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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 606

MONDAY 18 OCTOBER 2021

(The Questions and Answers Paper published on Monday to Friday of each week will contain, by number and title, all questions to which answers have been received the previous day and any new questions asked that day. Consequently, the full text of any question will be printed only twice: when notice is given; and, when answered.)

Notice given on date shown.

Publication of Questions	Answer to be lodged by
Q & A No. 593 (Including Question Nos 7603 to 7621)	18 October 2021
Q & A No. 594 (Including Question Nos 7622 to 7626)	19 October 2021
Q & A No. 595 (Including Question Nos 7627 to 7634)	20 October 2021
Q & A No. 596 (Including Question Nos 7636 to 7636)	21 October 2021
Q & A No. 597 (Including Question Nos 7637 to 7638)	22 October 2021
Q & A No. 598 (Including Question Nos 7639 to 7640)	26 October 2021
Q & A No. 599 (Including Question Nos 7641 to 7655)	28 October 2021
Q & A No. 600 (Including Question Nos 7656 to 7656)	29 October 2021
Q & A No. 601 (Including Question Nos 7657 to 7663)	1 November 2021
Q & A No. 602 (Including Question Nos 7664 to 7672)	2 November 2021
Q & A No. 603 (Including Question Nos 7673 to 7675)	3 November 2021
Q & A No. 604 (Including Question Nos 7676 to 7682)	4 November 2021
Q & A No. 605 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 606 (Including Question Nos 7683 to 7684)	8 November 2021

27 SEPTEMBER 2021

(Paper No. 593)

* 7603 EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING—COOLER SCHOOLS PROGRAM—The Hon. Mark Banasiak to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning—

(1) Since the Cooler Schools program announced ahead of the election in 2018, only 4,300 out of 156,000 learning spaces have had air conditioning installed. In the lead up to summer and ventilation requirements for a safe return to school:

(a) Will the remaining units be installed in time?

(i) If so, how does the Minister plan to achieve this, when little progress has been made since 2018?

(b) How much of the \$500 million assigned to this program has been spent?

Answer—

(1)

(a) All eligible schools under the five-year Cooler Classroom Program will be completed by 30 June 2023. Information about the Program is available via the School Infrastructure NSW website at www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au.

(b) As at 31 August 2021, a total of \$344 million has been spent under the Program.

* 7604 TRANSPORT AND ROADS—BOAT AND CARAVAN OWNERS—The Hon. Mark Banasiak to ask the Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts representing the Minister for Transport and Roads—

(1) Boat and caravan owners within Local Government Areas (LGA) of concern have been unable to utilise their boats, boat trailers and caravans all of which they pay registration for. They have been unable to do so for up to 13 weeks to date. Given they are obliged to pay registration fees by government regulation to utilise such vehicles and have been restricted from doing so by subsequent government regulation (COVID-19 health orders):

(a) Will the Minister commit to either:

(i) Rebates on registration for caravans, boats and boat trailers for owners within an LGA of concern equivalent to the time period of restriction?

(ii) Extension of registration for caravans, boats, and boat trailers for owners within an LGA of concern equivalent to the time period of restriction?

Answer—

I am advised:

In 2018, the NSW Government recognised that caravans are generally used less than cars. To assist those who enjoy caravanning, the NSW Government substantially reduced the motor vehicle tax for privately registered caravans and camper trailers by 40 per cent. This provided a saving of up to \$471 on the annual cost of registering a caravan in NSW.

Customers with caravans and boats that are not being used also have the option of cancelling their registration and applying to Service NSW for a refund of their unused registration.

While there are no current plans to waive or discount vehicle registration fees, both the NSW and Australian governments have announced a range of measures to support businesses and members of the community experiencing financial difficulties as a result of the current Covid-19 situation.

The NSW Government is committed to supporting the people of NSW and will continue to look at ways to ease the burden on households.

* 7605 POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES—BACKLOG OF FIREARM LICENCE APPLICATIONS—The Hon. Robert Borsak to ask the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—

- (1) Regarding a reply to a question in Budget Estimates on 12 March 2021, the Minister confirmed there were 416 and 803 applications for Internal Review received by the NSW Firearms Registry in 2019 and 2020 respectively. Given the 93 per cent increase in the number of Internal Review requests received in the space of just 12 months:
 - (a) What is the Commander of the Firearms Registry doing to reduce the backlog of Internal Reviews?
 - (b) Will the 10 additional staff seconded to reduce the backlog of firearm licence applications be retained to reduce the backlog of Internal Reviews applications?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1)
 - (a) The NSW Firearms Registry is undergoing a re-alignment of its Command structure, and this forms part of a broader range of business improvement reforms currently being undertaken by the Command. These reforms have resulted in the elimination of historical firearms related renewal applications, and a significant reduction in historical new firearms related applications. It is anticipated that the business improvement reforms, which also include additional resources being allocated to undertaking internal reviews, will significantly reduce the backlog of these reviews, during the first quarter of 2022.
 - (b) The NSW Firearms Registry structural realignment will double the number of staff undertaking internal firearms related reviews, which will greatly assist with reducing the internal review backlog during the first quarter of 2022.

* 7606 WATER, PROPERTY AND HOUSING—SOUTHERN CROSS COMMUNITY HOUSING—The Hon. Rose Jackson to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Water, Property and Housing—

- (1) Does the Government monitor vacancy rates in Community Housing Providers?
- (2) How many properties in Southern Cross Community Housing have been vacant in the Shoalhaven?
 - (a) Why are these properties vacant?
- (3) How much does the Government pay Southern Cross Community Housing each year?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1-2) Community housing providers report on vacancies as part of their regulatory reporting which is administered by the Registrar of Community Housing. These questions should be referred to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.
- (3) Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) provides no recurrent funding to Southern Cross Community Housing to manage LAHC-owned properties.

* 7607 CUSTOMER SERVICE—VACCINATION DATA—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Finance and Small Business representing the Minister for Customer Service, and Minister for Digital—

- (1) Has Service NSW received data on the COVID-19 vaccination status of individual New South Wales residents, shared by the Federal Government?
 - (a) If so, how many residents have been affected?
 - (b) Which Federal Government agency provided the data?
 - (i) On which dates?
 - (c) How has Service NSW stored the data?

- (i) What security measures have been put in place?
- (2) Has Service NSW received the vaccination status of residents who have completed the Australian Immunisation Register 'Ceasing Correspondence and Release of Information' form?
- (a) What are the details?
- (b) How can Service NSW access the data, given that third party access is prohibited under Federal law?
- (3) In the creation of New South Wales Vaccine Passports:
- (a) How will the system verify that the vaccination certificate is held by the same individual identified on the Service NSW system?
- (b) What security measures are in place to guard against vaccine certificate forgery?
- (c) When does the Minister expect the New South Wales Vaccine Passport ID Card system to commence?
- (d) What do people do without a phone?
- (i) For these people, how do shops and other venues accurately verify vaccination status?

Answer—

- (1) COVID-19 Vaccine Certificate information is held by Services Australia on the Australian Immunisation Register that it maintains with input from health providers for the Commonwealth Department of Health.
- Service NSW has commenced an internal Pilot on Thursday 7 October 2021. During the pilot, participants can consent to Services Australia sharing their vaccination status and COVID-19 digital certificate with Service NSW through the Service NSW App using the Medicare Plus App. The COVID-19 digital certificate will be added as a credential to the individuals device.
- (a) As of 8 October, 70 participants have agreed to participate in the pilot and consented to share and display their COVID-19 digital certificate in the Service NSW App.
- (b) Services Australia
- (i) From 7 October
- (c) The COVID-19 digital certificate is stored on the person's device. Service NSW stores an encrypted token.
- (i) Service NSW takes reasonable security measures to protect all personal information we hold from loss, unauthorised access, use, modification, disclosure or other misuse – this includes the Service NSW app. Service NSW ensures that personal information is stored securely, not kept longer than necessary, and disposed of appropriately. Strong data encryption mechanisms are also used to protect personal information during data transmission and storage.
- (2) Australian Immunisation Register is responsible for managing internal governance and compliance with directions by citizens in relation to the disclosure of their vaccination status. Services Australia will only disclose vaccination status information to Service NSW with the consent of a citizen.
- (a) N/A
- (b) N/A. Please refer to our response to Q2.
- (3)
- (a) Service NSW will check the personal details on the COVID-19 digital certificate with the details on the MyServiceNSW Account to confirm the certificate is being shared with the correct account.
- (b) Service NSW has implemented a range of fraud controls, including a hologram on the certificate and a QR code which can be scanned to verify that a certificate is valid.

- (c) A customer may share their COVID-19 digital certificate with the Service NSW app from 15 October 2021.
- (d) People without a phone may carry their paper certificates as proof of vaccination.
 - (i) Businesses will sight the paper certificate as proof of vaccination

People may print their immunisation history statement using their MyGov account or their Medicare App. They may also call Australian Immunisation Register and ask for a copy of their immunisation history statement or COVID-19 digital certificate to be sent to their postal address.

* 7608 EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning—

- (1) Is the Department of Education denying its staff access to accrued leave entitlements?
 - (a) If so, what are the details?
- (2) What legal advice has the Minister received about the management practice in (1) above?
- (3) Given the impact of forced workplace vaccinations, how is the Department dealing with:
 - (a) Current staff shortages for teachers?
 - (i) What are the details?
 - (b) Current staff shortages for school support staff?
 - (i) What are the details?
 - (c) Impending staff shortages for teachers?
 - (i) What are the details?
 - (d) Impending staff shortages for school support staff?
 - (i) What are the details?

Answer—

The Department is discharging its responsibilities in compliance with the NSW Public Health Order regarding mandatory vaccination of school staff and its industrial obligations including employee entitlements.

As outlined in the Teacher's Handbook, with regards to extended leave, if the period for which leave has been applied is not convenient to the school because of reasons such as staffing difficulties, educational programs and student needs, then a mutually convenient time may be negotiated between the principal and the teacher.

The Department is assessing where vaccination rates may impact teacher availability across the state in order to inform decisions and support. Advice and guidance is provided to schools directly to manage teacher staffing and availability, should this be needed.

* 7609 EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING—PARENTAL CONSENT—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning—

- (1) Further to the Minister's answer to Question on Notice 7364:
 - (a) Will parental consent be required in Government schools for students to study the GSA Connect material on pansexuality, transgender, lesbianism, bisexuality, intersex and asexuality?
 - (i) At what age will parental consent be required?

Answer—

Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) material is not used as a mandatory component of the curriculum. Schools maintain communication with parents and carers related to teaching and learning programs, visiting speakers and other school activities for students of all ages and stages.

* 7610 EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING—REAL SCENARIOS OF FARMERS AND MINERS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning—

- (1) Further to the Minister's answer to Question on Notice 7300:
 - (a) Why do the "real scenarios" of family violence single out farmers and miners as perpetrators?
 - (b) Does the Department of Education believe that only farmers and miners reflect real scenarios of family violence in New South Wales?
 - (i) If not, why have farmers and miners been used in the "real scenarios" when there was no need to base the case studies on any particular industry or occupation?
- (2) Will the Minister now apologise to the peak associations in New South Wales representing farmers and miners?

Answer—

The premise of this question is false and misleading.

All staff have a responsibility to recognise and respond to safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns for children and young people from a range of backgrounds, including those who live in regional, rural and remote communities.

The Annual Child Protection Training Update looks at real scenarios based on previous experiences of our workforce, de-identified, to provide staff with practical learning and preparation to enhance support of children and young people.

The content is updated each year in response to guidance from the workforce and relevant research and recommendations. The focus of the 2021 training update is in response to findings and recommendations for the Department of Education from the NSW Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2015-17 and recommendations from the Special Commission of Inquiry into the Drug 'Ice'.

* 7611 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT—NSW BIODIVERSITY SCHEMES—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts representing the Minister for Energy and Environment—

- (1) Under NSW Biodiversity Schemes:
 - (a) Why are scrubland grasses on private properties only allowed to be managed and reduced in length by burning off, creating carbon emissions, air pollution and fire hazard risks?
 - (b) Why is reducing these grasses to a blackened, charcoal, ugly landscape regarded as sound environmentalism?
 - (c) What contribution do these practices make to air pollution in New South Wales, the Sydney basin in particular?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1)
 - (a-b) These questions should be referred to the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales, the Hon. Adam Marshall MP, as these are matters managed under the Land Management (Native Vegetation) Code 2018.
 - (c) The annual contribution of smoke from bushfires, hazard reduction and ecological burns to air pollution in NSW and the Sydney basin varies from year to year depending on multiple factors including the weather and the number, extent and location of the fires. Scrubland grasses burning would contribute only a very small amount of this total.

* 7612 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT—NSW ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND SCIENCE SPOKES WOMAN COMMITTEE—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Special Minister of State, and Minister for the Public Service and Employee Relations, Aboriginal Affairs, and the Arts representing the Minister for Energy and Environment—

- (1) What is the NSW Environment, Energy and Science Spokes Woman Committee?
 - (a) Who is on it?
 - (b) What does it do?
- (2) Does someone need to be born biologically female to be on the Committee or can men join too?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) The Environment, Energy and Science Spokeswomen's Committee is an employee-led group that acts to promote gender equity in the Department of Planning, Industry, and Environment.
 - (a) The Committee comprises 15 employees from across the Environment, Energy and Science Group.
 - (b) The Committee advocates for Departmental policies and practices that support gender equity, promote awareness of concerns from women, run events, training and awards, and act as an impartial point of contact for staff on gender equity issues.
- (2) No, you do not need to be born biologically female to be a member of the Committee.

* 7613 HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH—MANDATORY WORKPLACE VACCINATIONS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Health and Medical Research—

- (1) Has NSW Health conducted a survey of its employees concerning the introduction of mandatory workplace vaccinations?
 - (a) What do the survey results show?
 - (b) What percentage of the following groups, have said they do not plan to be COVID-vaccinated:
 - (i) Nurses?
 - (ii) Paramedics?
 - (iii) Other NSW Health staff?

Answer—

- (1) No.

* 7614 HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH—NSW HEALTH STAFF—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Health and Medical Research—

- (1) Is NSW Health denying its staff access to accrued leave entitlements?
 - (a) If so, what are the details?
- (2) What legal advice has the Minister received about the management practice in (1) above?
- (3) Given the impact of forced workplace vaccinations:
 - (a) How is NSW Health dealing with current and impending staff shortages?

Answer—

- (1-2) No.
- (3) NSW Health has been closely monitoring the vaccination rates of staff to ensure skilled workforce are available to deliver all clinical services. Health agencies have local strategies in place to monitor and ensure workforce supply and demand factors are aligned.

* 7615 PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACES—NSW BIODIVERSITY SCHEMES—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces—

- (1) Under NSW Biodiversity Schemes:
- (a) Why are scrubland grasses on private properties only allowed to be managed and reduced in length by burning off, creating carbon emissions, air pollution and fire hazard risks?
 - (b) Why is reducing these grasses to a blackened, charcoal, ugly landscape regarded as sound environmentalism?
 - (c) What contribution do these practices make to air pollution in New South Wales, the Sydney basin in particular?

Answer—

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Treasurer and Minister for Energy and Environment.

* 7617 POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES—LUNAR PARK GHOST TRAIN FIRE—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—

- (1) Has the NSW Police paid a reward to anyone for information about the 1979 Lunar Park Ghost Train fire?
- (a) When will the reward availability end?
- (2) Has the NSW Police identified any reason for reopening its investigation into the fire?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) The NSW Police Force does not comment on whether Government rewards are paid to any person(s) in relation to a specific investigation.
- (a) NSW Government rewards do not have an expiry date.
- (2) In April 2021, the NSW Police Force was requested by the State Coroner to conduct a formal review of the evidence surrounding the fire, following an application by a person with sufficient legal standing and pursuant to Section 83 of the Coroners Act 2009. The NSW Police Force review is continuing, and as such, it would be inappropriate for me as Minister, to make any further comment while the review takes place.

I do however encourage anyone who has information to offer in relation to the fire, to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000, or via their website: www.crimestoppers.com.au

* 7618 POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES—MANDATORY WORKPLACE VACCINATIONS—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—

- (1) Has the NSW Police conducted a survey of its employees concerning the introduction of mandatory workplace vaccinations?
- (a) What do the survey results show?
 - (b) What percentage of police have said they do not plan to be COVID-vaccinated?

Answer—

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force has not conducted an employee survey concerning the directive that members of the NSW Police Force must be vaccinated for COVID-19.

* 7619 POLICE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES—NSW POLICE STAFF—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans representing the Minister for Police and Emergency Services—

- (1) Is NSW Police denying its staff access to accrued leave entitlements?
 - (a) If so, what are the details?
- (2) What legal advice has the Minister received about the management practice in (1) above?
- (3) Given the impact of forced workplace vaccinations, how is the NSW Police dealing with:
 - (a) Current staff shortages?
 - (i) What are the details?
 - (b) Impending staff shortages?
 - (i) What are the details?

Answer—

I am advised:

The NSW Police Force does not deny its members access to their accrued leave entitlements, and no staff shortages have been identified, or have occurred to date, as a consequence of the directive that members of the NSW Police Force must be vaccinated for COVID-19.

* 7620 SPORT, MULTICULTURALISM, SENIORS AND VETERANS—CRICKET NSW VACCINATION—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans—

- (1) What advice has the Government provided to Cricket NSW about COVID-safe requirements for its 2021/22 season?
- (2) Given that park cricket is played outdoors in summer as a non-contact sport, and that both vaccinated and unvaccinated people can carry the COVID-19 virus:
 - (a) What requirement is there for the COVID-vaccination of the:
 - (i) Players?
 - (ii) Officials?
 - (iii) Spectators?
 - (b) At what age would any COVID-vaccination requirement commence?
- (3) Why would a vaccination requirement for park cricket be enforced when the Australian and Indian national teams are currently playing an ODI series with some unvaccinated players?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) The Office of Sport has provided all recognised State Sporting Organisations including Cricket NSW with regular updates in relation to COVID-19 public health requirements and advice.
- (2-3) The NSW Government has released its roadmap for easing COVID-19 restrictions. The Monday after the 80% double vaccination target is reached, community sport is open for staff, spectators and participants under the age of 16, and people over the age of 16 who are fully vaccinated.

From 1 December 2021, community sport will be permitted for all staff, spectators and players.

* 7621 AGRICULTURE AND WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES—AGRICULTURAL WORKFORCE PLAN—The Hon. Rod Roberts to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales—

- (1) On 2 September 2021 Question on Notice 7358 was asked and a response was received on 23 September 2021. In relation to that response:
 - (a) What are the actions the Minister refers to in the answer to question (1) (a) (i)?

(b) When will the Minister have an answer to question (2)?

Answer—

(1)

- (a) The NSW Government has taken steps to address the immediate labour needs of the primary industries during the COVID-19 pandemic, including:
- Securing \$9.1 million in funding to provide a 50 per cent subsidy for the cost of quarantine for agriculture workers arriving under the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) programs
 - Facilitating flow of workers through PALM by:
 - securing quarantine beds
 - providing resources to support, for example, flights, arrivals, health requirements
 - facilitating approval of applications
 - influencing improvements to the system
 - Driving development and implementation of the National Agriculture Workers Code to support timely flow of workers across borders and within NSW
 - Establishing sector-specific COVID-19 working groups to identify and address challenges to support business continuity
 - Increasing awareness about work opportunities across primary industries in regionally targeted media campaigns
 - Providing fee free training under the NSW Smart and Skilled and AgSkilled 2.0 programs
 - Launching Help Harvest NSW, a web portal to promote employment opportunities across NSW primary industries
 - Launching the Regional NSW Gap Year campaign to connect 17-24 year olds who have just finished school or university, to regional jobs, including primary industries
 - Establishing Regional Skills Relocation Grants of up to \$10,000 for businesses operating in NSW regional eligible industries, to help relocate eligible skilled workers from metropolitan areas to Regional NSW
 - Working across government to resolve worker mobility issues, including permits for local ride-sharing.
- (b) I have considered the NSW Farmer's Association 10-point Plan and note a number of actions have already been implemented by the NSW Government to support access to and availability of agricultural labour as referred to above.

18 OCTOBER 2021

(Paper No. 606)

7683 WATER, PROPERTY AND HOUSING—LAND SALES BY VENDOR—The Hon. Daniel Mookhey to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Water, Property and Housing—

- (1) Please update the data provided in LC Question on Notice 3819 (answer published in Questions & Answers Paper No. 427) in regards to:
- (a) The totals for state-owned land sold by the Government to non-state government purchasers for the following financial years:
- (i) 2020-21?
 - (ii) 2021-22 (Projected)?

- (b) Provide a breakdown of the yearly total by every Government vendor (Department, Agency, or other body) - including for each vendor, both the dollar value, and the total number of properties sold for the following financial years:
 - (i) 2020-21?
 - (ii) 2021-22 (Projected)?

7684 PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACES—CALD STAFF NETWORK—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning representing the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, and Minister for Transport and Roads—

- (1) When was the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) CALD Staff Network launched?
 - (a) Why was it needed?
- (2) Which DPIE employees are not allowed to join the CALD Network?
 - (a) Why not?
- (3) What are the other staff networks and support groups operating at DPIE?
- (4) Why does DPIE need so many staff support networks?
 - (a) Is it because DPIE is a bad and unsupportive place to work?

David Blunt
Clerk of the Parliament