



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 1 – PREMIER AND FINANCE

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025

Supplementary questions

Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier and Finance

Treasurer

(Mookhey)

Hearing: Wednesday 5 March 2025

Answers due by: 5.00 pm Tuesday 1 April 2025

Budget Estimates secretariat

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BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025
SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

Questions from Hon Mark Latham MLC

- (1) How many Covid emergency economic stimulus grants were issued in 2020 and 2021, and after checking, can the Treasurer report on which unspent monies have been reclaimed by the Treasury?
- (2) Given the \$2.7 million unspent in the \$3.7 million grant to the Bathurst Race Club in 2020 and the improprieties I detailed at the Racing Estimates on Tuesday, will the Treasurer now ask the Auditor General to follow the money and fully audit this grant and if need be, the entire program?

Questions from Hon Chris Rath MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)
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Treasurer

Working Regions Fund

- (3) In the 2023/24 Budget you announced \$250 million for the Working Regions Fund. Did that come out of the former government's Regional Growth Fund?
- (4) Has any additional funding been allocated to the Working Regions Fund since it was first announced?
- (5) What is the aim of the Working Regions Fund? What kind of projects can be applied for?
- (6) Have there been any applications for funding through the Working Regions Fund?
 - (a) If so, how many applications have been received?
 - (b) If so, how many applications have been approved and what is the value of the approved applications?
- (7) Has any funding been allocated through the Working Regions Fund?
 - (a) If so, where and how?
 - (b) If no funding has been allocated, when do you expect funding will be available through this fund?

- (c) If no funding has been allocated, why have you held this fund, worth a considerable amount of money, for two years without allowing any of it to be spent in regional NSW?

- (8) What is the current balance of the Working Regions Fund?

Housing and Productivity Contribution

- (9) Will there be a Works in Kind model available under Housing and Productivity Contributions for developer led works?

- (a) If so, how do you propose to ensure that Works in Kind projects align with the four-year budget cycle and Treasury-determined capital funding limits and do not interfere with the state's credit metrics?

- (10) Do you have any concerns that Works in Kind will allow infrastructure to be delivered outside of the state's planned sequencing, potentially bringing forward the need for related social infrastructure such as schools and parks. Have you undertaken any assessment of these risks?

- (11) Have discussions taken place between Treasury and the Department of Education to ensure that schools will be delivered in areas where Works in Kind brings forward housing and population growth?

- (12) It has been suggested that a housing-enabling capital fund could be created to integrate Works in Kind within current capital planning processes. Have you explored this option?

- (13) What is the current process for integrating Works in Kind contributions into long-term government planning, and how could a dedicated fund streamline this?

- (14) In 2023 the Government determined to waive State Infrastructure contributions to social and affordable housing providers. This of course would include the Housing and Productivity contribution. What other contributions are included in this exemption?

- (a) What is the value of the waived contributions (the exemptions) since that change was enacted with respect to both State Infrastructure Contributions and the Housing and Productivity contribution?

Great Koala National Park

- (15) You have allocated \$80 million to the assessment and establishment of the Great Koala National Park. How much of that \$80 million has been spent?

- (a) Can you itemise that expenditure?
- (16) Have you planned for significant costs to the NSW Budget for the establishment of a new koala park, compensation paid in termination of sovereign contracts with NSW, the cost of skilled worker redundancies and all new costs in creating that park?
 - (a) Are you confident that businesses and skilled workers in the area will be unaffected by the changes?

Carbon Credits

- (17) Has Treasury performed any work with or made any assumptions using carbon credits from the Improved Native Forestry Method to fund any or part of the proposed Great Koala National Park?
 - (a) What did that advice say, or what were those assumptions?
- (18) Without carbon credits, does the NSW Government have the money to fund a 176,000 hectare park?
- (19) Will all future funding for the Koala Park be new funding?
 - (a) Where will you allocate that funding from?

Glebe Island Port

- (20) Where is the review into the future of Glebe Island Port up to?
- (21) Is the Government actively considering a hybrid model for Glebe Island port?
- (22) When will you make a decision about the future of Glebe Island port?
- (23) Have you considered the full economic impact of moving current operations at Glebe Island port including:
 - (a) Increased truck movements in the order of hundreds and thousands?
 - (b) The increase in costs for gypsum, sugar and cement?
- (24) Does this consider the increased cost to government for the building of major infrastructure projects, for example the Metro?
- (25) We understand that as the Treasurer, your priority is to ensure return on investment by building up around metro stations. Has the Government completed any modelling on what return on investment closing the Port would achieve for the government?
 - (a) What assumptions or inclusions were made in the modelling?

- (26) I bring to your attention the Daily Telegraph story dated Monday 24 February about congestion at Newcastle Port. Newcastle Port is already at capacity on critical berths, correct?
- (a) Does this rule out Newcastle port as a viable alternative to Glebe Island?
- (27) Is Port Kembla a viable alternative to Glebe Island Port?
- (a) If so, is it a viable alternative for all users of Glebe Island Port?
- (28) Does your modelling note the additional 220,000 additional truck movements on the road between Wollongong and Sydney required each year by moving the current users to Port Kembla?
- (a) Are these additional movements not a significant safety issue?
- (29) We understand that users of Glebe Island have been put onto rolling leases with no guarantee of renewal. Can you provide more clarity for these businesses about those leases?

Bankstown Hospital Workers – Israeli Patient Comments

- (30) Did you or any member of staff from your office draft the amendment to the Hon. Jacqui Munro's motion moved on 19 February 2025, in particular which removed point 5 of her motion which read "*That this House calls on the Government to:*
- (a) *review any funding arrangements or grants received by signatories to the "United Muslim Community" statement;*
and
- (b) *revoke any funding for organisations that support the views in the "United Muslim Community" statement.*"?
- (a) Did you or any member of staff from your office review the amendment before it came before the Legislative Council?
- (31) What prompted your office or the government more broadly to remove this call to action from the motion?
- (32) Do you think it's acceptable for an individual who opposed the actions taken by the NSW Government against the former Bankstown nurses involved in the antisemitic incident to continue to be employed by the taxpayer?
- (33) As a general rule, do you support the upholding of codes of conduct and social media policies among the public sector?
- (a) Do you believe taxpayer money should be spent on employees who flagrantly violate those codes or policies?

- (34) Is it the NSW Government's position to continue financially supporting Sheikh Wesam Charkawi, who accused your government of "selective moral outrage"?
- (35) Should taxpayer funds continue to flow to employees who so obviously breach those codes and policies to which they are bound?

Health Insurance Premiums

- (36) There was a recent health insurance premium increase from April 2025, averaging 3.73 per cent. Have you spoken with the Albanese government on the matter of this above-household-inflation increase?
- (a) Has Treasury ever been instructed to speak with the Albanese government on this issue?

Gaming Reform and the Star

- (37) It has been reported that The Star's financial challenges are a result of the "unfair playing field" between gaming venues in New South Wales. The 2024 Independent Inquiry into The Star also recommended that there be a level playing field between casinos and other gaming and gambling venues for "reasons of commercial fairness" when it comes to harm minimisation measures, such as mandatory carded play. As a principle, does the government support the notion that there should be this 'level playing field'?
- (a) Is the government's lack of action on gaming reform in pubs and clubs a key reason why The Star is in financial trouble and so many jobs are at risk, since there is no such level playing field?
- (38) In a highly regulated space such as gaming and gambling, does the government aim for competitive neutrality between businesses selling the same product?
- (a) With regard to the Star example, relative to gaming at pubs and clubs, is it analogous to observing strict safety standards in one or two childcare centres but next to no regulations at hundreds of other childcare centres in the state?
- (39) It would seem that current regulatory arrangements financially disincentivise gaming and gambling venues from proactively implementing harm minimisation measures, correct?

Assets and Liabilities Committee

- (40) Can you provide a copy of all papers that have been provided to the Assets and Liabilities Committee in the last financial year?

(41) How often does the committee meet?

(42) Who is on the committee?

NSW Master Fund

(43) Have any transfers been made between funds since the NSW Master Fund was created?

(44) If so, please provide details for each of these transfers

(45) If so, with reference to what governance framework were the funds transferred?

(46) What is the strategic asset allocation policy for the NSW Master Fund?

Business Cases

(47) How many projects have not been required to have a business case since Treasury changed the governance of business cases?

(48) Please provide a list of these projects.

Parameter and Technical Adjustments (PTAs)

(49) What was the quantum of requested PTAs for the 24/25 FY?

(50) What was the quantum of approved PTAs for the 24/25 FY?

(51) How does the level of approved PTAs compare to historic levels of PTA approvals?

(52) Which agencies were the top three agencies for requested recurrent PTAs for 24/25 FY?

(53) Which agencies were the top three agencies for requested capital PTAs for 24/25 FY?

General questions

CFMEU meetings

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

ETU meetings

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

Ministerial disclosures to The Cabinet Office

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

Department(s)/Agency(s) Employees

- (57) 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?
- (c) On what page are redundancies published in the respective Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports?

Department(s)/Agency(s) Annual Reports

- (58) On what date were the annual report(s) from 2023-24 for each department / agency in your portfolio published?
- (59) Were the annual report(s) from 2023-24 for each department / agency in your portfolio printed?
- (a) If yes, what was the printing cost(s) for each department / agency?
- (60) Did the annual report(s) from 2023-24 for each department / agency in your portfolio use in part or full an external production / body / consultant to draft?
- (a) If yes, what was the cost(s) for each department / agency?
- (61) In what month will the 2024-25 annual report(s) for each department / agency in your portfolio be published?
- (62) Will the 2024-25 annual report(s) for the department / agency in your portfolio include a printed copy?
- (a) If yes, how much is budgeted for printing in 2024-25 for each department / agency?

State Records Act

- (63) 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?

Advertising

- (64) On what page is advertising published in the respective Department(s)/Agency(s) annual report(s)?

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

- (65) 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 website URL?

Ministerial staff disclosure of gifts and/or hospitality

- (66) Does your ministerial office keep a register of gifts and/or hospitality for staff to make disclosures?
- (a) If yes, what is the website URL?
- (67) 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?

Ministerial Code of Conduct

- (68) Since 28 March 2023, have you breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct?
- (a) If yes, what was the breach?

Credit Cards

- (69) 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?
- (70) Do public servants in your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) been issued with department/agency credit cards?
- (a) If yes, what is the website URL of the credit card policy?

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

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

Senior Executive Drivers

(72) As at 1 February 2025, how many senior executives in your portfolio department(s) / agency(s) have a driver?

GIPA Applications – Ministerial Office

(73) Has your Ministerial Office received a GIPA Application(s) since 28 March 2023?

(a) If yes, how many?

(b) If yes, what is the website URL of the disclosure log?

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

(74) 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)?

GIPA Act – Disclosure Log Website URL

(75) What is the website URL for the GIPA Act disclosure log each of your portfolio department(s) / agency(s)?

TikTok

(76) Are you on TikTok?

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

Signal

(77) Are you and/or your ministerial staff on Signal?

(a) If yes, do you and/or your ministerial staff access Signal from a NSW Government device?

(b) If yes, does Signal comply with the State Records Act?

Training

(78) 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?

Cabinet documents

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

Parliamentary Secretary

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

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

(82) Has your Parliamentary Secretary ever used your Ministerial Vehicle?

Media releases and statements

(83) 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?

Overseas Travel

(84) As Minister, do you approve overseas travel for public servants from your portfolio department(s)/agency(s)?

Data Breaches

(85) Does your portfolio department(s)/agency(s) keep a register of data breaches in accordance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection (PPIP) Act?

(86) If yes, what is the website?

Discretionary Fund

(87) As Minister, do you have a discretionary fund?

(a) If yes, what department(s) / agency(s) administer it?

(b) If yes, what is the website URL detailing expenditure?

Qantas Chairman's Lounge

(88) Are you a member of the Qantas Chairmans Lounge?

Local Government Councillors

(89) How many of your Ministerial staff is a local government councillor(s)?

Questions from Ms Abigail Boyd MLC

Domestic and family violence funding

- (90) Given the importance of responding to domestic and family violence perpetrated against animals, what funding is the NSW Government allocating to increase the capability of workers across the domestic and family violence, homelessness, community, local council, health, child and family, legal, law enforcement, animal welfare, veterinary and animal management sectors to identify and respond to risk related to animal abuse as a form of domestic and family violence?
- (91) You previously noted that the 2024 emergency package for domestic and family violence was a first step, and that more needs to be done. Will there be additional funding to improve responses to domestic and family violence in this year's budget? If not, why not?
- (92) Specialist domestic and family violence services are at the frontline in the response to domestic and family violence in NSW with demand for support increasing and yet, these services have not received a substantial increase to baseline funding in years. Will the NSW Government provide a 50% baseline funding increase for all specialist sexual, domestic and family violence services in NSW in 2025-26? If not, why not?
- (93) Why hasn't the NSW Government provided a funding increase for women's refuges established prior to, and operating outside of, the Core and Cluster funding stream?
- (94) Domestic Violence NSW has called for \$100 million over four years to be committed to the NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2027. The NSW Government announced \$38 million for implementation of the plan plus a separate \$8 million for the All-In program. Given that this is a \$54 million shortfall, will the NSW Government invest a further \$60 million to ensure the effective implementation of the strategy and show real commitment to change?
- (95) When will the NSW Government release the NSW Domestic and Family Violence 10-year Workforce Development Strategy?
- (a) How will the implementation of the strategy be supported? Will the NSW Government allocate funding to implement the strategy? If not, why not? If yes, how much funding will be allocated?
- (96) Many domestic and family violence services in regional rural and remote areas do not receive any additional funding or loading despite the additional costs they incur to deliver services across vast geographical areas. Will the NSW Government consider a regional loading for all funding streams that provide domestic and family violence specialist services? If not, why not?

- (97) How much National Partnership Agreement funding was allocated to domestic and family violence initiatives in NSW over the past 3 years?
- (98) Has the National Partnership Agreement allocation to domestic and family violence initiatives changed from one year to the next?
- (99) Does the NSW Government intend to continue to allocate the same amount of National Partnership Agreement funding to domestic and family violence initiatives in the coming years, or will there be an increase or a decrease?
- (100) To ensure transparency and accountability, will the NSW Treasury commit to clearly stated line items in the 2025-26 Budget Papers to ensure investment in domestic and family violence prevention and response in NSW can be clearly tracked over time? If not, why not?

Cooler Classrooms program

- (101) How much of the \$500 million allocated to the Cooler Classrooms Program has been spent so far?
- (102) How many schools have been approved for funding but are still waiting for installation?
- (103) How many schools are still waiting for confirmation on whether they will receive air conditioning?
- (104) Has the program been paused or completely discontinued?
- (a) What is the cause for the delay?
- (105) Why has Balmain Public School (and others) which applied in 2018, still not received a formal determination?