
35. How many on-the-ground assessments of the extent of damage to non-target vegetation in regions that have reported damage from pesticides or chemicals in the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 been conducted by EPA?
36. If on-the-ground assessments of vegetation damage were conducted, what were the qualifications of the person conducting the assessments in relation to identifying vegetation damage and diffuse pesticide and chemical pollution incidents?
37. Has any funding been provided directly by the EPA or by the NSW Government towards the establishment or ongoing operations of 'Stop Off-Target Spraying (SOS) groups'?
  - (a) If funds have been provided what is the amount of funding that has been provided and is funding ongoing?

### **Whitehaven's Narrabri Coal Mine**

38. Whitehaven's project approval for Narrabri includes a condition that requires the company to "implement all reasonable and feasible measures to minimise the greenhouse gas emissions" from the mine.
  - (a) What reasonable and feasible measures are being implemented at Narrabri underground mine?
  - (b) Can you provide some examples of reasonable and feasible greenhouse gas minimisation measures at other coal mines in NSW?
  - (c) Does the Department have any policy or guidelines on what would be considered "reasonable and feasible measures"? If yes, please provide on notice.

39. An updated Greenhouse Gas Minimisation Plan for Narrabri underground was provided to the Department in 2017 by Whitehaven. Reference: page 30 of Whitehaven's [last independent environmental audit](#), published February 2020. Why has the Plan not been approved by the Department?
- (a) What is the status of the Plan?
  - (b) Has the Department corresponded with the Office of Environment and Heritage in relation to the Plan? What was the correspondence about and when?
  - (c) Has the Department met with or corresponded with Whitehaven since the Plan was submitted?
  - (d) What was the correspondence about and when?
  - (e) Can the Department please provide on notice the latest version of the Plan in the Department's possession?

#### **Greenhouse gas emissions from Ravensworth Underground mine in NSW**

40. Please outline the strict conditions to minimise emissions at Ravensworth underground?  
(Development consent DA 104/96, modification 9)
- (a) Has the Department enforced those conditions?
  - (b) Has the Department corresponded with Glencore about its emissions at Ravensworth underground since the mine was placed in care and maintenance?
  - (c) Is the Department aware that Glencore has switched off its flares at Ravensworth underground? If so, when did the Department become aware of this

#### **Native Vegetation Clearing**

- 41. What is the number of active investigations into breaches under part 5a of the Local Land Services Act 2013?
- 42. What is the number of active investigations into breaches under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974?
- 43. What is the number of active investigations into breaches under the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016?
- 44. How many prosecutions has there been for breaches under Part 5A of the Local Land Services Act 2013?
- 45. How many prosecutions has there been for breaches under Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016?
- 46. How many prosecutions has there been for breaches under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974?



47. How many hectares of unexplained clearing were discovered in;
  - (a) 2020?
  - (b) 2019?
48. How many full-time-equivalent compliance officers are currently employed?
49. Has any analysis been conducted into staffing requirements for compliance officers?

### **Metropolitan Coal Mine**

50. Has an analysis of the health of the Hacking River been conducted to determine its suitability prior to the translocation of platypus populations?
51. Has an analysis been conducted on the potential impact of the Metropolitan Coal Mine on any potential translocated platypus population?
52. Is water from Peabody's Metropolitan Colliery holding dams allowed to discharge into creeks which run into Royal National Park waterways under Environment Protection Licence No. 767?

### **Biodiversity Offsets**

53. What is the proportion of current offsetting obligations transferred to the Trust which the Trust has not yet fulfilled?
54. Are there any offset obligation types the Trust does not expect it will be able to fulfil either due to the difficulty of sourcing credit supply for particular ecosystems or because the Trust is currently under resourced (as developer charges have been too low)?
  - (a) If yes, how many/what types are of concern?
  - (b) What is the plan for these offset obligations?
  - (c) Generally to what extent has the Trust been financially under-resourced by the use of the Biodiversity Offsets Price Calculator in the first four years of the BOS?
55. Has the BCT identified any types of habitat that cannot be offset?

### **Waste to Energy Incinerator Project**

56. Why are the emissions limits in the Draft EPA Energy from Waste Policy significantly higher than those in the European Union?
57. Why does the waste policy require periodic sampling for certain substances when the EU requires continuous monitoring?
58. Are municipal waste to energy incinerator projects being classified as renewable energy?

## **Dingoes**

59. How does the department ensure that native dingoes are not being targeted by efforts to eradicate wild dogs?
60. What genetic testing is performed by the department to ensure eradication efforts are not targeting dingoes?
61. What efforts are taken by the department to determine dingo populations?
  - (a) What is the current estimated dingo population in NSW?
62. Does the department track the numbers of wild dogs killed? If so how many were killed in;
  - (a) 2020?
  - (b) 2019?
  - (c) 2018?
  - (d) 2017?
  - (e) 2016?

## **Kosciusko**

63. How much additional funding will be allocated to the National Parks and Wildlife Service to implement the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Management Plan?
  - (a) How much of that will be allocated to the monitoring and research foreshadowed in section 7 of the draft plan?

## **Wollemi National Park / Hawkins, Rumker and Ganguddy-Kelgoola potential coal release areas**

64. Has the NSW Government considered at any time the reservation of the Coricudgy and Nullo Mountains State Forests into the National Park system?
  - (a) Have NSW Forests and NPWS held discussions about their transfer?
65. Is the NSW Government aware of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's concerns about coal mining in the vicinity of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area?
66. How will the NSW Government ensure the World Heritage status of the Blue Mountains is not lost due to the impacts of coal mining?
67. How is the NSW Government taking into account the impact of the Gaspers Mountain bushfire on the regional ecology in the PRIA decision?
68. How is the NSW Government taking into account the impact of the Gaspers Mountain bushfire on the availability of habitat for threatened and vulnerable species in the PRIA decision?

## Questions from The Hon. Mark Buttigieg MLC

### COVID supports

69. Can an individual apply for the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance Scheme more than once?
70. What was the average price of electricity in a household bill in NSW for 2020-2021?
- (a) By how much has it increased/decreased during the lockdown period of 23 June 2021 to 11 October 2021?
    - i. By how much has it increased?
  - (b) How many NSW consumers asked for extensions on energy bills for 2020-2021?
  - (c) How many NSW consumers asked for emergency grants and supports for energy bills for 2020-2021?
  - (d) How many NSW consumers were disconnected from their retail provider during 2020-2021?
  - (e) How many NSW consumers are currently paying the electricity reference price?

### Gas prices

71. What did the Government do to manage increasing gas wholesale market prices over the past 12 months?
72. If higher pricing persists due to tightening global markets and plant outages, has the Department modelled the impact on the viability of manufacturing businesses?
73. The ACCC gas inquiry report in January 2021 notes that there is a risk of gas supply shortfalls leading to higher prices and “that less progress has been made than we would expect, and that we find ourselves one year closer to a potential shortfall.”
- (a) What steps has the Government taken to mitigate this risk?
  - (b) What is the Government’s assessment of the likelihood of a potential shortfall?

### Smart meters

74. How is the Government promoting the uptake of smart meters to vulnerable and multicultural communities?

### Kurri Kurri Gas Plant

75. How will the Kurri Kurri Gas Plant affect the NSW Government’s plan to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030?

76. Will the NSW Government pay for the transmission lines required to connect the proposed gas plant to the existing network?

### **NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap**

77. Was the modelling work required for the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap undertaken by the Department or outsourced to an external party?
- (a) If the latter, how many contracts have been issued?
    - i. What is the total value of those contracts?
    - ii. Does the Department have the capacity in terms of staff and funding to implement the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap in-house?
78. Noting energy companies are making significant investments in upgrading transmission capacity, is the NSW Government assisting with these upgrades or will these costs be passed on to consumers?

### **Solar & Batteries**

79. Does the Department record the take-up of household batteries by geographic location or electorate?
- (a) If so, please provide this breakdown.
80. The Australian Energy Market Commission has ruled that distribution networks are now allowed to charge export fees to households with rooftop solar and batteries. Has the NSW Government undertaken any modelling to show the impact the introduction of export fees could have on the uptake of rooftop solar or the pattern of exports?
- (a) How much does the NSW Government expect that households with solar will pay on average to their retailers to export electricity to the grid?
81. The Clean Energy Regulator delivered a report on 15 September 2021 following numerous reports of consumer issues, defective installations, misuse of installer accreditator details and safety and quality concerns in the solar sector. What has the NSW Government done to ensure that NSW's regulatory frameworks for electric installations adequately cover the solar sector?
- (a) What body would a NSW consumer make a complaint to about a solar installation?
    - i. What is the budget allocation for this complaint handling body?
    - ii. Does this body have standalone staff or are staff in the Department required to manage it in addition to existing responsibilities?
  - (b) How does the NSW Government ensure that installers of solar technology are qualified?
    - i. Are spot inspections conducted?

### **Renewable Energy Zones**

82. Will the government review the *Just Terms Compensation Act* in recognition of the long-term financial consequences to the farming sector given community concern about use of agricultural land for essential renewable energy infrastructure?

### **Coal Innovation**

83. The NSW Government has signed an MOU with the Federal Government to provide joint funding for over \$2 billion for Coal Innovation Program initiatives. How much of the \$2 billion has been allocated?
84. What is the anticipated emissions reduction from initiatives funded from this \$2 billion allocation?

### **Bushfire preparedness and impacts**

85. AEMO's NEM Operations Review of the 2019-2020 summer found that large-scale and rooftop solar both suffered at the hands of enormous smoke plumes and subsequent forecasting errors. What advice has the NSW Government received on the summer readiness of NSW's energy supply for the 2021-2022 summer?
- (a) Given during the 2019-2020 bushfires there were threats to energy infrastructure, what actions has the NSW Government taken to guarantee the state's energy supply over the summer?
86. What was the impact of the 2019-2020 bushfires on the amount of carbon sequestered in NSW?
- (a) Is the NSW Government continuing to count carbon sequestered in NSW' forests even after it has become clear that is at risk due to increasing levels of catastrophic bushfires?
87. Has all the electricity infrastructure damaged in the 2019-2020 bushfires been replaced or repaired?
- (a) Were any replacements/repairs to fossil fuel infrastructure made with renewable energy infrastructure?

### **Lane Cove Test Station**

88. Has the NSW Government undertaken an evaluation of the implications of the announced closure of the Lane Cove Test Station?

89. Is the NSW Government aware of the risks arising from the closure of the Lane Cove Test Station in relation to energy security and the ability of domestic businesses to supply the domestic market with electrical equipment?
90. Does the NSW Government have any plans to explore ways to ensure that capability to undertake high current testing of electrical equipment is not lost to Australia once Plus ES closes the Lane Cove Test Station?

### **Federal Energy Policy**

91. Has the Minister written to the Federal Energy Minister encouraging the Federal Government to take an emissions reduction target for 2030 consistent with the NSW Government?
92. Has the Minister written to the Premier, either the former Premier or current Premier, requesting the emissions reduction target for 2030 be raised at National Cabinet or the preceding Council of Australian Governments?

### **Wild horse management**

93. Can the department provide the total number of entries in its Wild Horse Management Threatening and Aggressive Database?
  - (a) Can the department provide percentage breakdown of these entries in terms of those that are supportive of wild horse control and those who oppose wild horse control?

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

94. How much of the \$125.9 million commitment over 4 years announced in June 2019 to upgrade and maintain the fire trail network in NSW national parks, is allocated to the Illawarra in the 2021/22 budget?
  - (a) What hazard reduction activities have commenced or are planned in the Illawarra Escarpment in preparation for the 2021/22 bush fire season?

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

95. How much of the \$80 million committed to establishing the Great Southern Walk is allocated to the Illawarra Escarpment in 2021/22?
  - (a) What are the details of this work?
  - (b) When will this work commence?

96. How much of the \$149.5 million committed over four years announced by the Government in June 2019 for improving NSW National Parks is allocated to improving national parks and walking trails the Illawarra in this 2021/22 budget?
97. What are the details of the work the Government has completed to maintain, upgrade and improve walking trails and visitor facilities in the Illawarra this financial year?
98. Given that work is scheduled to commence on the Illawarra Escarpment Mountain Bike Network in 2022, what resources has the government allocated to fund environmental conservation work to support the new network this financial year including:
  - (a) resourcing for increased staffing such as Rangers?
  - (b) remediation of impacted areas from unsanctioned trails?
  - (c) environmental conservation activities to address the impact of invasive species such as weeds and feral deer?
  - (d) ongoing management of the environmental values of the Escarpment?

### Questions from Mr David Shoebridge MLC

#### **Kurri Kurri gas plant**

99. Where is the economic justification of the project?
100. During recent blackouts, Tomago Aluminium chose to switch off rather than use the expensive power that could be provided by the Colongra power station (gas-fired). Has the government sought commitment from industry that they will use the power generated by the Kurri gas peaking plant?
101. Will the Kurri Kurri power station be 100% green hydrogen ready so that it fits within net zero targets?
102. Can the Govt commit to Kurri Kurri power station running on 100% green hydrogen ASAP to align with net zero targets, IEA report and UN climate report?
103. What modelling has the government undertaken that shows the operation of the Kurri Kurri power station does push emissions over targeted reductions?
104. Given that the Kurri gas/diesel plant is only expected to run for 6-7 hours, before taking a full day to recharge, what was the justification for declaring this project Critical State Significant when batteries would do a much better job at providing reliable power?
105. Has there been an economic feasibility study demonstrating that the plant will be able to compete with faster, cheaper batteries?

106. How can this project be put up for approval when the gas pipeline that it requires to be in operation is not included in the funding announcement or Environmental Impact Statement process?
107. Energy and financial analysts predict that the entire project could cost over a billion dollars. Given Australia's \$1 trillion national debt, how can this public expenditure be justified?

### **Singleton Biomass plant**

108. Regarding the recent proposal to transition the Redbank power plant at Singleton to biomass which is high emissions and environmentally destructive, does NSW have a plan to ensure that the closure of coal fired power stations doesn't lead to a proliferation of these kinds of damaging alternative proposals?

### **Community scale batteries:**

109. How much funding has the government provided (and/or committed) to fund trials and help encourage/develop community-scale battery projects?
110. What steps has the government taken to reduce/remove regulatory barriers for the smooth implementation of projects?

### **EPA prosecutions**

111. We are aware of a number of well documented cases of hazardous waste being illegally dumped on private land and properties in the Western Suburbs in 2019 and 2020 which were reported to the EPA, can you advise why these were not prosecuted?
112. What percentage of hazardous waste matters referred to the EPA each year are investigated? Of this how many are prosecuted? How many of these prosecutions are successful?
113. How many prosecutions are currently on foot against Forestry Corporation and Forestry Corporation contractors?

### **55 Coonara Avenue, West Pennant Hills**

114. Given that there are large areas of critically endangered ecological communities of Blue Gum High Forest and Sydney Turpentine Ironbark Forest on the Mirvac site at 55 Coonara Ave, West Pennant Hills, why didn't your department insist on getting a survey of the trees within the development area, when it now turns out there are over 450 trees within the demolition footprint alone?



## **Clean Air Strategy**

115. Can the Minister explain how the health of Sydney residents will be protected when the 4 waste incinerators currently under consideration for construction in the Sydney basin burn more than 1.5 million tonnes of waste in the Sydney basin per year?
116. Can the Minister confirm what air quality modelling has been done to verify this?

## **Question from RE-Alliance**

117. What is the timeline for community engagement in these regions? What engagement strategy is being adopted? What resources are being deployed to complete this crucial work?
118. With the high number of solar and wind projects being planned and proposed in the REZ, community volunteers are finding themselves stretched and overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of time required to give due consideration to significant changes happening around them. This burden has begun to emerge as a critical issue and risk for small communities who lack the resources and time to adequately respond with cohesive community responses for developers. How will the Government ensure small local towns have support to pull together adequate and representative responses to developments happening all around them?
119. How will the Government ensure benefits are shared with neighbouring properties? What will the Government do to ensure neighbours of host landholders don't have to cover the costs of increased insurance premiums if other mitigation measures do not work to keep insurance costs down?
120. The indicative merit criteria outlined in the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap includes eligibility criteria for social impacts, local economic benefits, and compatibility with farming. Given the importance of earning social licence in host REZ regions, what weighting is going to be given to each of these criteria in the finalised merit criteria?
121. The government recently introduced \$3 Billion in incentives to drive a new hydrogen industry in NSW. Will you confirm if the \$3 Billion in incentives will support the state's net-zero goals by only funding hydrogen made from renewable energy sources?