



## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

2019-20-21

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 647

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 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.

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<b>Publication of Questions</b>	<b>Answer to be lodged by</b>
Q & A No. 632 (Including Question Nos 7818 to 7821)	14 December 2021
Q & A No. 633 (Including Question Nos 7822 to 7830)	15 December 2021
Q & A No. 634 (Including Question Nos 7831 to 7839)	16 December 2021
Q & A No. 635 (Including Question Nos 7840 to 7843)	17 December 2021
Q & A No. 636 (Including Question Nos 7844 to 7908)	20 December 2021
Q & A No. 637 (Including Question Nos 7909 to 7913)	21 December 2021
Q & A No. 638 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 639 (Including Question Nos 7914 to 7917)	23 December 2021
Q & A No. 640 (Including Question Nos 7918 to 7926)	24 December 2021
Q & A No. 641 (Including Question Nos 7927 to 7957)	27 December 2021
Q & A No. 642 (Including Question Nos 7958 to 7959)	28 December 2021
Q & A No. 643 (Including Question Nos 7960 to 7968)	29 December 2021
Q & A No. 644 (Including Question Nos 7969 to 7978)	30 December 2021
Q & A No. 645 (Including Question Nos 7979 to 7983)	31 December 2021
Q & A No. 646 (Including Question Nos 7984 to 7987)	3 January 2022
Q & A No. 647 (Including Question Nos 7988 to 7992)	4 January 2022

**23 NOVEMBER 2021**

(Paper No. 632)

\* 7818 AGRICULTURE AND WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES—FARM HARVEST—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales—

- (1) When did the 55,000 Pacific Islander workers brought in for the farm harvest arrive in New South Wales?
- (2) Were these workers double COVID-19 vaccinated?
  - (a) What proof is there of this status?

Answer—

- (1) Please refer to QoN 7820 from the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional NSW and Minister for Regional Transport and Roads.

\* 7819 HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH—FARM HARVEST—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Health and Medical Research—

- (1) When did the 55,000 Pacific Islander workers brought in for the farm harvest arrive in New South Wales?
- (2) Were these workers double COVID-19 vaccinated?
  - (a) What proof is there of this status?

Answer—

This is a matter for the Deputy Premier.

\* 7820 REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES—FARM HARVEST—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning representing the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, and Minister for Regional New South Wales—

- (1) When did the 55,000 Pacific Islander workers brought in for the farm harvest arrive in New South Wales?
- (2) Were these workers double COVID-19 vaccinated?
  - (a) What proof is there of this status?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) The Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) programs are administered by the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government has made public statements that there are 55,000 Pacific Islander workers seeking employment.

As of 29 November 2021, 2,733 agricultural workers have arrived in NSW under these programs from participating Pacific countries. There are an additional 325 workers scheduled for arrival in December. The NSW Government has approved and supported all applications submitted for workers into NSW.

- (2) All workers entering NSW under the PALM must be double vaccinated before entry into the State is permitted. The second dose of a COVID-19 vaccination must have been administered at least seven days prior to entry into NSW.

With the emergence of the Omicron strain, NSW implemented a new Public Health Order that requires any international arrival to self-isolate for 72 hours. NSW has facilitated and funded accommodation in Sydney for the flights arriving 7, 8 and 9 December 2021.

- (a) The vaccination history of each worker is provided to the Approved Employer before departure by the Labour Sending Unit in their country. The workers are then required to present their COVID-19 vaccination certification to the airline to board their flight to NSW.

\* 7821 WATER, PROPERTY AND HOUSING—WATER NSW STRATEGIES—The Hon. Rose Jackson to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Water, Property and Housing—

- (1) What is the status of Water NSW's Draft Climate Change Adaptation Strategy?
  - (a) Has it been released?
    - (i) If not, why not
  - (b) What is the timeline for its release?
  - (c) Why was it delayed?
- (2) Why has the final discussion paper for a Biodiversity Offset Strategy been delayed?
  - (a) What date will this be released?
  - (b) Why has it been delayed?
  - (c) Will the Minister release the draft that has been internally circulated?

Answer—

- (1) The strategy is scheduled to be completed before the end of FY22.
- (2) This is a question for the Minister for the Environment.

## 9 DECEMBER 2021

(Paper No. 644)

\* 7972 PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACES—DPIE WORKPLACE VACCINATION POLICY—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) Why has the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) introduced a forced workplace vaccination policy for all staff?
- (2) Prior to the policy's introduction:
  - (a) What workplace risk assessment took place?
  - (b) What employee consultation took place?
- (3) How many DPIE staff:
  - (a) Are under investigation for non-compliance with the policy?
  - (b) Have resigned due to the policy?
  - (c) Have been fired for non-compliance with the policy?
- (4) Why did the DPIE Secretary tell colleagues that "this vaccine mandate is a good way of getting rid of the staff we don't like politically"?
  - (a) Is this a health or political issue for DPIE?

Answer—

I am advised:

- (1) The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) is completing the consultation process and has not at this stage introduced a workplace COVID-19 vaccination policy.
- (2) In developing a draft workplace vaccination policy (the draft policy), I can advise the following:

- (a) DPIE's Crisis Management Team has worked with each business group to understand COVID-19 exposure factors and review existing COVID-19 Work Health and Safety (WHS) risk assessments to identify risk and controls associated with each work group.

WHS risk assessments and workforce segmentation were undertaken and approved by business groups in consultation with leaders, Health and Safety Committee members, Health and Safety Representatives, and workers.

- (b) DPIE has consulted with business groups across the department undertaken a staff sentiment survey, conducted workplace live sessions that were broadcasted to all staff, and consulted directly with staff on the draft policy which included a two week period in which over 600 submissions were received.

In addition to the regular meetings that have taken place with the unions on COVID-19 during the pandemic, there have also been dedicated meetings specifically in relation to the draft policy.

- (3) Not applicable - DPIE has not yet adopted a workplace COVID-19 vaccination policy.  
 (4) I have been advised categorically that the Secretary did not make the alleged statement.

Any complaint that any public servant may have acted contrary to the Ethical Framework for the Government Sector should refer the matter to the Public Service Commission or NSW Ombudsman.

- (a) DPIE prioritises the work health, safety and wellbeing of all of its employees.

#### 14 DECEMBER 2021

(Paper No. 647)

7988 EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING—BLUE HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL—The Hon. Mark Latham to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning—

- (1) Does the Minister recall the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) report on the remarkable success of Blue Haven Public School in lifting student results from a systematic program of Explicit Instruction?  
 (2) Will the Minister now ask CESE to conduct a follow-up review of the school, responding to reports from teachers that under new school leadership there has been a politically motivated, fad-based retreat from Explicit Instruction teaching?  
 (3) Why would the Principal of Blue Haven Public School abandon the classroom pedagogy that had worked so well for the school and its students?

7989 PREMIER—VACCINE PASSPORTS—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 Premier—

- (1) Given that the Government is abolishing its vaccine passports on December 15, is it now safe for the vaccinated and unvaccinated to sit together in cafes, pubs and restaurants in New South Wales?  
 (a) If so, why is the Government introducing forced workplace vaccination mandates in agencies such as the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) and the Department of Customer Service, meaning it is not safe for the vaccinated and unvaccinated to sit together in Government offices?  
 (2) What action is the Premier taking to end this inconsistency?

7990 AGRICULTURE AND WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES—REGIONAL STRATEGIC WEED MANAGEMENT PLANS—The Hon. Mick Veitch to ask the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women representing the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales—

- (1) For each of the 11 Regional Weed Committees, please indicate which have completed or not completed a mid-term review of their Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan?  
 (a) Will the mid-term review for each committee be made public?

- (i) If so, when?
  - (2) For each of the 11 Regional Weed Committees:
    - (a) Please indicate if they will complete a full review of their plan by the end of 2022?
    - (b) Please indicate which have completed or not completed a Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Improvement (MERI) Framework report to monitor the progress of their Regional Strategic Weed Management Plans?
- 7991 REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES—TRAVEL FOR GRANTS—The Hon. Mick Veitch to ask the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning representing the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, and Minister for Regional New South Wales—
- (1) Please provide the following information for the Stronger Country Community Fund:
    - (a) How much was allocated for and spent on Departmental staff's:
      - (i) Travel?
      - (ii) Accommodation?
      - (iii) Meals?
    - (2) Please provide the following information for the Regional Communities Development Fund:
      - (a) How much was allocated for and spent on Departmental staff's:
        - (i) Travel?
        - (ii) Accommodation?
        - (iii) Meals?
      - (3) Please provide the following information for the Drought Stimulus Package:
        - (a) How much was allocated for and spent on Departmental staff's:
          - (i) Travel?
          - (ii) Accommodation?
          - (iii) Meals?

7992 PREMIER—HON BRAD HAZZARD MP—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 Premier—

    - (1) Is the Premier aware that the Minister for Health and Medical Research shook hands with the infected Hon Adam Marshall MP in front of witnesses from the Pharmacy Guild at the National Party Budget Dinner in Parliament House on 22 June and then arranged for health officials to classify himself only as a Casual Contact of Minister Marshall, thereby avoiding two weeks of isolation?
      - (a) What discussions has the Premier had with Minister Marshall to establish the extent of the Hazzard impropriety?
    - (2) How can the Hon Brad Hazzard MP remain as Health Minister in this Government?

David Blunt  
Clerk of the Parliament

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales