



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Supplementary questions

Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service

**Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service and Digital
Government (Dib)**

Hearing: Monday 9 September 2024

Answers due by: 5.00 pm Tuesday 8 October 2024

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BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

National Gender and Emergency Management Guidelines

- (1) Following devastating floods and fires, will the NSW Government work with Gender and Disaster Australia to incorporate the National Gender and Emergency Management Guidelines into NSW disaster planning?

(a) If not, why not?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government is committed to working with individuals and groups, as well as the services that support and advocate for them, to identify action-oriented strategies to increase access, inclusion and support when planning for and coordinating disaster recovery.

On 28 August 2024, the NSW and Commonwealth Governments announced that Gender and Disaster Australia (GADAus) has been successful in securing funding under the latest round of the jointly funded Disaster Ready Fund. The project 'Creating Safe Shelter Spaces - Holding a Gendered Lens on Emergency Management Simulations' aims to assess the safety of emergency shelters through a gendered lens to help ensure the safety of women, children, and LGBTQIA+ people during disasters.

Disability Royal Commission recommendations

- (2) Which recommendations does the Minister have partial or full responsibility for, in relation to each of the Minister's portfolios including digital government, youth justice and emergency services?

ANSWER

Allocations of Ministerial responsibility for particular recommendations from the Disability Royal Commission are a decision of Cabinet.

The publicly available NSW Government 2024-25 Implementation Plan includes our commitments and actions over the first 12 months of activity and identifies the NSW Government agency with lead responsibility for actions.

- (3) The NSW Government responded to recommendation 7.35(c) relating to disaster welfare with "subject to further consideration". What consideration is the Government giving in relation to this?

(a) In the Government's response, it is noted that "evacuation centres are regularly audited to ensure they are fit for purpose and accessible to the public in emergencies".

When conducting such audits, what guidelines are followed to ensure they are truly accessible and inclusive for people with disability, including for people with intellectual disability?

- i. How regularly are evacuation centres audited and by whom?
 - ii. Has the Government engaged with any disability stakeholders in relation to guidelines around accessibility and inclusion of people with disability in disaster response?
 - iii. Does the Government engage with any disability stakeholders in preparing the State Emergency Management Plan (EMPLAN)?
- (b) In the Government’s response, it is noted that “all people are encouraged to develop their own emergency plans including when to go early and where they may go if forced to evacuate”. What support does the Government provide to people with disability and their families to develop their own emergency plans?
- (c) Has the Government considered establishing a vulnerable persons register similar to the register currently in place in Victoria?
- (d) In the Government’s response, it is noted that “every effort is made to provide for the needs of all people who require shelter and emergency accommodation”. What evidence does the Government have to support this determination that no further efforts need to be made?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Per the publicly available response to the Disability Royal Commission, NSW is implementing key actions under the 2024-25 Implementation Plan and is supporting regular reporting on progress by all governments on the DRC recommendations. The first report is expected to cover the period to March 2025 with reports every six months after that.

The NSW Government will hold a series of stakeholder forums with a particular focus on progressing the recommendations that require further consideration.

- (4) The NSW Government responded to recommendation 8.3 Prohibiting solitary confinement in youth detention with “accept in part”. Of parts (a) to (e), which parts does the Government fully accept?
- (a) Will the Minister for Youth Justice have responsibility for ensuring this commitment is followed through?
 - (b) In response to this recommendation, the NSW Government commented that it “welcomes continued engagement across all youth justice jurisdictions to inform

further improvements and harmonisation of practice for young people with a disability in custody”. Has the Government undertaken any consultation to date with any disability stakeholders or people with disability in relation to this?

- i. If yes, which stakeholders has the Government engaged with?
- ii. If no, will the Government commit to engage broadly with people with disability and their representative organisations in relation to this, particularly in relation to people with cognitive disability?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Per the publicly available response to the Disability Royal Commission, NSW is implementing key actions under the 2024-25 Implementation Plan and is supporting regular reporting on progress by all governments on the DRC recommendations. The first report is expected to cover the period to March 2025 with reports every six months after that.

The NSW Government will hold a series of stakeholder forums with a particular focus on progressing the recommendations that require further consideration.

- (5) The NSW Government responded to recommendation 8.4 Screening and assessment for disability in youth detention with “accept in principle”. Why did the Government accept this in principle and not in full?
 - (a) What actions will the Government be taking in relation to improving existing screening and assessment for cognitive disability?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Per the publicly available response to the Disability Royal Commission, NSW is implementing key actions under the 2024-25 Implementation Plan and is supporting regular reporting on progress by all governments on the DRC recommendations. The first report is expected to cover the period to March 2025 with reports every six months after that.

- (6) The NSW Government responded to recommendation 8.5 Disability training for staff in youth detention with “accept in principle”. Why did the Government accept this in principle and not in full?
 - (a) In response, the Government commented that “within current resourcing, staffing and budgetary limitations, staff training is delivered to frontline youth justice and clinical health staff”. Is this training mandatory for all frontline youth justice staff?
 - i. How long does training take, and is it conducted online or in-person?

- ii. Is training ongoing or only initial?
- iii. Do officials in youth detention centres at all levels currently receive any disability training?
 - 1. If yes, is it ongoing or only initial, and is it mandatory?
 - 2. If no, will the Government commit to develop appropriate disability training in line with recommendation 8.5?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Per the publicly available response to the Disability Royal Commission, NSW is implementing key actions under the 2024-25 Implementation Plan and is supporting regular reporting on progress by all governments on the DRC recommendations. The first report is expected to cover the period to March 2025 with reports every six months after that.

Questions to RFS

- (7) What are the current hurdles to the RFS providing more accurate data on its volunteers (including date of birth)?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Migration of historical data into the current RFS dataset has in some cases resulted in missing fields, because, for example, those fields were previously not required. The accuracy of the master volunteer data set is also reliant on District and Brigade input in relation to volunteer movements.

- (8) What has the RFS done to improve its data on volunteers in the last financial year?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The RFS implemented the SAP HR system for managing volunteer records in 2012. At this time, some historical data issues were identified, however, new processes and data capture were introduced to ensure data quality into the future. The RFS continues to work with its members and brigades to identify and correct these historical errors on an ongoing basis.

- (9) What is the government doing to ensure that the RFS can provide accurate data in relation to its volunteers?

ANSWER

The Government supports ongoing efforts by the RFS to manage datasets.

- (10) In relation to costings for improvements to presumptive legislation provided by iCare, how

many RFS volunteers was budgeted for?

ANSWER

This question should be directed to the Minister for Work Health and Safety.

(11) For each emergency service:

- (a) When is a Working With Children Check required to be undertaken?
- (b) How often must those Working With Children Checks be renewed?
- (c) Are there restrictions on a person interacting with children in the performance of their job when they have a Working With Children Check less than 5 years old?

ANSWER

I am advised:

- a) NSW SES members involved with the NSW SES Youth Internship program are required to undertake a Working With Children Check (WWCC). RFS members are required to undertake a WWCC before starting in any role that has 'direct responsibility for the training and supervision of Junior Members (including Cadet Brigades) or participants in the Secondary School Cadet Program'. Within FRNSW the Work Experience Co-ordinator role, Education & Training Directorate is required by FRNSW to have a WWCC.
- b) The Office of the Children's Guardian requires that individuals must renew their WWCC every five years.
- c) No.

Questions from Hon Chris Rath (on behalf of Opposition)

CUSTOMER SERVICE & DIGITAL GOVERNMENT

Regional Digital Connectivity Program

- (12) The NSW Government created the \$50 million Connecting Country Communities Fund to invest in telecommunications infrastructure addressing mobile black spots and broadband internet access. The Wentworth area was identified as a location for being part of the Mobile Black Spot Program Round 1 program, which was to install or upgrading mobile towers delivering 4G voice and data services for more than 13,000 premises. According to available data this project is complete. The Digital Connectivity Index score for the Wentworth shire is 45 and the shire of Balranald is still at 19. These scores mean these areas are less likely or unlikely to be able to conduct digital activities. The Murray electorate ‘mapped’ more than 100 black spots when we asked constituents about non - mobile connectivity areas causing communication issues to farm businesses, road safety, and emergency services to name a few. Given these facts, will the Minister commit additional funds to address ongoing connectivity issues across regional NSW, in particular the Wentworth and Balranald shires?

ANSWER

Questions regarding the Connecting Country Communities Fund should be directed to the Minister for Regional NSW.

Additional NSW Service Centre for the Wentworth Shire

- (13) With a growing population in Buronga Gol Gol area, with an additional 1,100 lots of land being developed, there is a need for servicing this part of the municipality. There is a RMS Service Centre located in Wentworth which operates 9-4pm. Wentworth is a 45-minute drive from Gol Gol and does not permit constituents time to access during a lunch break to deal with RMS issues. This then requires constituents for the eastern end of the Shire to take time off work to access services. Given these facts, would the Minister consider looking at expanding this service to the eastern end of the area or creating an opportunity for a shared service centre or two-day a week satellite centre?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Buronga is included on Service NSW’s Mobile Service Centre (MSC) route with the MSC visiting the area approximately every 10 weeks to provide services to customers who are not able or do not wish to travel to the nearest Service Centre at Wentworth.

The Wentworth Service Centre is between 20 to 30 minutes from Buronga and Gol Gol.

Service NSW continually monitors its network to identify potential locations based on factors such as estimated population growth by region and the distance to, and utilisation of, the nearest Service NSW Service Centre.

GovHack Sponsorship

- (14) Given the \$12,000 cost of the GovHack Platinum sponsorship, can the Minister provide a breakdown of the benefits derived from this sponsorship? How does this compare to other similar sponsorships?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Department of Customer Service determined that Sponsoring GovHack 2023 provided an opportunity to showcase and promote use of the Data.NSW open data portal to 672 event participants and more than 30,000 GovHack social media followers. Following participation in GovHack 2023, the Data.NSW open data portal saw month on month engagement levels increase by:

- 23% for dataset downloads
- 33% for dataset searches
- 23% for total page views.

GovHack sponsors typically include various Australian governments and agencies. GovHack is the only event organised for open government and open data hackathons across Australia and New Zealand, making comparisons to other sponsorships difficult.

Digital Transformation and Public Services

- (15) Can the Minister provide an update on the progress of key digital transformation initiatives aimed at improving public services?

ANSWER

The NSW Digital Strategy was released on 3 October 2024. The strategy is intended to align digital initiatives across NSW departments and agencies based on five missions which focus on using digital to improve outcomes for NSW communities, continuing leadership in digital, and supporting our public sector workforce to build digital skills and capabilities.

- (16) How are these initiatives being prioritized, and what timelines are in place for their full implementation?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The initiatives featured in the NSW Digital Strategy have been informed by research, broad consultation with industry, academia and international jurisdictions, and consultation with NSW agencies on existing digital initiatives and priorities. These initiatives have been prioritised

through their relative alignment to the strategy's five missions. The strategy will be regularly updated with the delivery status of the identified commitments.

Public Sector Digital Literacy

(17) What efforts are being made to improve digital literacy within the public sector to ensure that employees can effectively use and manage new digital tools?

ANSWER

I am advised:

A number of initiatives are underway across the NSW Government which aim to improve digital literacy and ensure that public sector employees can effectively use and manage new digital tools. Various agencies/departments hold responsibility for delivery of specific initiatives.

(18) Are there specific training programs in place, and how are they being evaluated for effectiveness?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Evaluation of the effectiveness of digital training programs in place is the responsibility of the individual agency or department responsible for delivery of the initiative.

Customer Service Improvements

(19) Service Delivery Enhancements: What recent enhancements have been made to the Service NSW platform to improve customer experience?

ANSWER

I am advised that several enhancements have been made to the Service NSW platform to enhance the customer experience. These include upgrading navigation in the app and improvements to authentication management and MFA processes to improve the adoption of secure practices.

(20) Are there plans to expand the range of services available through Service NSW, particularly in areas like health, education, and social services?

ANSWER

I am advised that Service NSW delivers services for customers and businesses on behalf of partner agencies in response to agency requests and Government priorities.

NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline

(21) When contacting the NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline, why are some attempting to report concerns of abuse and the exploitation of older people and adults with disabilities facing significant wait times, and in some cases unable to reach an operator altogether?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Service NSW does not operate the NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Hotline. Questions about the helpline should be directed to the Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion.

- (22) Are you aware of these wait times and the difficulties people are facing when attempting to make what could potentially be a lifesaving report of abuse by phone?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 21.

- (23) Do you accept that the mass cuts to Service NSW you have already announced, including the 25% reduction in funding to Risk, Strategy and Customer Support will only lead to lengthier and potentially costly wait times for crucial services such as the NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 21.

- (24) According to figures from the NSW Ageing and Disability Commission,* between 2019-20 and 2023-24 the number of calls to the NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline increased by 66.1 percent. Can you say with confidence that the cuts to Service NSW which your Government has already announced will not impact the ability of the Helpline to meet this worrying rise in reports of abuse and exploitation?

*https://ageingdisabilitycommission.nsw.gov.au/documents/reports-and-submissions/ADC_Dashboard_data_2023_-_2024_Amended_for_web.pdf

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 21.

- (25) When these cuts were initially planned, did you knowingly and willingly accept that longer wait times would be a logical outcome, and that this would have significant impacts for people seeking crisis support via Service NSW helplines such as the NSW Ageing and Disability Abuse Helpline?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 21.

- (26) How can the Minister provide assurance that longer wait times for crucial over-the-phone services will not be a result of the cuts to Service NSW being implemented by your Government?

ANSWER

At my direction, the Service NSW realignment is being implemented to minimise potential impacts to frontline services.

Customer Feedback Mechanisms

(27) How is the department using customer feedback to inform ongoing improvements to digital and government customer services?

ANSWER

The NSW Government undertakes customer research to better understand the needs of the people of NSW to inform service delivery and ongoing improvements. For example, digital delivery teams in the Department of Customer Service follow the principles of human-centred design and Agile project management as set out in the Digital Design Standards (<https://www.digital.nsw.gov.au/delivery/digital-service-toolkit/design-standards>) to build digital products and services for the people of NSW. As part of the Digital Design Standards, teams must engage end users and customers of the digital product or service through research and user testing, which then inform ongoing improvements.

(28) Can the Minister provide examples of changes that have been made based on this feedback?

ANSWER

I am advised that Have Your Say consultation feedback is used to shape other major government policy, such as on NSW rental reforms, bus services across NSW, and approaches to reducing harm from social media use.

Digital Identity and Security

(29) What is the current status of the Digital Identity program?

(a) How is the department ensuring the security and privacy of citizens' digital identities, especially in light of recent high-profile data breaches?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The program has successfully conducted several pilots to test key capabilities including First Aid Certificates and has launched state-wide online renewals of Working With Children Check. While still undergoing rigorous testing, audits, and reviews, these initiatives continue to work on solutions that enable a safer digital economy to combat identity fraud. In addition to the pilots, this work will be supported by a robust legislative framework founded on key principles including privacy, transparency, security and user centricity.

Cybersecurity Measures:

(30) What specific measures are in place to protect government digital services from cyber threats?

ANSWER

I am advised that measures to protect digital services from cyber threats are captured in the NSW Government's cyber security strategies available here:

<https://www.digital.nsw.gov.au/delivery/cyber-security/strategies>

(31) How is the department working with other agencies to ensure a coordinated response to potential cybersecurity incidents?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government coordinates its response to significant cyber security incidents through the application of the State Cyber Security Emergency Plan as well as the Commonwealth Incident Management Arrangements, which account for inter-agency and state/federal responses to a cyber incident.

Cyber Security NSW and ID Support NSW also maintain relationships with key entities such as the Australian Cyber Security Centre, NSW Police Force, and NSW Information & Privacy Commission in anticipation of and response to cyber security incidents.

Accessibility and Inclusivity in Digital Services

(32) How is the department ensuring that digital services are accessible to all citizens, including those with disabilities and those in remote or underserved communities?

(a) What specific steps have been taken to meet accessibility standards across all government platforms?

ANSWER

The NSW Digital Strategy released on October 3 2024 prioritises greater inclusion and accessibility as a core mission; specific commitments and actions to deliver on the mission are outlined as part of the Strategy at: www.digital.nsw.gov.au/strategy

Digital Divide

(33) What initiatives are being implemented to bridge the digital divide, particularly in rural and low-income areas?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 32.

(34) How is the department working to ensure equitable access to digital services for all residents?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 32.

Future-Proofing Digital Services:

(35) What is the department's long-term strategy for future-proofing digital services against technological advancements and changes in public needs?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 32.

(36) How are emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, being considered in future plans?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government operates a Digital Assurance Framework which includes provisions for the ethical and safe adoption of emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI). This gives government agencies confidence to use and apply emerging technologies such as AI to maximise the benefit of new technologies in their projects and to solve problems for government.

Sustainability and Digital Services:

(37) How is the department integrating sustainability into its digital transformation efforts?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Sustainability is a key part of the NSW Government's digital transformation efforts and is integrated in the NSW Digital Strategy. Mission 3 of the strategy refers to NSW Government's aim to reduce the environmental impact of digital infrastructure and services through sustainable practices and to deliver on the government's Net Zero by 2050 goal.

The Department of Customer Service is also investing in the reuse of digital platforms and infrastructure, through the State Digital Asset Reuse Policy, which drives reuse through robust whole-of-government governance and assurance practices.

(38) Are there specific initiatives aimed at reducing the environmental impact of digital services?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Department of Customer Service continues to investigate opportunities to reduce the environmental impact of digital services and is actively working with partners to reduce the impact of its data centres, for example through the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) program, and maintains a 4.5 star NABERS (National Australian Built Environment Rating System) energy rating.

The Department also integrates sustainable NSW Government procurement policies into all of Government ICT procurement and Buy NSW, including social, economic and environmental considerations. Recent examples include local market testing and modern slavery provisions.

E-Conveyancing

(39) Can the Minister provide current statistics on the adoption rates of e-conveyancing in NSW?

(a) How does this compare to the department's targets, and what steps are being taken to increase adoption among practitioners who have been slower to transition?

ANSWER

I am advised:

NSW completed the transition to a fully electronic land title system on 11 October 2021. Since then, all land dealings must be lodged through eConveyancing and all practitioners will have made arrangements to accommodate the electronic system.

(40) What specific support is being provided to small conveyancing practitioners to assist them in transitioning to e-conveyancing? Are there grants, training, or resources available to ensure they are not left behind in this digital shift?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 39.

System Performance and Reliability

(41) What measures are in place to ensure the reliability and uptime of the e-conveyancing platforms used in NSW? How is the department addressing any technical issues that have been reported by users?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Operating Requirements include Performance Levels for service availability and reliability, including minimum service availability of 99.8% during core business hours and 99% outside of core business hours.

The NSW Office of the Registrar General (ORG) monitors Electronic Lodgement Network Operators' (ELNOs) compliance with the Performance Levels and ELNOs are required to notify of any technical issues within three business days, including root cause analysis and remediation plans.

(42) In the event of system outages or failures, what contingency plans are in place to ensure that property transactions can still be completed without significant delays? How are these plans communicated to conveyancers and other stakeholders?

ANSWER

I am advised:

ELNOs are required to proactively address system outages or failures to minimise delay and other impacts on transacting parties. This includes working with other eConveyancing system participants (land registries, revenue offices and banks) to identify and resolve network issues.

Data Security and Privacy

- (43) How is the department ensuring the security of sensitive information in the e-conveyancing process? What protocols are in place to prevent unauthorized access and data breaches, particularly given the increasing cyber threats?

ANSWER

I am advised:

ELNOs are required to have in place robust cyber security and information security management systems. These are required to be reviewed and certified as fit-for-purpose by an independent expert approved by the Registrar General.

ELNOs are also required to provide cyber security awareness training to their Subscribers, covering matters such as use of digital signatures and taking appropriate measures to prevent email scams and other fraudulent conduct.

- (44) How does the e-conveyancing system comply with NSW privacy laws and regulations? Are there regular audits or reviews to ensure ongoing compliance?

ANSWER

I am advised:

eConveyancing involves the collection and use of personal information to facilitate land transactions. If ELNOs propose to use conveyancing data (which may include personal information) for a different purpose, they must obtain the Registrar General's approval, which will be conditional on the ELNO complying with relevant privacy laws.

ELNOs are required to prepare and submit Privacy Impact Assessments when requesting approval for any use of conveyancing data.

Under the NSW Operating Requirements and NSW Participation Rules, ELNOs and Subscribers are required to comply with privacy law. ELNOs are subject to an annual compliance review process conducted by the Australian Registrars National Electronic Conveyancing Council (ARNECC), in which they are required to attest to compliance with all aspects of the Operating Requirements in effect in each jurisdiction, including in relation to privacy. Subscribers are subject to periodic audits which assess their compliance with the Participation Rules in effect in each jurisdiction.

Integration with Other Digital Services:

- (45) How is the e-conveyancing platform being integrated with other government digital services,

such as land registries and revenue offices? What challenges have been encountered in this integration, and how are they being addressed?

ANSWER

I am advised:

ELNOs are required to establish connections with land registries and revenue offices to provide eConveyancing services. These integrations are fundamental to eConveyancing. The Registrar General oversees these integrations through compliance and reporting requirements under the regulatory framework. ELNOs also manage these arrangements directly with the relevant government agency, through bilateral agreements.

(46) What efforts are being made to collaborate with other states and territories to ensure that e-conveyancing systems are compatible across Australia? How is the department addressing any differences in legal frameworks or technical standards?

ANSWER

I am advised:

eConveyancing was established as a national reform with a policy and regulatory objective of national consistency. The Operating Requirements and Participation Rules which apply to ELNOs and Subscribers respectively are based on national model rules determined by the Australian Registrars' National Electronic Conveyancing Council (ARNECC), the national council comprised of Registrars from each State and Territory, to oversee the national eConveyancing system.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement:

(47) How is feedback from conveyancers, legal practitioners, and the public being incorporated into the continuous improvement of the e-conveyancing system?

(a) Can the Minister provide examples of recent improvements that were driven by user feedback?

ANSWER

I am advised:

ORG meets with industry groups on a regular basis to hear feedback and resolve issues that may arise from eConveyancing. For example, the ORG meets with the Law Society of NSW Property Law Committee and the Australian Institute of Conveyancers (AIC) to discuss improvements to the requirements of eConveyancing, clarification of certain requirements, or to discuss issues experienced by its members. ORG considers these issues and addresses them either with the ELNOs or with NSW Land Registry Services (LRS).

(a) Changes are regularly made to the Registrar General's Guidelines, for clarification and guidance, following feedback received from stakeholders.

(48) What future enhancements are planned for the e-conveyancing system?

- (a) How is the department ensuring that the system remains responsive to the needs of all stakeholders, including adapting to potential changes in property law or conveyancing practices?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Office of the Registrar General ensures the system remains responsive by:

- holding regular meetings with industry stakeholders, including the Law Society Property Law Committee, AIC and ELNOs;
- monitoring current case reports and industry publications;
- participation in ARNECC's national working groups to continually review and update operating requirements and participation rules, to maintain national consistency;
- considering and responding to enquiries and correspondence received from practitioners and land owners.

E-Conveyancing and Fraud Prevention:

- (49) What mechanisms are in place within the e-conveyancing system to detect and prevent fraud?

- (a) How effective have these mechanisms been, and are there plans to enhance them in response to emerging threats?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Only Subscribers can transact in the eConveyancing system. Subscribers must comply with the NSW Participation Rules, which include strict requirements for:

- Verifying the identity of the client;
- Establishing the client has the right to deal with the land;
- Obtaining authorisation from the client; and
- Retaining the evidence for seven years.

ORG audits Subscribers to ensure that they have met their obligations under the NSW Participation Rules. Failure to meet these requirements can result in a suspension or termination from accessing the electronic platform.

There has been no increase in land title fraud as a result of eConveyancing. All NSW land titles are backed by the Torrens Assurance Fund, which provides compensation in the unlikely event of a person losing an interest in land through fraud.

- (50) What training or resources are available to conveyancers and legal practitioners to help them identify and prevent fraudulent transactions within the e-conveyancing process?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Under the NSW Operating Requirements, which governs the behavior of ELNOs, ELNOs must make adequate training resources and information available to Subscribers to understand their security obligations including, but not limited to, cyber security awareness training covering secure use of the ELN and secure use of email and other electronic communication.

The ARNECC website has in depth Guidance Notes for Subscribers covering on all areas relevant to use of the electronic platform.

Impact of E-Conveyancing on the Real Estate Market:

(51) How has the introduction of e-conveyancing impacted the efficiency of the real estate market in NSW?

- (a) Are there any studies or data available that show the effects on transaction times, costs, or market dynamics?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Two of the main efficiencies achieved through eConveyancing are:

- sellers receive direct access to settlement money; and
- buyers receive quicker registration of title.

Prior to eConveyancing, the seller had to wait for cheques to clear, which could take upwards of five days. Payments are now made direct to the seller's nominated bank account. Similarly, a buyer previously had to wait 3 to 4 days for the Torrens Register to be updated to show the buyer as the new owner of land. Now, transaction documents are lodged immediately with the land registry and, depending on the type of transaction, registered instantly.

(52) How is the department ensuring that e-conveyancing is accessible and understandable to homebuyers, particularly first-time buyers? Are there educational resources available to help them navigate the process?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Conveyancing is the legal process of transferring title from one person to another. Buyers and sellers engage a lawyer or licensed conveyancer to prepare contracts and advise on the legal aspects of the transaction, organise the financial settlement and lodge the documents with the land titles office to complete the transaction and transfer ownership. This process has not changed with eConveyancing. The only difference is that the documents that are prepared and lodged with the land titles office are completed electronically, through an ELNO such as Property Exchange Australia Ltd (PEXA).

Owners cannot lodge documents with the land titles office directly. They must engage a legal representative, as was previously the normal when buying or selling a house. The eConveyancing system was set up so that only qualified and insured participants can access the electronic

platform, which reduces the risk of fraud and errors. The homebuyer's legal representative is therefore on hand to explain the transaction to their client, including, if necessary, the eConveyancing platform.

Working with Children Checks (WWCC)

(53) What enhancements have been made to the digital application process for WWCC to improve user experience and reduce processing times? Are there any planned updates to further streamline the process?

ANSWER

I am advised:

In November 2023, Service NSW, in partnership with the Office of the Children's Guardian and Transport for NSW, introduced the Digital Working with Children Check (WWCC) renewal for NSW citizens, providing people with the choice to renew online.

This innovation benefits customers by streamlining the process, eliminating the need to visit a Service NSW service centre and providing flexibility to renew at their convenience. This includes regional customers who previously needed to travel longer distances to complete their renewal.

(54) How is Service NSW supporting applicants who may face challenges in completing the WWCC application online, such as those without digital access or those with language barriers? Are there in-person services available to assist these individuals?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Service NSW offers customers in-person support and guidance to complete digital forms and transactions at service centres.

The Office of the Children's Guardian manages the Working With Children Check (WWCC) digital application form. Service NSW verifies proof of identity documents submitted through the digital WWCC application and processes payments if required.

Customers who are not able to complete the digital form are referred directly to The Office of the Children's Guardian, which can provide customers with alternate pathways for lodging their applications.

(55) What measures are in place to ensure the security of sensitive information submitted during the WWCC application process? How does Service NSW protect this data from unauthorized access or breaches?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The privacy of Service NSW customers' personal information is protected under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*.

Service NSW has developed a Privacy Management Plan to inform customers how Service NSW manages and protects personal information.

Service NSW has implemented a range of protective measures to prevent unauthorised access and breaches of information. This includes role-based access which ensures that only individuals that require access to the information to perform their duties can access the data.

- (56) How does Service NSW ensure that the WWCC process complies with NSW privacy laws? Are there regular audits or reviews conducted to ensure ongoing compliance and data protection?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 55.

- (57) What are the long-term plans for the WWCC process within Service NSW? Are there any upcoming initiatives or technological advancements aimed at further improving the process?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Long-term plans for the WWCC process are guided by the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) as the agency responsible for the WWCC. Service NSW continues to support the OCG, including on any identified service improvements, and to ensure alignment with future demand, priorities and legislative requirement.

- (58) How is Service NSW planning to adapt the WWCC process to meet future demands, such as potential legislative changes or increases in application volume?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 57..

Cuts to Service NSW

- (59) In line with answers provided in this Budget Estimates, can you please advise exactly when you anticipate the third wave of redundancies at Service NSW will begin?

ANSWER

I am advised that the staged rollout of the Service NSW realignment is subject to consultation with staff and unions, and consideration of that feedback. This will inform the appointment of staff to roles. Staff will also have the opportunity to be redeployed through the NSW Government mobility program.

- (60) What is the breakdown or can you please quantify the number of jobs at Service NSW which are estimated to be cut as part of this wave, and the locations these redundancies will come from?

ANSWER

I am advised that the staged rollout of the Service NSW realignment is subject to consultation with staff and unions, and consideration of that feedback. This will inform the appointment of staff to roles, at which time the breakdown will be known. Staff will also have the opportunity to be redeployed through the NSW Government mobility program.

(61) (If no to both) You are undertaking a significant restructuring process to an essential frontline support service, which has real implications for staff who support the people of NSW on a daily basis. How can you not be aware of, or not have access to these figures?

ANSWER

Please refer to answers to Supplementary Questions 59 and 60.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Rural Fire Service volunteers

- (62) At present, how many volunteers are currently in the RFS?
 - (a) How many are in active or operational firefighting roles?
 - (b) Separately and by region:
 - i. How many members are over 50 years of age?
 - ii. How many members are over 60 years of age?
 - iii. How many members are over 70 years of age?
 - iv. How many members are under 50?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Volunteer numbers are available in the agency’s annual report. As at 31 August 2024:

- a) 56,204 volunteers were in operational roles.
- b)

Area Command	Under 50	50 – 59	60 – 69	70+
RFS Area Hunter	3,817	1,400	1,609	1,547
RFS Area North East	2,611	1,184	1,403	1,200
RFS Area North West	2,682	1,366	1,486	1,323
RFS Area South East	4,278	2,036	2,355	2,222
RFS Area South West	4,048	1,723	1,951	1,816

RFS Area Greater Sydney	7,064	2,387	1,993	1,994
RFS Area Western	5,432	2,574	2,724	2,868
Total	29,506	12,529	13,386	12,863

Note 1: These figures include double counting of volunteers who are members of more than one Brigade, District or Area.

Note 2: Data errors have occurred due to data migration of historical volunteer data into the current system.

- (63) In 2019, how many volunteers were part of the RFS?
- (a) How many were in active or operational firefighting roles?
 - (b) Separately and by region:
 - i. How many members are over 50 years of age?
 - ii. How many members are over 60 years of age?
 - iii. How many members are over 70 years of age?
 - iv. How many members are under 50?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Volunteer numbers are available in the agency’s annual report. As at 30 June 2019:

a) 58,128 volunteers were in operational roles.

b)

Region	Under 50	50 – 59	60 – 69	70+
RFS Region East	11,939	3,816	3,465	3,005
RFS Region North	5,282	2,719	2,698	1,979
RFS Region South	8,372	4,074	4,041	3,033
RFS Region West	5,908	2,949	2,770	2,371
Total	31,271	13,476	12,906	10,350

Note 1: These figures include double counting of volunteers who are members of more than one Brigade, District or Area.

Note 2: Data errors have occurred due to data migration of historical volunteer data into the current system.

- (64) Separately for each RFS Region, how many volunteers have joined the service in the last 12 months that are under 30?

ANSWER

I am advised 1,795 people aged under 30 years joined the RFS from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Area Command	Under
---------------------	--------------

	30
RFS Area Hunter	320
RFS Area North East	167
RFS Area North West	148
RFS Area South East	227
RFS Area South West	148
RFS Area Greater Sydney	519
RFS Area Western	267
Total	1,795

(65) Separately for each RFS Region, how many volunteers have joined the service in the last 12 months that are aged between 30 and 50?

ANSWER

I am advised 1,643 people aged between 30 and 50 years joined the RFS from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Area Command	30-50
RFS Area Hunter	278
RFS Area North East	245
RFS Area North West	158
RFS Area South East	232
RFS Area South West	139
RFS Area Greater Sydney	390
RFS Area Western	202
Total	1,643

(66) Separately for each RFS Region, how many volunteers have joined the service in the last 12 months that are aged over 50?

ANSWER

I am advised 1,147 people aged over 50 years joined the RFS from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

Area Command	Over 50
RFS Area Hunter	219
RFS Area North East	178
RFS Area North West	84
RFS Area South East	229
RFS Area South West	62
RFS Area Greater Sydney	226
RFS Area Western	152
Total	1,147

(67) How many volunteers have departed the RFS in the last 12 months?

(a) What was the reason most cited for departure?

ANSWER

I am advised:

4,274 people left the RFS from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024. The most common reason was

'Removed.' This may be due to non-attendance or failure to respond to Brigade communications.

State Emergency Service volunteers

(68) Separately for each SES Region, at present, how many volunteers are currently in the SES?

- (a) How many members are over 50 years of age?
- (b) How many members are over 60 years of age?
- (c) How many members are over 70 years of age?
- (d) How many members are under 50?

ANSWER

This question was answered on page 79 of the uncorrected transcript.

(69) Separately for each SES Region, in 2019, how many volunteers were in the SES?

- (a) How many members were over 50 years of age?
- (b) How many members were over 60 years of age?
- (c) How many members were over 70 years of age?
- (d) How many members were under 50?

ANSWER

I am advised that as at 30 June 2019:

Zones	49 and Under	50 - 59	60 - 69	70 and over	TOTAL
SES Head Office	232	51	41	12	336
SES Metro	2,390	464	364	189	3,407
SES Northern	1,274	382	409	225	2,290
SES South East	893	223	205	90	1,411
SES Southern	343	123	96	46	608
SES Western	712	228	191	108	1,239
Unknown	6	5	1	4	16
GRAND TOTAL	5,850	1,476	1,307	674	9,307

(70) How many volunteers have joined the SES in the last 12 months?

ANSWER

I am advised 2,263 volunteers joined the SES between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024.

(71) How many volunteers have departed the SES in the last 12 months?

- (a) What was the reason most cited for departure?

ANSWER

I am advised 1,183 volunteers departed the SES between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024.

- a. The NSW SES does not record this data at present.

Dungog Fire Station

(72) Has the land been purchased for the new Dungog Fire and Rescue station?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Yes.

(73) Has construction on the project commenced?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Yes.

(74) What is the timetable for the construction work to be undertaken?

ANSWER

I am advised construction commenced in August 2024 with an anticipated completion date of 2025.

(75) When will Dungog brigade commence using the new station?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 74.

(76) What is the current status of On-Call firefighter ranks at Station 282?

ANSWER

I am advised Dungog Fire Station has four on call firefighters and three applicants progressing through the recruitment process.

Fuel load

(77) Provide a list of areas that have a fuel load rated High, Very High or Extreme.

ANSWER

I am advised that information on fuel loads is provided in the RFS Fire Season Outlook 2024-25.

Bilpin

(78) When was the last bushfire hazard analysis completed for the Bilpin area?

ANSWER

I am advised:
February 2024

(79) What were the results of the analysis?

ANSWER

I am advised:
The overall fuel hazard differed on each of the nine locations on which a fuel hazard assessment was conducted.
The RFS has written to Hawkesbury City Council and Transport for NSW requesting treatment of certain areas. Both have agreed to progress with the treatment, with the RFS to support the work by providing mitigation crew services.

(80) What hazard reduction activities have been completed in the Bilpin area since 2020?

ANSWER

I am advised:
In addition to the work referenced in Supplementary Question 79, a Community Protection Plan is being developed for Bilpin.
Maintenance and vegetation management works are being undertaken on the Pitmans Fire Trail.
The heavy burn scar from both the State Mine Fire in 2013/14 and the Gospers Mountain Fire in 2019/20, threshold restrictions for the period between burns and excessive rainfall levels have reduced the opportunities for hazard reduction burning.

Flood Recovery

(81) During the October 2023 Budget Estimates session, it was estimated people would be in their homes on a new Resilient Lands Program site by Christmas this year.

Can you provide an update on each of the sites and whether the target of people in homes by Christmas is on track?

ANSWER

I am advised:
The NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) is working towards relocating buyback homes to the Mt Pleasant Estate, Goonellabah by the end of 2024. These homes will serve as a demonstration of how buyback homes can be re-purposed in an efficient and economical way.

(82) How much of the \$100m allocated to the Resilient Lands Program has been spent to-date?

ANSWER

I am advised:

\$15.3 million with the remaining funding envelope committed to projects to deliver land, housing and supporting infrastructure across the Northern Rivers.

Insurance

(83) Parts of the Northern Rivers are now uninsurable against floods - insurance companies won't offer flood coverage. In other areas premiums are so high, residents and business owners can't afford to protect their livelihoods and homes from future flooding. What is the Government doing to address this significant issue?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) is delivering a range of initiatives to address this issue.

The Resilient Homes Program (RHP) is providing financial support to residents in the Northern Rivers Region to build greater resilience to future flooding within impacted communities.

The RA has supported the development of place-based adaptation plans across the Richmond Valley local government area, including some of the town's most severely impacted in the 2022 floods, such as Coraki, Woodburn and Broadwater.

Development of the Northern Rivers Disaster Adaptation Plan (DAP) is underway. The purpose of the DAP is to ensure the Northern Rivers is well-prepared and the cost and impacts of disasters on communities can be reduced by successfully mitigating or adapting to natural hazard risks.

The availability and affordability of insurance was identified as a key issue in the preparation of the NSW State Disaster Mitigation Plan which includes two actions that seek to address these issues:

- Action 35 - Review levy arrangements on insurance premia
- Action 36 - Collaborate with NEMA and the insurance sector to reflect disaster risk reduction measures in insurance pricing, and to use data on insurance affordability to inform strategic land use planning responses.

YOUTH JUSTICE

Bail and Crime Amendment

(84) The number of Aboriginal children in detention has increased by almost 40% compared with this time last year. How has the Government's approach to addressing public perceptions about youth crime, including tightening access to bail for children, impacted the record high numbers of children in custody?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The new bail laws are recent changes, and it is too early to draw a correlative link from what is captured in BOCSAR data.

(85) Under a new provision in the NSW Bail Act a young person can only be released on bail if the bail decision maker has a high degree of confidence the young person will not commit a serious indictable offence while on bail.

(a) What is the forecast additional costs that will be incurred because of the anticipated increase in the number of young people being denied bail and being held in detention because of this new requirement?

(b) Are these costs expected to be absorbed in current agency budgets?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The new bail laws are recent changes, and it is not yet possible to forecast the financial impact on Youth Justice Centre operational costs.

Mental Health

(86) Given we are in a recognised youth mental health crisis and a youth justice crisis, why has there been zero increase in the Targeted Early Intervention (TEI) funding for the Northern Sydney and Northern Beaches Regions this year, despite a recorded increase in offences committed by young offenders in several LGAs in those regions?

ANSWER

This question should be directed to the Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion.

Alternate Accommodation and Diversion

(87) Youth Foyers are a proven approach to assisting young people transition from out-of-home care to independence, assisting them into accommodation, education and employment and reducing contact with the justice system. Does the Government propose to develop additional Foyers in NSW?

ANSWER

This question should be directed to the Minister for Housing and Homelessness.

(88) The former Coalition Government extended out-of-home care for young people to the age of 21 with a basic package of income support. Does the Government have any plans under

Your Choice Your Future to provide youth coaching to those young people to continue to prepare them for independence?

ANSWER

This question should be directed to the Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion.

Union membership

(89) Are you a member of a union?

(a) If yes, what union?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983 (the Regulation) sets out Members' obligations to disclose relevant pecuniary and other interests in periodic returns to Parliament.

Clause 13 of the Regulation relevantly requires the disclosure of the name of each trade union and each professional or business association 'in which he or she held any position' as at specified dates. The Regulation does not require Members to disclose membership of a trade union.

Membership of Unions can be disclosed on a discretionary basis. The Clerk of the Parliaments has confirmed that this view is consistent with guidance provided to Members.

TikTok

(90) Are you on TikTok?

(a) If yes, do you access TikTok from a NSW Government device?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Circular DCS-2023-01 Cyber Security NSW Directive - Protecting NSW Government information on government-issued devices sets out how NSW Government agencies are to manage the risk of using TikTok.

More information is available at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/public%3A//2023-05/TikTok%20Ban%20-%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20%282%29.pdf>
[TikTok%20Ban%20-%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20%282%29.pdf](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/public%3A//2023-05/TikTok%20Ban%20-%20Frequently%20Asked%20Questions%20%282%29.pdf)

Land audit – Department(s)/Agency(s)

(91) Has your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) undertaken a land audit of surplus government property in any of the following postcodes:

- (a) 2077?
- (b) 2079?
- (c) 2080?
- (d) 2081?
- (e) 2082?
- (f) 2083?
- (g) 2117?
- (h) 2118?
- (i) 2119?
- (j) 2120?
- (k) 2121?
- (l) 2125?
- (m) 2126?
- (n) 2151?
- (o) 2154?
- (p) 2156?
- (q) 2157?
- (r) 2158?
- (s) 2159?
- (t) 2756?
- (u) 2775?

i. If yes to (a) to (u), how many properties have been identified?

ANSWER

I am advised:

- The NSW Government has been conducting an audit of government land to identify surplus sites that are suitable for social, affordable or market housing.
- The locations of an initial set of 44 sites identified by the audit will be made public over the coming weeks and months as they are transferred to housing delivery agencies or brought to market.

Signal

(92) Are you on Signal?

(a) If yes, do you access Signal from a NSW Government device?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Like the former Coalition Government, a range of communications are used by the NSW Government.

I comply with the *State Records Act 1998* and I expect all staff members to comply with their obligations under the Act.

CFMEU membership

(93) Have you ever been a member of the Construction, Forestry and Maritime Employees Union (CFMEU)?

(a) If yes, when?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 89.

Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports

(94) In what month will the 2023-24 annual reports for each department / agency in your portfolio be published?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The annual report of a reporting GSF agency is to be prepared, submitted and tabled in accordance with requirements under the *Government Sector Finance Act 2018* and Treasurer's Direction 23-11.

(95) Will the 2023-24 annual reports for the department / agency in your portfolio include a printed copy?

(a) If yes, how much is budgeted for printing in 2024-25?

ANSWER

I am advised:

All agencies in my portfolio have been directed to comply with the NSW Treasury Policy and Guidelines – Annual Reporting Requirements TPG23-10.

ETU membership

(96) Have you ever been a member of the Electrical Trades Union (ETU)?

(a) If yes, when?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 89.

Paper shredder

(97) Does your ministerial office have a paper shredder?

ANSWER

I am advised:

When the NSW Government was elected in 2023, shredders used by the former Liberal and National Government were left in Ministerial and Parliament offices.

Office equipment is purchased in line with NSW Government procurement rules.

Department(s)/Agency(s) in Portfolio

(98) What department(s)/agency(s) are included in your portfolio?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Cabinet Office publishes a Governance Arrangements Chart containing information about Ministers, NSW Government agencies established under Schedule 1 to the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013* and State owned corporations established under Schedule 5 to the *State Owned Corporations Act 1989*. The Governance Arrangements Chart outlines the agencies in the Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services and Youth Justice portfolios.

The Governance Arrangements Chart may be accessed via The Cabinet Office's website at www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/noindex/2024-08/20240807-Governance-Arrangements-Chart.pdf

The *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*, and Administrative Arrangements Orders made under Part 7 of the *Constitution Act 1902*, are available on the NSW Legislation website (www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)

Former Ministerial Employees

(99) Are there any former employee from your ministerial office now employed by any department/agency within your portfolio responsibilities?

(a) If yes, how many?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The employment of former Ministerial office staff is not tracked.

Under the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*, the Secretary of a Department exercises the employer functions of the Government in relation to departmental employees. The Secretary is not subject to the direction or control of a Minister in the exercise of those functions. Similarly, the head of a Public Service agency exercises the employer functions of the Government in relation to non-Public Service senior executives of the agency. A head of a Public Service agency is not subject to the direction or control of a Minister in the exercise of those functions.

All NSW government sector employees must comply with the Code of Ethics and Conduct for NSW government sector employees. Employees must also have regard to their relevant agency's code of conduct.

Ministerial office staff must comply with their ethical obligations under the NSW Office Holder's Staff Code of Conduct, including after the cessation of the employment.

Qantas Chairman's Club

(100) Are you a Member of the Qantas Chairman's Club?

- (a) If no, have you ever previously been a member?
- (b) If yes, when did you cease to be a member?
- (c) If yes, when did you initially become a member?
- (d) If yes, when did you make a declaration to The Cabinet Office?
- (e) If yes, how many times since 28 March 2023 have you used the Qantas Chairman's Club?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983 (Regulation) sets out Members' obligations to disclose relevant pecuniary and other interests in periodic returns to Parliament.

The Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics Report on Review of the Code of Conduct, Aspects of Disclosure of Interests, and Related Issues (December 2010) notes that:

“Advice has been received from the Crown Solicitor that use of the Chairman's Lounge by invitation is not a "gift" for the purposes of clause 10 of the Regulation, as it does not involve disposition of property. However, when the membership leads to an upgrade valued at more than \$250, it becomes disclosable as a contribution to travel, and should be reported under clause 11 of the Regulation.”

Clause 16 of the Regulation allows a Member to, at their discretion, disclose any direct or indirect benefit, advantage or liability, whether pecuniary or not.

Relevant disclosures have been made to the Cabinet Office and to the NSW Parliament.

Ministerial Staff – Local Government Councillors

(101) As at 30 June 2024, how many of your ministerial staff were local government councillors?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministerial staff are employed by Ministers, on behalf of the State, in their capacity as "political office holders" under Part 2 of the *Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013* (Act).

All Ministerial staff are required to comply with the NSW Office Holder's Staff Code of Conduct, including obligations to seek approval for secondary employment, and to take reasonable steps to avoid, and in all cases disclose, any actual or potential conflicts of interest (real or apparent).

(102) What local government(s) did they serve?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 101.

ETU meetings

(103) Given ministerial diary disclosures do not include all meetings and provide exceptions to disclosures, since 28 March 2023, have you met with the ETU?

ANSWER

I am advised:

In accordance with Premier's Memorandum M2015-05 Publication of Ministerial Diaries and Release of Overseas Travel Information, all Ministers publish extracts from their diaries summarising details of scheduled meetings held with stakeholders, external organisations, third-party lobbyists and individuals. Ministers are not required to disclose details of the following meetings:

- meetings involving Ministers, ministerial staff, parliamentarians or government officials (whether from NSW or other jurisdictions)
- meetings that are strictly personal, electorate or party political
- social or public functions or events
- meetings held overseas (which must be disclosed in accordance with regulation 6(1)(b) of the Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018 and Attachment B to the Memorandum), and
- matters for which there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Ministers' diary disclosures are published quarterly on The Cabinet Office's website (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/the-cabinetoffice/access-to-information/ministers-diary-disclosures>).

State Records Act

(104) Have you and your ministerial office had training and/or a briefing about the State Records

Act from State Records NSW and/or The Cabinet Office and/or Premier's Department?

(a) If yes, when?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Ministers' Office Handbook provides guidance in relation to these obligations to assist each Minister's office.

The Premier's Department and The Cabinet Office also provide guidance, advice, training and support on these obligations for all Ministers' offices.

I expect my ministerial office to comply with their obligations under the *State Records Act 1998*.

Legal Costs

(105) How much did the Department/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities spend in legal costs since 28 March 2023?

(a) For what specific purposes or matters was legal advice sought?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Legal costs are contained within the fees for services rendered category disclosed within either the General Expenses or the Other Operating Expenses notes of the audited financial statements within each department or agency annual report.

Details for the period 28 March 2023 to 30 June 2023 form part of each department or agency annual report for 2022-23.

Details for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 form part of each department agency annual report for 2023-24. These reports are due to be released shortly.

Details for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2024 will form part of each department agency annual report for 2024-25.

Media releases and statements

(106) Are all the ministerial media releases and statements issued by you publicly available at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases>?

(a) If no, why?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Department of Customer Service (DCS) is responsible for managing www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases and the publication of media releases.

Advertising

(107) How much has each Department/agency within your portfolio responsibilities spent on advertising or sponsored posts since 28 March 2023 on the following social media platforms:

- (a) Facebook
- (b) Instagram
- (c) LinkedIn
- (d) TikTok
- (e) YouTube
- (f) X (formerly known as Twitter)

ANSWER

I am advised:

Department and agency expenditure is published in annual reports and on OpenGov NSW and data.nsw.gov.au

Catering

(108) How much of your ministerial budget was spent on catering in 2023-24?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Catering provided for official purposes may be funded from the Ministerial office budget.

Catering costs for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will form part of the Premier's Department Agency Annual Report 2023-24.

As Members of Parliament, Ministers have credit facilities extended to them for dining and hospitality at Parliament House. The facilities may be used for business or private purposes.

(109) Was catering used for external stakeholders?

- (a) If yes, who were these external stakeholders?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 108.

Parliamentary Secretary

(110) Does your Parliamentary Secretary have pass access to your ministerial office?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Security passes for 52 Martin Place are required to be issued in accordance with the 52 Martin Place security procedures and the associated Privacy and Surveillance Statement.

(111) Does your Parliamentary Secretary have a desk in your ministerial office?

ANSWER

No.

(112) Did any catering costs in 2023-24 include expenditure on alcohol?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Office Holder's Staff Code of Conduct, which is Attachment B to the Ministers' Office Handbook, provides that all office holder staff must use State resources for the effective conduct of public business in a proper manner. Office holder staff must be economical and efficient in the use and management of public resources. The Handbook can be found here:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/noindex/2023-12/Ministers-Office-Handbook.pdf>

Gin

(113) Since 28 March 2023, have you or your ministerial office purchased 'gin' using your ministerial budget?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Office Holder's Staff Code of Conduct, which is Attachment B to the Ministers' Office Handbook, provides that all office holder staff must use State resources for the effective conduct of public business in a proper manner. Office holder staff must be economical and efficient in the use and management of public resources. The Handbook can be found here:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/noindex/2023-12/Ministers-Office-Handbook.pdf>

Ministerial Vehicles and Driving Offences

(114) Since 28 March 2023, have you personally driven your ministerial vehicle?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, other nominated public office holders and certain former office holders are provided with official cars and drivers.

Office holders may drive themselves whenever they choose. Cars should be driven only by the office holder, officially employed drivers, the office holder's spouse or approved relative and any other person authorised by the office holder in those circumstances considered to be appropriate.

(115) As a driver since 28 March 2023:

(a) Have you been pulled over by the NSW Police Force?

(b) Have you been fined for speeding?

- (c) Have you been fined for school zone related offence?
- (d) Have you been fined for red light related offence?
- (e) Have you been involved in an accident that included the NSW Police attending the scene?
 - i. If yes to a) to e), did this include whilst driving your ministerial vehicle?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers, like all members of the community are subject to the laws of New South Wales, including Road Rules 2014.

Where a fine is incurred, the payment of the fine is the responsibility of the driver of the vehicle.

Speeches

(116) Does your portfolio department(s) / agency(s) draft and write speeches for you?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Department and agency staff may contribute to factual information for speaking notes as part of their duties in line with longstanding practices in place under successive governments.

(117) How many public servants have undertaken writing speeches in your portfolio department(s) / agency(s)?

ANSWER

Please see the answer to Supplementary Question 117.

Hard hats and/or vests

(118) Do you have a hard hat and/or vest for visiting infrastructure sites?

- (a) If yes, was it paid from your ministerial budget?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers are to comply with the appropriate use of personal protective equipment as per Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017.

The NSW Office Holder's Staff Code of Conduct, which is Attachment B to the Ministers' Office Handbook, provides that all office holder staff must use State resources for the effective conduct of public business in a proper manner. Office holder staff must be economical and efficient in the use and management of public resources. State resources are not to be subject to wasteful or extravagant use.

Ministerial Advisers

(119) How many staff members were employed in your ministerial office in 2023-24 FY?

ANSWER

I am advised that Ministerial staff numbers and grades are published on the NSW Government website at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/the-cabinet-office/access-to-information/premier-and-ministers-staff-numbers>

(120) What is the average salary for staff members in your ministerial office in 2023-24 FY?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 119.

Ministerial disclosures to The Cabinet Office

(121) On what date did you last update/make a ministerial disclosure to The Cabinet Office?

ANSWER

I am advised that disclosure obligations for Ministers under Part 2 (Standing disclosure of interests), Part 3 (Conflicts of Interest) and Part 4 (Gifts and Hospitality) of the Schedule to the Ministerial Code are continuous. Ministers are required to:

- notify the Premier of a change to their pecuniary and other interests as soon as practicable after the change has occurred
- notify the Premier of a change to pecuniary and other interests held by their immediate family members, as soon as practicable after the change has occurred
- notify the Premier promptly of conflicts of interest
- disclose gifts and hospitality promptly to the TCO Secretary.

I make continuous disclosures of the matters that are covered by the Ministerial Code.

GIPA Applications / Standing Order 52 – Ministerial Office

(122) Does your ministerial office have staff member(s) to undertake Government Information (Public Access) Act application(s) and/or Standing Order 52 requests?

- (a) If yes, has that ministerial staffer(s) received formal training about their legal obligations?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Cabinet Office provides training for Ministerial staff on their obligations under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* and the requirements for responding to orders for papers under Standing Order 52 of the Legislative Council.

(123) How many GIPA Applications have been received by your ministerial office since 28 March

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information concerning the obligations of a Minister's office as an agency under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* is required to be submitted to the Attorney General in accordance with section 125(2) of the Act.

The information is included in the annual report of the Department of Communities and Justice in accordance with sections 125(3) and (5) of the Act.

Police Commissioner Gin

(124) Have you received gin from the Police Commissioner?

ANSWER

No.

Cabinet Sub Committees

(125) What cabinet sub committees are you a member of?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Details of individual Cabinet committee members and the work of Cabinet committees are not generally made public. This reflects the longstanding Cabinet conventions of confidentiality and collective Ministerial responsibility, which are central to the Westminster system of government.

The NSW Cabinet Practice Manual is publicly available on the NSW Government website (www.nsw.gov.au) and provides information on operation of Cabinet and committees in NSW.

E-Toll

(126) Does your ministerial vehicle have an E-Toll?

(a) If yes, is expenditure paid by your by your ministerial budget?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition, other nominated public office holders, and certain former office holders are provided with official cars and drivers. All costs associated with these vehicles need to be paid from the relevant approved budget.

Costs for e-tolls form part of the Premier's Department Annual Report.

Department(s)/Agency(s) Gifts and Hospitality Register

(127) Does your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) have a gifts and/or hospitality register?

(a) If yes, is it available online?

i. If yes, what is the URL?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Regarding DCS, yes; it is not externally available.

Regarding the NSW SES, yes; it is not externally available.

Regarding FRNSW, yes; it is available at <https://www.fire.nsw.gov.au/page.php?id=9437#gifts>

Regarding the RFS, yes; it is not externally available.

Regarding the Premier's Department, yes; it is available at

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/premiers-department/access-to-information/gifts-and-hospitality-register>

Regarding the NSW Reconstruction Authority, yes; it is not externally available.

Regarding Youth Justice NSW, yes; the Department of Communities and Justice maintains a gifts register at <https://dcj.nsw.gov.au/resources/policies/gifts-benefits-and-bequests.html>

Workplace complaints

(128) Have you been the subject of any workplace complaints, including bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment since 28 March 2023?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Any complaint or disclosure made under the Respectful Workplace Policy is confidential. The Respectful Workplace Policy applies to all Ministerial Offices and staff and is published on the Cabinet Office website. As noted in the Goward review, a key aspect of effective workplace complaint policies is confidentiality in the complaint and investigation process. Confidentiality ensures that staff feel safe about raising concerns and confident that action will be taken in response.

(129) Has any member of your ministerial staff been the subject of any workplace complaints, including bullying, harassment, and sexual harassment since 28 March 2023?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 129.

Ministerial staff disclosure of gifts and/or hospitality

(130) Does your ministerial office keep a register of gifts and/or hospitality for staff to make disclosures?

ANSWER

I am advised:

All Ministerial staff are required to comply with the Gifts, Hospitality and Benefits Policy for Office Holder Staff attached to the Ministers' Office Handbook and available on the NSW Government website.

(131) Have any staff members in your office been the recipient of any free hospitality?

(a) What was the total value of the hospitality received?

(b) Are these gifts of hospitality declared?

ANSWER

I am advised:

All Ministerial staff are required to comply with the Gifts, Hospitality and Benefits Policy for Office Holder Staff attached to the Ministers' Office Handbook and available on the NSW Government website.

A breach of the Policy may be a breach of the Office Holder's Staff Code of Conduct. The Policy includes disclosure obligations for Ministerial staff in respect of gifts, hospitality and benefits over \$150.

If a Ministerial staff member is required by their role to accompany their Office Holder at an event that the Office Holder is attending as the State's representative, or where the Office Holder has asked the staff member to attend, then attendance at that event would not constitute a gift or benefit for the purposes of the Policy.

Ministerial Code of Conduct

(132) Since 28 March 2023, have you breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct?

(a) If yes, what was the breach?

ANSWER

I am advised:

All Ministers are expected to comply with their obligations under the NSW Ministerial Code of Conduct (Ministerial Code) at all times.

The Ministerial Code sets the ethical standards of behaviour required of Ministers and establishes practices and procedures to assist with compliance.

Among other matters, the Ministerial Code requires Ministers to:

- disclose their pecuniary interests and those of their immediate family members to the Premier
- seek rulings from the Premier if they wish to hold shares, directorships, other business interests or engage in secondary employment (known as 'prohibited interests')
- identify, avoid, disclose and manage conflicts of interest
- disclose gifts and hospitality with a market value over \$500.

A substantial breach of the Ministerial Code (including a knowing breach of any provision of the Schedule) may constitute corrupt conduct for the purposes of the *Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988*.

CFMEU meetings

(133) Given ministerial diary disclosures do not include all meetings and provide exceptions to disclosures, since 28 March 2023, have you met with the CFMEU?

ANSWER

Please refer to the answer to Supplementary Question 103.

Credit Cards

(134) Have you ever been issued with a credit card by a NSW Government department(s) and/or agency(s) since 28 March 2023?

- (a) If yes, under what circumstance?
- (b) If yes, what items and expenditure was undertaken?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers and Ministerial Staff are not eligible to receive Departmental credit cards except in the case of overseas travel. In cases of overseas travel short-term cards will be issued and returned at the completion of official travel together with a travel diary for fringe benefit tax purposes.

Where an NSW Government-issued credit card is provided the credit card must only be used for official overseas business trips and official business purposes, this includes for transport to/from the airport when departing/returning from the trip. NSW Government-issued credit cards for official business trips overseas will be held with government contract bankers and used within credit limits imposed. Credit cards are a useful means of expenditure control, but their use should never be for personal purposes.

Costs associated with overseas travel are published on the NSW Government website in line with M2015-05.

(135) For each department, agency and/or other body in the Minister's portfolio please report:

- (a) How many credit cards are currently on issue for staff? (Please provide a break-down of this information by grade)
- (b) What was the value of the largest reported purchase on a credit card for the last year?
- (c) What was each largest reported purchase for?
- (d) What was the largest amount outstanding on a single card at the end of a payment period?

- (e) And what was the card holder's employment grade?
- (f) How many credit cards have been reported lost or stolen?
- (g) What was the cost to replace them?
- (h) How many credit card purchases were deemed to be illegitimate or contrary to agency policy?
 - i. How many purchases were asked to be repaid on the basis that they were illegitimate or contrary to agency policy and what was the total value thereof?
 - ii. Were all those amounts repaid?
- (i) Are any credit cards currently on issue connected to rewards schemes?
 - i. Do staff receive any personal benefit as a result of those reward schemes?
 - ii. Can a copy of the staff credit card policy please be provided?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The use and management of purchasing (credit) cards for official purposes is in accordance with standard procurement arrangements of the NSW Government. Each department or agency within the portfolio has a specified policy, which was provided in my response to Supplementary Question 85 following my appearance on 31 October 2023.

Department(s)/agency(s) desk or office

(136) Do you have a desk or office in your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) building(s)?

ANSWER

I am advised:

No.

Senior Executive Drivers

(137) How many senior executives in your portfolio department(s) / agency(s) have a driver?

ANSWER

The Office of the Rural Fire Service Commissioner has an Executive Support Officer role whose assigned duties include providing transport to the Commissioner if required.

Mobile phones

(138) How many mobile phones has your ministerial office been allocated as at 1 July 2024?

ANSWER

I am advised;

Ministers' Staff Acceptable Use of Communication Devices Policy provides guidance on the use, loss, theft, and return of communication devices provided for business purposes.

Minister's staff may use mobile telephones for business and (reasonable use) private purposes.

Under the current mobile plans all local and Australia-wide calls to land lines/mobiles and texts are included in the plan. Premium service calls, international calls and global roaming services are outside of the plan and may be still chargeable based on the principles below.

Ministers' staff mobile phone charges are paid from the Ministers' office budget except for the items listed below, which need to be paid as a private expense:

- Personal international calls from within Australia
- Personal travel related global roaming charges
- Personal premium number service calls

Any personal calls which are outside the plan need to be declared and paid for monthly. Declarations are not required otherwise.

The purchasing of technology items is in accordance with standard procurement arrangements.

The costs form part of the Premier's Department Annual report.

(139) How many mobile phones in your ministerial office have been lost or stolen since 28 March 2023?

ANSWER

I am advised;

Ministers' Staff Acceptable Use of Communication Devices Policy provides guidance on the use, loss, theft, and return of communication devices provided for business purposes.

Minister's staff may use mobile telephones for business and (reasonable use) private purposes.

Under the current mobile plans all local and Australia-wide calls to land lines/mobiles and texts are included in the plan. Premium service calls, international calls and global roaming services are outside of the plan and may be still chargeable based on the principles below.

Ministers' staff mobile phone charges are paid from the Ministers' office budget except for the items listed below, which need to be paid as a private expense:

- Personal international calls from within Australia
- Personal travel related global roaming charges
- Personal premium number service calls

Any personal calls which are outside the plan need to be declared and paid for monthly. Declarations are not required otherwise.

The purchasing of technology items is in accordance with standard procurement arrangements.

The costs form part of the Premier's Department Annual report.

Efficiency dividends

(140) Was an efficiency dividend applied to your portfolio department(s) / agency(s) within your portfolio responsibilities in:

(a) 2023-24?

(b) 2024-25?

i. If so, what was the efficiency dividend applied to each department/agency?

ii. What measures are being considered to achieve this efficiency dividend?

ANSWER

I am advised;

The budget papers include detailed information on budgeted expenses, revenue and capital expenditure. This includes detailed financial statements for individual agencies as well as for government as a whole. The budget papers also outline the financial impact of measures in the budget on individual portfolios as well as for government as a whole.

Stationery

(141) How much of your ministerial budget was spent on stationery in 2023-24?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Spending on office stationery is in accordance with standard procurement arrangements.

The costs of stationery are contained within the Premier's Department Annual Report.

(142) Did your stationery expenditure include gifts for external stakeholders?

(a) If yes, what was the gift(s)?

(b) If yes, who received the gift(s)?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Ministers' Office Handbook outlines that the decision to present a gift is at the discretion of the Minister, having regard to both appropriateness and economy. Gifts may be appropriate, for example, where given as a memento of an official visit or as a small token of appreciation.

However, gifts should not be given with the purpose, or in circumstances where they could be perceived as having the purpose, of inducing favourable treatment.

Gifts may be purchased as needed on an occasional basis or purchased and stored for future use. Gifts need to be purchased in accordance with NSW Government procurement policy.

Consultants

(143) Since 28 March 2023, how many consultancy contracts have been signed in your portfolio agencies, broken down by agency?

(a) What was the individual amount of each contract?

(b) What is the purpose of each contract?

(c) Who was the contract with?

(d) Did the contract go through a competitive tender?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Consultancy expenditure, including details of consulting engagements over \$50,000, are included in the annual reports of agencies and departments in accordance with the NSW Treasury Policy and Guidelines TPG23-10 - Annual Reporting Requirements.

Details for the period prior to 30 June 2023 form part of the 2022-23 annual reports within my portfolios.

Details for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will form part of the 2023-24 annual reports within my portfolios.

GIPA Applications – Department(s)/Agency(s)

(144) Since 28 March 2023, have you and/or your ministerial office given instructions to your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) in relation to Government Information (Public Access) Act application(s)?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* provides that agencies are not subject to the direction or control of any Minister in the exercise of the agency's functions in dealing with a particular access application under the Act (subsection 9(2)). The Act also contains offences prohibiting agency officers from acting unlawfully, and prohibiting persons from directing agencies to make an unlawful decision in relation to an access application (sections 116 and 117 of the Act).

It is, however, generally appropriate for agencies to inform the responsible Minister where documents are to be released under the Act, for the Minister's information.

Department(s)/Agency(s) Travel

(145) As Minister, do you approve overseas travel for public servants in your portfolio department(s) / Agency(s)?

(a) If yes, how many overseas trips have you approved since 28 March 2023?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government Travel and Transport Policy provides a framework for NSW Government travelling employees and covers official air and land travel by public officials using public money. Section 2.1 of that Policy sets out approvals required in relation to overseas travel. Further information in relation to the Policy can be found here:

<https://www.info.buy.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/travel-and-transport-policy>

NSW Treasury Policy and Guidelines – Annual Reporting Requirements (TPG-10) requires agencies to include information on overseas visits by officers and employees in agency annual reports. Information for the period prior to 30 June 2023 is available in agencies' 2022-23 annual reports. Information for the period between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024 will be available in agencies' 2023-24 annual reports.

(146) Since 28 March 2023, how much has been spent on charter air flights by your portfolio agencies, broken down by agency?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Charter air flights are contained within the travel costs category in the Other Operating Expenses note of the audited financial statements within the Department / Agency's Annual Report. This is in accordance with the Treasury Direction TD23-11 Annual reporting requirements.

The travel costs for the period prior to 30 June 2023 form part of the 2022-23 annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio. Travel costs for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will form part of the 2023-24 annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio.

(147) Since 28 March 2023, how much has been spent on domestic flights by your portfolio agencies, broken down by agency?

(a) Of these, how many flights were taken in business class?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Domestic travel is contained within the travel costs category in the Other Operating Expenses note of the audited financial statements within the annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio. This is in accordance with the Treasury Direction TD23-11 Annual reporting requirements.

The travel costs for the period prior to 30 June 2023 form part of the 2022-23 annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio.

Travel costs for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will form part of the 2023-24 annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio.

Official travel is taken in accordance with the NSW government travel policy.

(148) Since 28 March 2023, how much has been spent on international flights by your portfolio

agencies, broken down by agency?

- (a) Of these, how many flights were taken in business class?
- (b) Of these, how many flights were taken in first class?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government Travel and Transport Policy provides a framework for all NSW Government travelling employees and covers all official air and land travel by public officials using public money. Further information in relation to the Policy can be found here:

<https://www.info.buy.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/travel-and-transport-policy>

The travel costs for the period prior to 30 June 2023 form part of the 2022-23 annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio. Travel costs for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will form part of the 2023-24 annual reports of the agencies within my portfolio.

(149) What was the total expenditure since 28 March 2023 by each Department/agency within your portfolio responsibilities on:

- (a) Taxi hire?
- (b) Ridesharing services?
- (c) Limousine/private car hire?
- (d) Hire car rental?

ANSWER

I am advised:

These items are contained in the travel costs category of either the Operating Expenses category of the Travel and Motor Vehicle note or the Other Operating Expenses note of the audited financial statements within each department or agency annual report. This is in accordance with the Treasury Direction TD23-11 Annual reporting requirements.

Travel costs for the period 28 March 2023 to 30 June 2023 form part of each department or agency annual report for 2022-23. These reports are due to be released shortly.

Travel costs for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024 will form part of each department or agency annual report for 2023-24.

Union membership fees

(150) What was the expenditure for you to join a union in:

- (a) 2022-23?
- (b) 2023-24?
- (c) 2024-25?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983 (the Regulation) sets out Members' obligations to disclose relevant pecuniary and other interests in periodic returns to Parliament.

Clause 13 of the Regulation relevantly requires the disclosure of the name of each trade union and each professional or business association 'in which he or she held any position' as at specified dates. The Regulation does not require Members to disclose membership of a trade union.

Membership of Unions can be disclosed on a discretionary basis. The Clerk of the Parliaments has confirmed that this view is consistent with guidance provided to Members.

Training

(151) Since 28 March 2023, have you had training from an external stakeholder that included an invoice and payment paid for using your ministerial budget?

(a) If yes, what is the description of training?

(b) If yes, how much?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers have undertaken a program of Ministerial induction training.

Ministers have undertaken Respectful Workplace Policy Training.

Members of Parliament are provided with a Skills Development Allowance that may be used in a manner consistent with the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Annual Determination.

Cabinet documents

(152) Since 28 March 2023, have you shared Cabinet documents with your Parliamentary Secretary?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The conventions and practice for access to Cabinet documents are outlined in Premier's Memorandum M2006-08 - Maintaining Confidentiality of Cabinet Documents and Other Cabinet Conventions (M2006-8).

M2006-08 provides that the unauthorised and/or premature disclosure of Cabinet documents undermines collective ministerial responsibility and the convention of Cabinet confidentiality. It is essential that the confidentiality of Cabinet documents is maintained to enable full and frank discussions to be had prior to Cabinet making decisions.

Website usage

(153) What were the top 20 most utilised (by data sent and received) unique domain names accessed by your ministerial office since 28 March 2023?

ANSWER

I am advised that all use of network services must be lawful, appropriate, and ethical, in line with the Ministers' Staff Acceptable Use of Network Services Policy which is available in the Ministers' Office Handbook.

(154) What were the top 20 most accessed (by number of times accessed) unique domain names accessed by your ministerial office since 28 March 2023?

ANSWER

I am advised that all use of network services must be lawful, appropriate and ethical, in line with the Ministers' Staff Acceptable Use of Network Services Policy which is available in the Ministers' Office Handbook.

Department(s)/Agency(s) Employees

(155) How many senior executive service employees were employed by each Department/agency within your portfolio responsibilities on:

- (a) 28 March 2023?
- (b) 1 July 2023?
- (c) 1 January 2024?
- (d) 1 July 2024?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The number of senior executives is publicly reported within Annual Reports.

(156) How many public servants within your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) were paid more than the Premier in 2023-24?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The remuneration of public service senior executives is published in the respective department/agency annual report.

(157) How many redundancies were processed by each Department(s)/agency(s) within your portfolio responsibilities since 28 March 2023?

- (a) Of these redundancies, how many were:
- i. Voluntary?
 - ii. Forced?
- (b) What was the total cost of all redundancies in each Department/agency within your portfolio responsibilities?

ANSWER

I am advised that redundancies are published in department/agency annual reports under employee related expenses.

Ministerial visits

(158) Since 28 March 2023, have you visited any of these postcodes:

- (a) 2077?
- (b) 2079?
- (c) 2080?
- (d) 2081?
- (e) 2082?
- (f) 2083?
- (g) 2117?
- (h) 2118?
- (i) 2119?
- (j) 2120?
- (k) 2121?
- (l) 2125?
- (m) 2126?
- (n) 2151?
- (o) 2154?
- (p) 2156?
- (q) 2157?
- (r) 2158?

(s) 2159?

(t) 2756?

(u) 2775?

i. If yes to (a) to (u):

1. What was the purpose of the visit(s)?

2. Did you make a funding announcement(s)?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers' diary disclosures are publicly available. Premier's and Ministers' domestic travel information is published on the Premier's Department's website at:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/premiers-department/access-to-information/premier-and-ministers-domestic-travel>

Camera, video recorder and microphones

(159) Does your ministerial office have the following paid by your ministerial budget:

(a) Handheld camera?

(b) Handheld video recorder?

(c) Microphone?

i. If yes to (a) to (c), how much is each worth when purchased?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Ministers' Staff Acceptable Use of Communication Devices Policy provides guidance on the use, loss, theft, and return of communication devices provided for business purposes.

The purchasing of technology items is in accordance with standard procurement arrangements.

The costs form part of the Premier's Department Annual Report.