

21 JUNE 2001

(GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 2)

PORTFOLIO

MINERAL RESOURCES AND FISHERIES

QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

1. Mr Gay asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Investment income is expected to decrease from \$270,000 in 2000/2001 to \$80,000 in 2001/2002 (Budget Paper No 3, vol 2, p 13-9). Can you account for the difference?

Answer:

Investment income relates to interest earned on the Department's cash balance. The decrease in the new financial year relates to a forecast reduction in cash balances and a conservative estimate of the expected interest rate.

2. Mr Gay asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

How many claims and applications for payment have yet to be assessed by the Coal Compensation Board?

Answer:

As at 30 June 2001 the Coal Compensation Board has assessed 97.6% of its total workload of 28,261 claims under the Compensation Scheme. The Board has also assessed 91.5% of the 1354 applications for compensation lodged under the Reacquisition Scheme.

3. Dr Chesterfield-Evans asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Please provide access to the database of derelict mines?

Answer:

The Department currently has 560 derelict mines on its abandoned mines database. Most have had a preliminary health and safety assessment. Using this information, the inter-agency Derelict Mines Committee assesses risk at derelict mines based on the following criteria; public safety, pollution, erosion and visual impact. Rehabilitation works are undertaken based on these risks with public safety being the foremost concern, followed by offsite environmental impacts.

The environmental consultant group, URS Australia, has been commissioned to provide an objective strategy to assess risks and set rehabilitation priorities for derelict mines based on information contained in the database.

The draft strategy is to be provided to the Derelict Mines Committee for review and comment later this year. Additional information will be required for input into the database to ensure the successful implementation of the strategy. This will be gained through site inspections by field officers over the following year.

Rehabilitation works are undertaken through the Derelict Mined Lands Rehabilitation Program, administered by the Department of Mineral Resources. Under the previous Coalition Government, program funding stood at \$125,000 per year. This figure has been increased to \$1.6 million per annum under this Government. Through the Environment Trust, the Government has also approved grants totalling \$2.8 million for rehabilitating a further 4 derelict mine sites.

4. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

(Relevant area in Hansard: p14)

Please provide a list of all items of expenditure from the saltwater trust to date.

Answer:

The following expenditure from the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust was approved in respect of the 2000/2001 financial year:

- (1) Information and advisory - angler and public education
- (2) Administration within the 10% guarantee.
- (3) Recreational fishing areas selection process.
- (4) Research and Monitoring including recreational fishing creel surveys, recreational fishery assessments and the Gamefish tagging program.
- (5) Compliance - coastal fisheries officers for recreational angling and an expansion of the Fishcare Volunteer program.
- (6) Management - support, consultation with and information service for key recreational fishing groups, and consultation with anglers through their expenditure committee.
- (7) Establishment of an angler database for future research purposes.
- (8) Establishment - one off costs for implementation of the general licence.

More detailed information will be provided in the next NSW Fisheries Annual Report.

5. Dr Chesterfield-Evans asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

(Relevant area in Hansard: p 18)

How much is it costing NSW Fisheries to run the public consultations processes concerning the restructure of the commercial coastal and estuarine fisheries in New South Wales, by region?

Answer:

Costings, by region, for this program are not available.

6. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

(Relevant area in Hansard: pp23-24)

- (1) How much revenue has been collected in respect of restricted registered fish receivers in the 2000-2001 financial year?
- (2) Have fees been collected, under an anomaly in the legislation, from commercial fishers that they did not have to pay?
- (3) Will you consider returning any monies that did not have to be paid?

Answer:

- (1) \$54,000
- (2) NSW Fisheries have advised they are not aware of an anomaly under legislation whereby commercial fishers are paying a fee they do not have to pay.
- (3) Not applicable.

7. Dr Chesterfield-Evans asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) What expenses were incurred by NSW Fisheries in managing and facilitating the stocking of native and introduced fish into waterways and dams?

In relation to 5.81 Budget Paper No 3 – Vol 2

- (2)
 - (a) Of the 4 million trout fingerlings released into dams and inland rivers, how many will be stocked this year, what is the estimated cost?
 - (b) How much money from the Freshwater Fishing fee will be spent into re-stocking trout fingerlings?
- (3) What were the expenses incurred by NSW Fisheries in its aquaculture section, including on research and development of each type of aquaculture ie: silver perch, abalone?
- (4) What expenses did NSW Fisheries incur in its Office of Conservation?
- (5) What expenses were incurred by NSW Fisheries in establishing aquatic reserves in freshwater rivers as provided for by the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*?
- (6)
 - (a) What is the estimated financial cost to NSW Fisheries for facilitating the public consultation process for:
 - (i) Recreational Fishing Areas (Lake Macquarie, Botany Bay, Region 1 and Region 7),
 - (ii) Aquatic reserves (does this include the proposed aquatic reserves for the Batemans Shelf and Hawkesbury Shelf Bioregions),
 - (iii) Estuary general fishery management strategy,
 - (iv) Indigenous Fisheries Strategy.
 - (b) And how much has been allocated this financial year?

Answer:

- (1) Salaries and operating expenses at Gaden hatchery, Dutton Hatchery, Narrandera Fisheries Centre, Port Stephens Research Station and Grafton Research Station.
- (2)
 - (a) Approximately \$800,000.
 - (b) It is yet to be determined, however, it will comprise one full salary at Gaden Hatchery and additional operating expenses at Gaden Hatchery and Dutton Hatchery to support trapping of spawners at Lake Eucumbene, rearing of eggs and fry at both hatcheries, and release of fish from both hatcheries to highland waters around the State.
- (3) Aquaculture expenditure for the 2000/01 financial year including funding from consolidated revenue, industry funds and external grants was:
 - \$498,000 on industry development;
 - \$1,740,000 on management;
 - \$2,255,000 on technology development;
 - \$377,200 on permit administration; and
 - \$409,000 on compliance.
- (4) Between consolidated and grant funding, over \$6.8 million was spent on expenses last year by the Office of Conservation division of NSW Fisheries.
- (5) The Fisheries Management act does not require NSW Fisheries to establish aquatic reserves in freshwater rivers.
- (6)
 - (a)
 - (i) I refer you to my answer to question 5.
 - (ii) NSW Fisheries received an \$80,000 grant to progress the consultation process, and the grant funding was complemented with NSW Fisheries core funded resources.
 - (iii) No public consultation relating to the Estuary General management strategy was undertaken during the 2000/01 financial year.
 - (iv) No public consultation relating to the Indigenous Fisheries Strategy was undertaken during the 2000/01 financial year.
 - (b) Budget allocations for 2001/02 have not been finalised at this time.

8. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) For each of your portfolio agencies:
 - (a) How much money was spent on advertising in 2000-01?
 - (b) Can you please provide a list of each campaign and cost?
- (2) For each of your portfolio agencies:
 - (a) What is the estimate of money to be spent on advertising in 2001-02?

- (b) Can you please provide a list of each campaign and estimated cost?

Answer:

- (1) (a) All advertising was undertaken in accordance with government guidelines for advertising.
(b) All advertising was undertaken in accordance with government guidelines for advertising.
- (2) (a) The exact cost will depend on the nature and scope of advertising identified for 2001-02.
(b) This will depend on the nature and scope of advertising identified for 2001-02.

9. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) For each of your portfolio agencies:
- (a) How much was spent on overseas trips in 2000-01 by officials?
(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on overseas trips in 2001-02 by officials?
(c) Can you please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost for (a) and (b)?
- (2) (a) Did you take any overseas trips in the last financial year?
(b) What is the total cost of your overseas trips in 2000-01?
(c) What is the estimate of money to be spent on your overseas trips in 2001-02?
(d) Can you please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost for (a) and (b)?
(d) For each trip, can you please provide a breakdown in airfare costs, hotel costs, car hire, and accompanying staff and officials?
- (3) For each of your portfolio agencies:
- (a) How much was spent on inter-state trips in 2000-01 by officials?
(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on interstate trips in 2001-02 by officials?
(c) Can you please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost for (a) and (b)?
- (4) (a) What is the total cost of your interstate trips in 2000-01?
(b) What is the estimate of money to be spent on your interstate trips in 2001-02?
(c) Can you please provide a list of each trip, purpose and cost for (a) and (b)?
(c) For each trip, can you please provide a breakdown in airfare costs, hotel costs, car hire, and accompanying staff and officials?

Answer:

- (1) (a) Details regarding all official overseas travel is included in the Annual Report and in accordance with the appropriate guidelines.

- (b) International travel by public servants is undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines.
Expenditure in 2001-2002 will depend on the particular issues requiring overseas travel.
- (c) All official overseas travel is included in the Annual Report for 2000-01 and with regard to 2001-02 it is too early to provide an estimate at this stage of the financial year. However, the Annual Report for 2001/02 will contain the full list.
- (2) (a) Yes.
- (b) Official travel is undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines.
- (c) This will depend on the nature and scope of any travel undertaken in 2001-02.
- (d) All official overseas travel is included in the Annual Report. It is too early to provide an estimate at this stage of the financial year 2001-02. However, the Annual Report for 2001/02 will contain the full list.
- (e) Costs incurred during official overseas travel were in accordance with the appropriate guidelines.
- (3) (a) Interstate travel by portfolio agencies was undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines.
- (b) This will depend on the nature and scope of any travel undertaken in 2001-02
- (c) Costs incurred during interstate travel in the financial year 2001-02 was in accordance with the appropriate guidelines. In the financial year 2001-02 costs incurred during official interstate travel will be in accordance with appropriate guidelines.
- (4) (a) Official travel was undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines and within cost expectations.
- (b) It is too early to provide an estimate at this stage of the financial year. However, expenditure will depend on the nature and scope of any travel in 2001-02.
- (c) With regard to 2001-02 please see previous answer. With regard to 2000-01, official travel was undertaken in accordance with guidelines and in a cost effective manner.
- (d) Official travel was undertaken in accordance with appropriate guidelines and in a cost effective manner.

10. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) For each of your portfolio agencies, how much money in total was spent on Olympic-related costs?
- (2) Of this amount, how much was reimbursed by additional appropriations or by assistance from Olympic agencies?

Answer:

- (1) Expenditure was in accordance with Olympic-related priorities
- (2) Expenditure was in accordance with agency requirements

11. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) For each of your portfolio agencies, how much money was spent on performance pay for public servants in 1999-00, and 2000-01?
- (2) Did you personally approve these bonus payments?

Answer:

- (1) On 28 August 2000 Premier's Memorandum 2000-21 was issued indicating that performance pay was not to be made available to members of the Chief and Senior Executive Services.

In August 2001 details of performance payments were published in the Sydney media relating to a range of performance payments made in 2000.
- 2) Approvals for performance payments as well as all other remuneration to members of the Senior Executive Service were made by the respective Chief Executive Officers.

12. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1)
 - (a) In 2000-01, how much was spent on your ministerial expenses?
 - (b) Can you please provide a breakdown by expense, for example hotel expenses, office refurbishments etc?
 - (c) What is the forecast amount to be spent in 2001-02?
- (2) For each of your portfolio agencies:
 - (a) How much money was spent for entertainment purposes in 2000-01?
 - (b) What was the breakdown by cost and nature of these functions?
 - (c) What is the forecast to be spent in 2001-02?

Answer:

- (1)
 - (a) Expenditure was in accordance with the relevant approvals and guidelines.
 - (b) See previous answer
 - (c) This will depend on the extent and nature of requirements
- (2)
 - (a) Expenditure was undertaken within the allocations to agencies
 - (b) See previous answer
 - (c) This will depend on the nature and extent of expenditure required. It is too early in the financial year to estimate a figure.

13. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) In 2000/01, how many board appointments were made you, or by your portfolio agencies?
- (2) Of these appointments:
 - (a) How many were women?
 - (b) How many people were from a non-English speaking background?
 - (c) How many were with a disability?
 - (d) How many were Aboriginal Torres Strait Islanders?
 - (d) How many were young people?

Answer:

- (1) The Government provided a detailed response to Question 1312 in December 2000.
- (2)
 - (a) Refer to previous **Answer:** on the notice paper regarding this issue.
 - (b) Refer to previous **Answer:** on the notice paper regarding this issue.
 - (c) Refer to previous **Answer:** on the notice paper regarding this issue.
 - (d) Refer to previous **Answer:** on the notice paper regarding this issue.
 - (e) Refer to previous **Answer:** on the notice paper regarding this issue.

14. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) For each of your portfolio agencies in 2000-01, what fees and fines were increased, and by how much?
- (2) In 2001-02, what is the forecast for fees and fines to be increased and by how much?

Answer:

- (1) Fee increases are originated within agencies on an annual or periodic basis and are referred to Parliament's Regulation Review Committee for consideration. Most increases fall within the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
Fines are set under the relevant legislation and are usually subject to annual CPI adjustments.
- (2) See previous answer

15. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1)
 - (a) In 2000-01, for each of your portfolio agencies, how many media or public relations advisers were employed?
 - (b) What is the total cost of this?

- (c) What is the forecast for 2001-02 for the number of media or public relations advisers to be employed, and their total cost?
- (3) (a) For each of your portfolio agencies in 2000-01, how much was spent on public opinion surveys?
- (b) What was the breakdown for the cost of these surveys?

Answer:

- (1) (a) Staff numbers will vary from time to time depending on leave or peak periods.
- (b) See previous answer
- (c) Staff numbers will vary from time to time depending on leave or peak periods.
- (3) (a) On 20 December 2000 Premier's Memorandum 2000-28 was issued indicating that under no circumstances should surveys of clients, other users of government services or citizens be used to elicit information of a political nature.
- (b) See previous answer.

16. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) (a) For each of your portfolio agencies, in 2000-01, how much was spent on legal expenses?
- (b) What was the breakdown for these expenses?
- (2) In 2000-01, how much did you spend on legal expenses?

Answer:

- (1) (a) Expenditure on legal expenses followed appropriate review of the circumstances, the need for such expenditure and within appropriate guidelines

In the case of core work for public sector agencies the Crown Solicitor meets these costs.
- (b) See previous answer
- (2) Expenditure on legal expenses followed appropriate review of the circumstances and the need for such expenditure.

17. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) (a) How many Ministerial Staff are currently employed by you?
- (b) What is the total salary cost of these staff?
- (2) For each of your portfolio agencies in 2000-01:
 - (a) How much was spent on office fitouts and refurbishments?
 - (b) What is the estimated cost for 2001-02?

- (3) For each of your portfolio agencies in 2000-01:
- (a) How much was spent on the cost of leases in the Sydney CBD?
 - (b) What is the estimated cost for 2001-02?
- (4) For each of your portfolio agencies in 2000/01:
- (a) Was there any vacant or under-utilised office space?
 - (b) If so, how much did this cost?
- (5) For each of your portfolio agencies in 2000/01:
- (a) How much was spent on the salary packages for Senior Executive Service?
 - (b) What is the estimated cost for 2001-02?

Answer:

- (1) (a) Ministerial staff are employed by the Director General of the Premier's Department in accordance with the provisions of the Public Sector Management Act 1988.
- (b) All costs were in accordance with the expenditure necessary to facilitate the effective functioning of the office and within allocations to Ministerial Offices.
- (2) (a) All expenditure was in accordance with guidelines and procedures for office fit-outs and refurbishment.
- (b) This will depend on the nature and extent of any changes to office fit-outs and refurbishment.
- (3) (a) Expenditure on lease of government office accommodation followed careful review of the particular circumstances and needs of agencies. The Government Asset Management Committee oversees policy of government accommodation.
- (b) This will depend on a range of factors and it is too early in the financial year to estimate expenditure. The Government Asset Management Committee will oversight leasing issues.
- (4) (a) The Government Asset Management Committee oversees all asset management in the NSW public sector. The GAMC ensures that all agencies adopt a strategic approval to property management.
- (b) See above.
- (5) (a) Salary packages for the Senior Executive Service are set by the Statutory and Other Offices Tribunal. Current bands for each level are:
- Level 8 \$258,000 to \$318,315
 - Level 7 \$218,615 to \$276,135
 - Level 6 \$181,960 to \$219,510
 - Level 5 \$158,840 to \$194,770
 - Level 4 \$145,350 to \$169,420
 - Level 3 \$132,410 to \$155,575

- Level 2 \$118,675 to \$137,145
- Level 1 \$109,225 to \$127,130

(b) This will depend on the number of SES officers employed and their current point within the particular range.

18. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

For each of your portfolio agencies:

- (a) How much was spent on consultants in 2000-01?
- (b) How much funding has been set aside to cover the cost of consultants in 2001-02?
- (c) Can you please provide a list of each consultant, project, amount and estimated amount for each contract, including those under \$30,000 for (a) and (b)?

Answer:

- (a) The cost of consultants is reflected in the Annual Report.
- (b) Payments are made out of general operating expenses.
- (c) The total costs for consultancies under \$30,000 for 2000-01 is included in the Annual Report. With regard to the financial year 2001-2002 it is not possible to answer this question at this stage of the financial year. Expenditure will depend on the need for consultancy services throughout the year.

19. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) (a) Could you please advise the number of aquaculture permits for the following financial years: 1996-97, 1997/98, 1998/99, 1999/2000.
- (b) How many are active?
- (2) How many aquaculture permits were there in 2000/2001?
- (3) What is the estimate for 2001/2002?
- (4) Are you fearful of a reduced number of permits remaining active due to the cost of each permit and the impression that aquaculture businesses are easily dismissed as a cottage industry?
- (5) How many prosecutions have there been for failure to pay the fee?

Answer:

- (1) • In 1996/97 - 1107 aquaculture permits.
- In 1997/98 - 1006 aquaculture permits.
- In 1998/99 - 995 aquaculture permits.

- In 1999/2000 - 931 aquaculture permits.
- (b) Businesses producing under aquaculture permits may have varying levels of production. Without a definition of what is meant by “active” in this question the relevant information cannot be supplied.

There are 866 aquaculture permits.

- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) No.
- (5) None.

20. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) What is the cost to NSW of administering aquaculture services?
- (2) How is the cost of administering a permit determined?
- (3) What is the average cost of administering a permit?

Answer:

- (1) I refer you to my Answer: to question 7.
- (2) and (3) NSW Fisheries worked closely with the Centre for International Economics as part of their review of costs and pricing in aquaculture to determine the cost of administering a permit. The report has been widely distributed, and a draft version was sent to every permit holder for comment, prior to its finalisation, and any decisions by me. I recommend you study this report closely, as it comprehensively addresses the issues you have raised.

21. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

With respect to the Director of Aquaculture’s position advertised in the SMH 26 May 2001, when is it expected that the position will be filled?

Answer:

The new Director of Aquaculture will commence duties at a time agreed between the successful candidate, and the Director of Fisheries. Given that the merit selection process is not complete, no agreement has been reached.

22. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) Has any research been done or is planned to be done regarding the potential for the yabby industry in NSW?
- (2) What proportion of research funding is used for research relating to the prawn industry?

Answer:

- (1) The yabby industry in NSW shows real potential for expansion with consumer demand for the yabby outstripping the available supply. A status report on the commercial yabby fishery was completed in 2000, and showed a total commercial catch of 29 tonnes of yabbies in 1997/98. NSW Fisheries in conjunction with the Department of State and Regional Development, is looking at measures to help boost development for this industry in NSW in the long term.
- (2) It is important to note that the \$100 research levy contributed by permit holders is directed towards the Commonwealth Government's Fisheries Research and Development Corporation – who provide matching funding – and determine research priorities.

23. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) Are there any plans to extend the initiative beyond 3 years? (Started July 2000)
- (2) How much time do the extension officers spend doing field work compared to office work?
- (3) Are there any plans to broaden the expertise range possessed by aquaculture extension officers?
- (4) List all projects to which funds are allocated under the 1st year of the Government's 3 year \$3 million Aquaculture Initiative.

Answer:

- (1) A decision on whether or not it is necessary to extend the initiative will be made at the appropriate time.
- (2) The extension officers were appointed in the second half of last year. At the end of May 2001, these officers had handled 856 aquaculture extension contacts. Their commitment to on-farm visits and face-to-face information transfer is seen as integral to improving the flow of information from aquaculture institutions to the industry.
- (3) The extension officers were selected on the basis of their aquaculture expertise and their ability to communicate effectively. I am reliably informed that we have three of the most talented, dedicated and well-respected extension officers in Australia.
- (4) The focus of the Aquaculture Initiative for 2000/2001 was to:
 - Promote the NSW aquaculture industry and identify investment opportunities;
 - hold aquaculture promotional forums (Sydney, Batemans Bay, Bourke, Mittagong, Wagga, Ballina, Dubbo, Tamworth, Orange, Broken Hill);
 - case manage investors;
 - coordinate industry promotions, such as the Olympics, 2001 Fine Food Show, Royal Agriculture Society, and the Regional Class at Mudgee.
 - develop Regional Aquaculture Strategies;
 - assess industry economics and market opportunities;
 - assist with extension services;

- assist with health management; and
- showcase demonstration aquaculture facilities.

24. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Has the position of planning officer been appointed?

Answer:

The planning officer commenced duty with NSW Fisheries on 26 February 2001.

25. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

(In relation to budget paper 58.1.1, 13-20 Fisheries Conservation and Management)

- (1) Was the consultancy won by Dominion Consulting open to tender?
- (2) Name the unsuccessful tenderers?
- (3) On what grounds did Dominion consulting win the job?

Answer:

- (1) I am advised that NSW Fisheries has employed the services of Dominion Consulting in accordance with Government guidelines. Dominion Consulting has been successful in some but not all of the tender processes it has participated in.
- (2) Numerous groups participate in tender processes. The question is very broad and may be unfair to groups that have been unsuccessful in NSW Fisheries tenders to be named in this way.
- (3) I am advised that Dominion Consulting has undertaken work for NSW Fisheries when it was apparent that they, in accordance with government guidelines, were the most appropriate service provider.

26. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) Many in the seafood industry are concerned about the cost of compliance with the SafeFood requirements. What is NSW Fisheries doing to assist with eliminating red tape?
- (2) Is the cost of compliance, by way of fees from, for example, commercial fishermen, expected to increase?
- (3) If so, by how much?

Answer:

- (1) to (3) These questions are more appropriately directed to the Hon Richard Amery, Minister for Agriculture, who has portfolio responsibility for SafeFood,

27. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Please list all research papers undertaken by and gathered by NSW Fisheries on the issue of restocking of estuaries.

Answer:

I am advised that there are more than 80 such research papers. If the Hon Jenny Gardiner wishes to learn more about stocking, I would be happy to arrange a briefing for her with my staff.

28. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Regarding carp reduction: \$1.5m was budgeted over three years.

- (1) What assessment has been made of the success of otherwise of the program?
- (2) What is its future?

Answer:

I am advised that \$1 million was budgeted over three years, not \$1.5 million. The program is nearing the end of the three-year period, and will be reviewed on its completion, in consultation with stakeholders.

29. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Regarding staffing:

- (1) How many staffing positions are being funded by each of the Fishing Licence Trusts?
- (2) How many vacancies are there in the Department as at 31 May 2001?
- (3) With respect to the budget allocation for increased NSW Fisheries staff, to what positions are the additional staff to be appointed?
- (4) What is the latest situation regarding the appointment of additional Fisheries Officers required to administer the General Recreational Fishing Licence.
- (5) What is the status of the Fisheries Officers' action in the Industrial Commission?

Answer:

- (1) Total positions currently funded from the recreational fishing fee trusts are: Saltwater 18, Freshwater 15.
- (2) Total vacancies in the Department as at 31 May 2001 was 22.
- (3) The proposed increase in 2001/02 staff will be primarily in the following programs:
 - Aquaculture Initiative (3 positions)
 - Threatened Species (5 positions)
 - Water Reform (5 positions)

- (4) The General Recreational Fishing Licence is not administered by Fisheries officers. Fisheries officers have a role, as part of their normal duties, in promoting compliance with fisheries laws, including the requirement to hold a fishing licence.
- (5) This matter remains a matter before the Industrial Relations Commission.

30. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) How many prosecutions were launched regarding freshwater licences in 2000-2001?
- (2) How many successful prosecutions have there been to date for:-
 - (a) commercial licences?
 - (b) recreational licences?

Answer:

- (1) NSW Fisheries advise that a total of 19 prosecutions regarding the Freshwater Fishing Fee commenced in 2000/2001.
- (2) (a) NSW Fisheries advise that in 2000/2001 there were 23 successful prosecutions in relation to commercial fishing licence offences.
(b) NSW Fisheries advise that in 2000/2001 there were 19 successful prosecutions in relation to recreational fishing licence offences.

31. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

To what extent is NSW Fisheries reliant on National Parks and Wildlife Services and Waterways Authority for ensuring compliance with fisheries regulations?

Answer:

Some patrols are carried out jointly with these agencies particularly around the waters of the Solitary Islands Marine Park, and National Park officers may undertake some fisheries compliance activities on rock platforms adjacent to National parks.

32. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

What is the marketing budget of the Department, (excluding expenditure from the Trust Funds)?

Answer:

I am advised that there is no discrete cost centre for “marketing” within NSW Fisheries

33. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Regarding saltwater Licence Fee – Consultancy fee:

The Department undertook a series of advertisements announcing and promoting the general recreational fishing licence. How much money was allocated for this promotion and were any individuals paid for their participation in these ads?

Answer:

A total of \$231,000 was approved for information and advisory programs relating to the general recreational fishing licence, following support for the expenditure by the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing (ACoRF).

I am advised that no individuals were paid for their participation in these advertisements.

34. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

(1) What resources have been spent so far on Environmental Impact Statements under the Commercial Fishing Strategy?

(2) Is progress to date on target, timewise?

(3) How much has been allocated for 2001-02?

Answer:

(1) \$450,000

(2) NSW Fisheries is on target for completing environmental impact statements.

(3) \$770,000

35. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

(1) Are the holders of general recreational fishing licences details held on a database?

(2) If so, what privacy provisions are in place?

(3) Who will have access to this database?

Answer:

(1) Yes.

(2) The database is kept secure in accordance with NSW privacy legislation.

(3) Access to the database is limited to a small number of authorised NSW Fisheries staff, and managed in accordance with NSW privacy legislation.

36. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Regarding 'Education' signage – general recreational fishing licence:

Steven Dunn claimed in a recent letter to a constituent that:

“To assist anglers appropriate signage is located at many public access locations in the Snowy Mountains and more is proposed. Clearly it would be impractical to provide signage at every possible fishing location and fishers must know the rules which apply and check if they are unsure”.

- (1) What specific plans are there for new signage?
- (2) Will the signage referred to by the Director, Mr Dunn, be paid for out of Trust Funds?
- (3) Is any information regarding rules and regulations handed out to new licensees at the time they purchase their licence? Is this proposed?

Answer:

I am advised that:

- (1) New signage is planned to advise of the forthcoming changes in bag and possession limits at Lake Eucumbene and Lake Jindabyne that have been announced in the Snowy Lakes Trout Strategy.
- (2) The costs of this signage can be met from the NSW Fisheries budget, and from the recreational fishing trusts. Any spending on signs from the trusts first need to be supported by the relevant trust expenditure committees and the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing.
- (3) Yes. Licence sales agents are provided with information and asked to hand out the brochures on rules and regulations when licences are purchased. As the vast majority of agents are not employees of the Government, it is not possible to be sure that every agent does so in every case.

37. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

For each proposed aquatic reserves please provide the following advice:

- (1) In which newspapers or other publications were advertisements placed notifying the public about the proposed aquatic reserves and what were the dates of each publication carrying such advertisements?
- (2) In which newspapers or other publications was notification placed of public meetings to discuss the proposed aquatic reserves and what were the dates of each publication carrying such notification?
- (3) Was there any advertising or notification of proposed aquatic reserves other than that in newspapers and if so, please provide advice as to the form of advertising and the date at which this place took?
- (4) Was there any advertising or notification of public meetings to discuss proposed aquatic reserves other than that in newspapers and if so, please advice as to the form of advertising and the date at which this took place?

Answer:

- (1) (a) and (b) A series of notices advertising the call for submissions and community information days were placed in the state-wide newspapers, Sydney Morning Herald and Daily Telegraph, as well as, The Australian.

Advertisements were also placed in regional and local papers:

Newcastle Herald, Lake Macquarie News, Central Coast Express Advocate, Central Sun Weekly, St George Leader, Manly Daily, Illawarra Mercury, Milton Ulladulla Times, Shoalhaven/Nowra News, South Coast Register, Wollongong Advertiser, Bay Post, Bomballa Times, Narooma News, and the Bega District News

(c) and (d) Media releases were distributed to local radio stations. The following electronic media reported on the releases:-

Central Coast – Radio announcements

Central Coast Community FM
Five – O – Plus Public Radio
Lake Macquarie Radio
2NC Radio

TV news bulletins

NBN News
Prime News

Sydney Region – Radio announcements

2UE Radio
2GB Radio
2CH Radio
2KY Radio

South Coast – Radio announcements

Power FM Radio
2ST Radio
Radio Wave FM
94.1 FM

TV news bulletins

ABC Illawarra Radio
WIN\Prime News

38. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

BP3 vol 2. P13-30 Scientific publications produced

Has any scientific research been undertaken regarding Kingfish so as to determine any impact on the Kingfish stock of the ban on traps? *(Please table copies of any reports or papers produced on this issue)*

Answer:

Since the banning of kingfish traps in 1996 NSW Fisheries has conducted research into the status of the kingfish stock off the coast of NSW. These research projects have developed methods by which to analyse the yearly size and age compositions of commercial landings, and to determine the growth rates of kingfish. However they do not specifically relate to the ban on Kingfish traps.

39. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Are there any facilities or plans for any facilities for small business owners who sell the recreational fishing licence on behalf of NSW Fisheries to pay licence fees directly into an account held by NSW Fisheries rather than being requested to send a cheque or money order to the Department?

Answer:

I am advised that NSW Fisheries is investigating ways to further improve the arrangements for the remittance of licence fees by agents.

40. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Regarding 13-27 operating statement – other expenses

- (1) Why have 'other operating statements' been allocated \$5.2m more than allocated (revised in 2000-01)?
- (2) What are the main contributors to the 9.2% increase allocated to employee related expenses?
- (3) Please provide a breakdown of the reasons for the jump in retained taxes, fees and fines?
- (4) How much is estimated to be derived from each of the categories taxes, fees and fines?

Answer:

- (1) The increase in other operating expenditure is due to additional funding for the following:
 - Trust Fund Projects
 - Aquaculture Initiative
 - Threatened Species
 - Water Reform Funding
 - Oyster Lease Cleanup Funds
- (2) The increase in employee related expenses of 9.2% is due additional funding provided for the following activities:
 - Payment of 3% wage increase in 2001/02
 - Aquaculture Initiative
 - Threatened Species
 - Water Reform Funding
 - Increased Trust funded programs
- (3) The line item retained taxes, fees and fines reflects revenue generated from the recreational fishing fee.

In 2001/02 it is anticipated that an additional \$4.5 million will be received from the sale of the recreational fishing fee due to the expansion of the program to include saltwater recreational fishing.

- (4) This line item only relates to fees and represents revenue raised from the recreational fishing fee. No taxes or fines are accounted for by this line item.

41. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Can you provide details regarding fisheries staffing levels at Manila as at 30 June, 2000 and 31 May 2001?

Answer:

NSW Fisheries has not had an office at Manila, or any staff based there since the mid 1970's. Manila is part of the Peel Fisheries District, which is based at Tamworth.

42. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

List all meeting dates for the:

- (a) Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing
- (b) Advisory Council on Commercial Fishing
- (c) Advisory Council on Conservation
- (d) Advisory Council on Aquaculture
- (e) Abalone Management Advisory Committee
- (f) Ocean Prawn Trawl Management Advisory Committee
- (g) Ocean Fish Trawl Management Advisory Committee
- (h) Estuary Prawn Trawl Management Advisory Committee
- (i) Ocean Trap and Line Management Advisory Committee
- (j) Ocean Haul Management Advisory Committee
- (k) Estuary General Management Advisory Committee
- (l) Rock Lobster Fishery Management Advisory Committee
- (m) Inland Management Advisory Committee
- (n) Fisheries Scientific Committee, and
- (o) Total Allowable Catch Committee

Answer:

Information concerning committees and councils appear in the 1999/2000 NSW Fisheries Annual Report. The bodies generally meet between two and four times a year.

43. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Regarding recreational fishing licence

- (1) Has the Department prepared any guidelines for the administering of the legislation/regulations in connection with adults supervising child fishers?
- (2) If so, please table the guidelines.
- (3) If not, are such guidelines proposed?
- (4) When will they be compiled?
- (5) Will they be made public?

Answer:

- (1) No.
- (2) See above
- (3) No. The Act and the regulation is clear.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) There has been an extensive education program with the introduction of the general fee. Also, this provision is generally widely known and understood, and I am informed that it has been applied since 1998 with the reintroduction of the freshwater fee.

44. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Minister, you recently mentioned the new Fisheries Patrol boat manufactured by Stebercraft.

- (1) How many vessels does the Department now have?
- (2) Where is each vessel based?

Answer:

- (1) NSW Fisheries currently has 83 Fisheries patrol vessels ranging from small 3 metre punts to large offshore vessels similar to the new Stebercraft.
- (2) 30 vessels are located at 10 fisheries districts in the Northern Region between Tweed Heads and the Hawkesbury River. A further 25 vessels are located at 8 fisheries districts in the Southern Region between Sydney and Eden. The remainder of the patrol vessels are located at 28 fisheries districts in the Western Region all geographically located west of the Great Dividing Range.

45. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) Please detail the training programs aimed at ensuring officers are abreast of contemporary commercial fishing practices.
- (2) How many officers undertook such training programs in 2000 -2001?

Answer:

(1) and (2) I am advised that:

Fisheries officers complete induction training within their first year of employment. Nine officers undertook induction training in 2000-2001.

Fisheries officers observe and monitor commercial fishing practices as a routine part of their duties and receive regular briefings on changes to fisheries management rules. Training in gear technology at the Australian Maritime College has also been provided to some staff.

Many Fisheries Officers have tertiary qualifications in Marine Science, which includes significant coursework in the area of commercial fishing practises.

The combination of regular field exposure and exercises combined with departmental updates enables Fisheries officers to maintain an up to date, practical and comprehensive knowledge of current commercial fishing industry.

Fisheries officers also complete intensive field training. This involves visits to fish receivers, fish identification training and field observations of fish trawlers, ocean prawn trawlers, estuary trawlers, ocean trap and line vessels, a variety of estuary fishing vessels, lobster, abalone and ocean haul fishing operations. Fisheries officers are assessed on their knowledge of commercial fishing practices.

46. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

How many staff are in the Fisheries Office of Conservation in:

- (a) 2000-01
- (b) 2001-2002 (estimates)

Answer:

- (a) 60.
- (b) 72

47. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Solitary Islands Marine Park p. 13-7 Strategic Directions

When will the long awaited maps be released to the public?

Answer:

4 July 2001

48. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Marine Parks p 13-8

- (1) For what specific purpose is the \$178,000 (see total expenses) to be allocated?
- (2) For what specific purposes is the additional \$395,000 to be allocated? (Asset Acquisitions?)

Answer:

- (1) To improve operations at marine parks, including identification and selection processes.
- (2) Office accommodation and operational equipment for marine parks other than Jervis Bay.

49. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) Can you please provide a detailed breakdown of figures for the expenditure of \$3.2 million on extensive consultation, to develop a new regulatory framework, and on a new campaign to improve the safety performance for small mines (13-2)?
- (2) Can you provide the strategic outcome list for the mine safety initiative, now completing its third of five years?
- (3) Can you provide a list of outcome measures used in assessing the program, and the results of key indicators to date?

Answer:

- (1) The \$3.2 million is part of the \$14 million enhancement funding committed by the Government over a five-year period to improve safety and health in the mining industry.

For accounting purposes, the enhancement funds are included with existing mine safety program funding. Total direct mine safety funding, including the enhancement, was \$9.9 million for 2000-01. \$8.1 million of this was spent on minesite safety performance evaluations, including assessments, local investigations and enforcement. \$0.7 million was allocated to formal investigations and \$1.1 million to improving safety performance, principally through regulatory development and communications. Similar levels of expenditure are planned for the new financial year.

- (2) In addition to the information provided for budget program 56.1.3 on pages 13-17 & 13-18 of Budget Paper No 3, Volume 2, strategic outcome lists for the mine safety objective are listed in the Department of Mineral Resources' annual Corporate Plans.
- (3) Outcome measures, in addition to those listed on pages 13-17 & 13-18 of Budget Paper No 3, Volume 2, are also listed in the Department's annual Corporate Plans. Achievement of these key indicators and goals and key outputs is reported in the Department's Annual Reports.

50. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

- (1) Can you provide details of the platform for the Department's competitive position for attracting mineral and petroleum exploration investment in NSW?
- (2) What are the key features of this position which have so far proven attractive to explorers?
- (3) In what aspects does this platform differ from those of other Australian states?

Answer:

- (1) The New South Wales Government is encouraging mineral and petroleum exploration in this State through the provision of a high quality framework of geological and geophysical information. This is supported by an effectively managed mining titles system.

The Government will spend \$5 million on the *Exploration NSW* initiative during 2001-02. This is part of a 7-year commitment of \$30 million. The expenditure principally involves an accelerated program of geophysical and geological mapping.

- (2) Access has been provided via the Internet to all previous company exploration results which are compiled in the DIGS System (Digital Imaging Geological System). The DIGS System and the enhanced program of geophysical mapping have been particularly effective in attracting exploration. In addition, regional digital information packages containing geophysical images, geological maps and other key geological and mineral deposit data have been successful.
- (3) High-resolution geophysical surveys are being undertaken over a larger proportion of NSW than in most other States. To date 50 per cent of the State has been covered. The DIGS System uses leading edge technology, and is the first system of its kind in the world to make comprehensive, detailed exploration data available via the Internet. The digital information packages also set benchmarks for this type of product across Australia.

51. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

The budget includes \$17.5 million to provide a geological, mineral and energy information framework.

- (1) Can you please advise what methods are being utilised in the collection of the necessary data for this framework?
- (2) Can a breakdown of this amount be provided?

Answer:

- (1) Methods include:
 - Regional geological mapping
 - Regional geophysical mapping (mainly aerial surveys using magnetic, radiometric and gravity survey methods)
 - Sedimentary basin investigations
 - Coal and petroleum resource assessment
 - Mineral resource mapping

- Extractive materials resource investigations
- Data base development
- Analysis of company mineral and petroleum exploration activities.

(2) In addition to the \$17.5 million, the total includes a planned project grant of \$264,000 from the Resource and Conservation Assessment Council:

(a) RESOURCE ASSESSMENT CORE FUNDING

Regional Geology and Geophysics	\$3.252 m
Coal and Petroleum Resource Geology	\$2.933 m
Mineral Resources Assessment	\$4.530 m
Cartographic Services	\$1.484 m
Information Systems	<u>\$0.685 m</u>
	\$12.884 m

(b) EXPLORATION NSW FUNDING

Minerals Program	\$2.136 m
Petroleum Program	\$1.542 m
Information Systems	\$0.842 m
Statewide Projects	<u>\$0.405 m</u>
	\$4.925 m
Total	<u>\$17.809 m</u>

52. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

A sustainable mineral development for the State, budgeted at \$9.5 million (13-4), has listed a number of community benefits.

Can you please detail the aspects of the developments which are specifically ecologically sustainable?

Answer:

Sustainable mineral resource development provides large scale economic and employment benefits to the community. As a result, social benefits accrue, and, where mining developments include rehabilitation of previously degraded lands, environmental benefits also arise.

The Government requires efficient resource use to reduce impacts. The Department has strict policy against “high-grading” whereby only high grade ore is extracted from a deposit, leaving significant quantities of consequently sub-economic ore behind.

Environmental impact assessment of new mining developments and associated conditions on approvals, including mining leases, aim to ensure that mines have no ecologically unsustainable long term impacts.

The Government also requires final mining landforms to be self sustaining. This Government has also promoted incorporation of wildlife corridors and reserves into post mining land uses. Each shows this Government’s concern for future generations when current activities are considered.

53. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Under the mining legislation strengthened through amendments in 2000, how many prosecutions for environmental non-compliance have been mounted and with what result?

Answer:

Recommendations have been made for the issuing of three Penalty Notices under section 375A of the *Mining Act 1992*, and these have been referred for legal advice.

54. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Why have employee related expenses in the Resource Policy and Executive Support (56.1.4) area increased from \$551,000 to \$736,000 with no increase in numbers of staff?

Answer:

The increase relates to structural changes in the Department's staff profile in this area, salary award increases and increments.

55. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

Can you please name the mines which are not currently operating to Mining Operations Plans which are acceptable?

Answer:

There are no operating mines that are not operating to Mining Operations Plans. A total of 277 Mining Operations Plans have been submitted to the Department. At present, only one such Mining Operations Plan requires amendment by the operator. The amendment is required to encompass the use of new processing infrastructure. An interim Mining Operations Plan has been prepared which adequately covers the existing operations and requirements for this site.

There are a number of inactive mining leases where mining has not been conducted for some years or else is conducted intermittently. Many of these have not yet finalised their Mining Operations Plans. However, these mines are being progressively reviewed and if Mining Operations Plans are not forthcoming, the leases may be cancelled.

56. Ms Gardiner asked the Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries, the Hon Eddie Obeid, MLC—

What risk analysis process did the Department carry out to identify the mines of highest risk?

Answer:

Mines were grouped into risk categories. In descending risk order, Mining Operations Plans were required of:

- large metalliferous mines with acid mine drainage potential or with large tailings dams,
- large open cut coal mines,
- other metalliferous mines,

- underground coal mines,
- other mines in continuous production, and
- operations with intermittent or campaign mining.

The Department is now focusing on inactive mining operations with the aim of having Mining Operations Plans prepared and operative for all mining leases.