

Sydney Metro

Responses to post-hearing questions

Public Accountability and Works Committee

Inquiry into Western Sydney Science Park and
Aerotropolis development

Hearing date – 31 October 2024

Witness – Angela Jeffery, Head of Project Delivery

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

QUESTION:

1. The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Well, in all fairness, sure, the consultant was doing what you've described but was also incredibly curious as to how a metro station now being completed in the middle of cow and horse paddocks—and we're all concerned about that—and how the proponent, Celestino, had a high expectation and some form of agreement with the then Government that they'd get a rail station before they'd even had their planning material finalised at Penrith council or at the New South Wales planning department. Could you on notice undertake to look at the material the consultant was seeking in that regard?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Yes, happy to.

ANSWER:

The material was required at the time to assist with the market valuation assessment as part of the compulsory acquisition process which commenced after the station location had been confirmed by the Government. The report was commissioned, in line with the Just Terms Act, to underpin the submission to the Valuer General in relation to the compulsory acquisition.

QUESTION:

2. The CHAIR: I mean the business case that was written in relation to this or, basically, that was used to support this metro station being where it is. Which consultants helped write that?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Can I provide that to you on notice?

The CHAIR: Yes, please.

ANGELA JEFFERY: I think it was Cox, but I'll have to come back to you, if that's okay.

ANSWER:

A consultant team including Cox, Mecone, LUTI and JLL prepared the land use report which helped inform the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport (SM-WSA) Final Business Case decisions.

QUESTION:

3. The CHAIR: Sorry, Mr Latham, I just want to get the timeline there. So the business case was prepared with the help of one or more consultants, which you'll check and come back on, and then signed off by who before it then went to who?

ANGELA JEFFERY: It's submitted to government, and then—

The CHAIR: Which bit of government?

ANGELA JEFFERY: Central government. It's submitted to Cabinet for consideration and then funded as a project. Once the project is funded, then it's delivered.

The CHAIR: Did it get signed off by the transport Minister before it went to Cabinet?
ANGELA JEFFERY: I'd have to take that on notice, but that does sound like a standard process. I would like to take that on notice to confirm for sure.

ANSWER:

Final Business Cases are submitted by the relevant portfolio Minister for Cabinet consideration.

QUESTION:

4. SIMON HUNTER: The business case would've also been independently assured by Infrastructure NSW as part of that investment decision-making process, followed by the New South Wales Government.

The CHAIR: If it's possible to provide on notice a chain of who approved what and when in relation to that business case and the project, that would be very helpful in clarifying.

ANGELA JEFFERY: I'm happy to do that.

ANSWER:

The Final Business Case was prepared in accordance with the NSW Government's business case policy and guidelines. Prior to submission to Cabinet, it was assured by Infrastructure NSW in accordance with the [Infrastructure Investor Assurance Framework](#) (IIAF).

Infrastructure NSW's evaluation summary of the Final Business Case is available at [in-sw-business-case-evaluation-summary_sydney-metro-western-sydney-airport.pdf](#)

QUESTION:

5. The Hon. MARK LATHAM: If the benefit-cost ratio was 0.75, what was it for extending the heavy line from Leppington to Badgerys Creek?

ANGELA JEFFERY: I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you? That would've been part of the analysis to look at alternatives.

ANGELA JEFFERY: The business case was prepared just before I joined Sydney Metro, so I would have to take that on notice

ANSWER:

A Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) has not been completed for the Leppington to Badgerys' Creek corridor at Business Case level.

The Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study (2018) is publicly available and provides information on options and priorities. The Study found that extension of the South West Rail Link would provide fewer long term benefits than either the north-south or east-west links.

[Western Sydney Rail Needs Scoping Study | Transport for NSW](#)

QUESTION:

6. The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I think it's also a matter of record that up until the cities deal signed by Stuart Ayres, all of the planning out of Transport had been to extend that Leppington line. If you can find the benefit-cost ratio for that, it would be very helpful. I'm reliably informed that it's a lot higher than 0.75. With regard to your point, Mr Hunter, about Infrastructure NSW, how do you explain the heavy criticism by Infrastructure Australia of the Badgerys Creek to St Marys line, where they said that there's not sufficient evidence that the proposed project is the best solution for linking Western Sydney airport by public transport? They concluded that the benefits of the project do not justify its costs.

SIMON HUNTER: I'm not probably best placed to answer that. I don't know, Ms Jeffery, if you had seen—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you take that on notice, if someone in the transport system can provide a response to the heavy criticism of Infrastructure Australia, who basically said, as per the business case, that this thing is a white elephant?

ANSWER:

Infrastructure Australia (IA) found that there was a strong strategic case for the project's underlying objectives – improving access to Western Sydney International Airport and encouraging more sustainable development in the Western Parkland City. However, IA declined to include the project on the Infrastructure Priority List on the basis that the up-front costs exceeded the near-term benefit. This is typical for long-term city shaping infrastructure.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS**QUESTION:**

1. Please provide a copy of your third-party lobbyist register, recording meetings between the department and third-party lobbyists since 2012.

ANSWER:

Sydney Metro uses the public register of lobbyists which can be found here:

<https://lobbyists.elections.nsw.gov.au/whoisontheregister>

Sydney Metro regularly engages with large landowners in the vicinity of the SM-WSA Project's rail alignment including, since 2020, with Celestino on interface, urban design and construction management issues.

QUESTION:

2. Please provide a copy of the department's gifts and benefits register since 2012.

ANSWER:

Sydney Metro is committed to promoting appropriate standards of behaviour that protect the integrity and reputation of Sydney Metro. Sydney Metro maintains a Declarations Portal that facilitates staff compliance with their obligations under the Transport Code of Conduct and the Sydney Metro Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Procedure.

Sydney Metro has searched the Portal, and its predecessor since Sydney Metro's establishment on 1 July 2018, and confirms that it does not contain any records of any offers of gifts, benefits or hospitality declared in relation to Sydney Science Park or Celestino.

QUESTION:

3. When was the decision made, and under which Minister's authority, to not have the metro operating 24/7 to the Western Sydney Airport?

ANSWER:

Parklife Metro will operate and maintain the Sydney Metro - Western Sydney Airport line for 15 years after it becomes operational.

Initial operating hours for the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport line will be 4:30am to midnight Sunday to Thursday, and 4:30am to 1am Friday and Saturday.

These operating hours are aligned with Sydney Trains services at St Marys. Sydney Metro has the capability to provide alternative service patterns, and this would need to be done in alignment with the broader transport network and the train maintenance schedule.

To maintain Sydney Metro's high standard of safety and reliability, overnight engineering hours are needed for maintenance activities.

QUESTION:

4. Please provide a copy of patronage modelling conducted to justify the location of the new Metro stations around the Aerotropolis region.

ANSWER:

Once operational, the Sydney Metro – Western Sydney Airport will be able to transport up to around 7,740 passengers each hour in each direction. Customers will have 12 trains per hour, a train every five minutes in the peak and a train every 10 minutes off peak.

The patronage modelling undertaken to inform the SM-WSA Business Case is Cabinet In Confidence.

QUESTION:

5. Please provide a copy of all assurances, assumptions or projections regarding anticipated future residential development that underpinned any patronage modelling undertaken by Sydney Metro.

ANSWER:

The assurances, assumptions or projections regarding anticipated future residential development that underpinned any patronage modelling to inform the SM-WSA Business Case are Cabinet in Confidence.

QUESTION:

6. What is the nature of your membership of the Western Sydney Leadership dialogue?
- How much does membership cost?
 - How many events or functions have been attended by staff from the department?
 - Are conversations undertaken at Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue events recorded in the register of external meetings?
 - How are lobbying and influence risks managed with relation to membership of the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue?
 - For hospitality provided at Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue events, functions or meetings, are they disclosed on the register of gifts and hospitality, or are they treated differently as a result of the agency's membership?
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ANSWER:

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) holds a Corporate Membership with the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue (WSLD).

- TfNSW's corporate membership was \$25,000 for FY23-24.

- b. Staff from Sydney Metro attended the following events undertaken by or involving the WSLD this year (2024):
- Airport City Summit - Thursday 11 April 2024
 - South West Sydney Housing & Infrastructure Forum, 25 July 2024
 - Boomtown! Gala Dinner and Summit 2024, Thursday 28 and Friday 29 November.
- c. Sydney Metro attends WSLD events in two capacities, as a formal nominated speaker often with other agencies and with a focus on Western Sydney collaboration, or as an attendee who works on Western Sydney initiatives to hear insights and feedback. The WSLD events are recorded in the Sydney Metro register of external meetings. Themes, key messages and speakers are recorded in this register.
- d. All Sydney Metro employees, as public sector officials, must follow the values, principles and requirements outlined in the Transport Code of Conduct and Premier's Memorandum M2019-02 NSW Lobbyists Code of Conduct. This requires all NSW public sector officials to act impartially in the public interest when carrying out their public duties, including when being lobbied, or making decisions after being lobbied, by lobbyists. Transport's Sponsorship and Corporate Membership Policy supports risk management in corporate memberships and ensures there are no conflicts of interest.
- e. Hospitality received at all events attended by Sydney Metro staff are treated equally under the Gifts and Benefits Policy, irrespective of any corporate membership of hosting organisations. Benefits of corporate memberships including entry to events, are not considered gifts as they are paid for by Transport.
- Sydney Metro employees are obliged to declare hospitality provided at WSLD events, functions or meetings in the Sydney Metro Declarations Portal.
- f. See 6e.