

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 4 - REGIONAL NSW

Wednesday 26 February 2025

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas

SMALL BUSINESS, LANDS AND PROPERTY, MULTICULTURALISM, SPORT

UNCORRECTED

The Committee met at 9:15.

MEMBERS

The Hon. Mark Banasiak (Chair)

The Hon. Greg Donnelly

The Hon. Wes Fang

The Hon. Scott Farlow

Ms Sue Higginson

The Hon. Emma Hurst (Deputy Chair)

The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine

The Hon. Mark Latham

The Hon. Tania Mihailuk

MEMBERS VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

The Hon. Peter Primrose

PRESENT

The Hon. Stephen Kamper, *Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport*

CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:

**Budget Estimates secretariat
Room 812
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

The CHAIR: Welcome to the second hearing of the Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Regional NSW for the additional round of the inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-25. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are meeting today. I pay respects to Elders past and present, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pay my respect to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today. My name is Mark Banasiak. I am the Chair of the Committee.

I welcome Minister Kamper and accompanying officials to this hearing. Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure of the portfolios of Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism and Sport. I ask everyone in the room to please turn their mobile phones to silent. Parliamentary privilege applies to witnesses in relation to the evidence they give today. However, it does not apply to what witnesses say outside of the hearing. I urge witnesses to be careful about making comments to the media or to others after completing their evidence. In addition, the Legislative Council has adopted rules to provide procedural fairness for inquiry participants. I encourage Committee members and witnesses to be mindful of these procedures. I welcome and thank witnesses for making the time to give evidence. All witnesses will be sworn prior to giving evidence. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn an oath to your office as a member of Parliament.

Ms KIERSTEN FISHBURN, Secretary, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure, on former affirmation

Mr LEON WALKER, Deputy Secretary, Property and Development NSW, on former affirmation

Ms JENNIFER HICKEY, Chief Executive Officer, Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW, on former affirmation

Mr STEWART McLACHLAN, Chief Executive Officer, Valuation NSW, on former oath

Mr TOM GELLIBRAND, Chief Executive, Infrastructure NSW, on former oath

Mr JOSEPH LA POSTA, Chief Executive Officer, Multicultural NSW, on former oath

Mr ADAM BERRY, Acting Chief Executive, Office of Sport, affirmed

Ms KERRIE MATHER, Chief Executive Officer, Venues NSW, on former oath

Mr GRAEME HEAD, Secretary, Department of Customer Service, on former affirmation

Mr GREG WELLS, Chief Executive Officer, Service NSW, Department of Customer Service, on former oath

Ms CASSANDRA GIBBENS, Executive Director, Department of Customer Service, on former affirmation

Mr MARK FROST, Acting Small Business Commissioner, affirmed

The CHAIR: As we progress through the hearing, if witnesses in the overflow seats are called to give evidence, please bring your name tag. That will help Hansard and ensure that the correct witnesses are identified in the transcript. Today's hearing will be conducted from 9.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. We are joined by the Minister for the morning session from 9.15 a.m. until 1 p.m. with a 15-minute break at 11.00 a.m. In the afternoon we will hear from departmental witnesses from 2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. with a 15-minute break at 3.30 p.m. During these sessions there will be questions from Opposition and crossbench members only and 15 minutes allocated for Government questions at 10.45 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. We will begin with questions from the crossbench.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Good morning, Minister. I want to start with questions about Wentworth Park, which I am sure will come as no surprise. According to your ministerial diary disclosures, on 18 October last year you met with the NSW Greyhound Breeders Owners and Trainers Association, with a lobbyist, the former Labor member Mr Walt Secord. Was this meeting about the lease of Wentworth Park greyhound racing track?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, thank you, Deputy Chair. I must say I was expecting the question in relation to Wentworth Park and I do take my hat off to you on your conviction and your concern there. We are still in a situation where we're considering what we're going to do with Wentworth Park. The fact that we're doing so much fantastic work around Blackwattle Bay with the new Fish Market, the old Fish Market site—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Sorry, Minister, the question specifically—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, I'm just getting to it.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I just need you to be directly relevant, thank you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't remember the exact conversation. There were some conversations in and around that, but at the moment we're, as I said, in a situation where we're reviewing what we're going to do there. We understand and appreciate that it's under-utilised. There could be better usage of that land. We're going through that, and if Racing NSW was invited and put a proposal through—we've got that on hand and we're looking at it. That's where it sits at this moment. I can't give you any more details in relation to Wentworth Park.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: You can't recall what the meeting itself was about? Is that what you're saying?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not word for word.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I am not asking for word for word; I'm just asking for a general vibe of what was discussed at the meeting?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There were discussions about Wentworth Park, obviously. I said the same thing that I've said to you today. We're considering what we're going to do there. There's a lease there until 2027, I believe, and that's where we sit with it.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'm assuming, for them to have brought in lobbyist Mr Walt Secord, they would have been asking for a specific commitment of action from you. What sort of commitment were they seeking from you in that meeting?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Who was representing them is not really relevant at the end of the day.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'm saying, because they had a lobbyist with them, obviously they were seeking some kind of commitment. It wasn't just a general chat. Obviously, when you're paying for a lobbyist, you go into a meeting with an idea to try to get the Minister to agree to some sort of action and I am just wondering what they were calling on you for in that meeting.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It doesn't matter who their lobbyist is. At the end of the day we're going to make a decision on that site.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I haven't said anything about that; I've just said they had a lobbyist. If they're paying for a lobbyist, clearly they're going to that meeting. It's not just a chat. They're asking the Minister for a particular ask, a particular action, and so I'm asking you what that action was.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There was no action from—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: They didn't ask you for anything?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There's no action from us. I mean, they—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So they didn't ask for any commitment or action in that meeting from you as Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They're not going to get a commitment. I told you we haven't made a decision on Wentworth Park.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: My question was what were they asking. I understand that maybe you haven't made one. I'm asking what commitment or action were they calling on you for in that meeting.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Obviously, their concern is for Wentworth Park. As far as they're concerned, it's the heart and soul of greyhound racing and so they're concerned about the future. That's what they're discussing. They didn't really get a clear position, just like I said to you earlier: We don't have one yet.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Have you met with any groups that are opposed to the retention of the greyhound track, that want to see that go into housing and greenspace, which was the original commitment? Or have you only met with groups that want to retain it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've met with groups that have requested to meet with me.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Which groups have you met with that are opposed to—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Look, I can't remember every single meeting I've had and whether a meeting—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Have you met with the City of Sydney or anyone involved in the development of the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy? Have you met with any animal welfare experts or groups? They're the ones that are obviously opposed to retaining—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, unlike greyhounds. Greyhounds sought a meeting and they got a meeting.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So you've only met with people who want to see it remain as a greyhound track. Have you met with any groups that want to see it committed to the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't believe so. I'd take that on—I'm not sure.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You're meeting with Emma right now.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! Ignore him, please, Minister.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: The department obviously has regular conversations with the City of Sydney about the Pyrmont Place strategy, amongst other matters.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Okay, so the department has, but you haven't personally met with anyone, Minister; you've only met with the industry?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't believe so. Let me check.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Are you willing to commit with at least one organisation—yourself, Minister, rather than just the department—that is opposed to the greyhound racing track remaining in place?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not in the business of projecting any motives of stakeholders or people who have an interest in a particular matter, so of course.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Are you able to provide a timeline on the Government's decision? I know we've got until 2027, but that's obviously the licence expiry. Can we expect a decision this year or are we going to defer that decision much closer to 2027?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not going to make an announcement today on the timeline or describe—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'm not asking for an announcement.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We're not really certain of the timeline yet.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Okay, so it could be any time between now and 2027 that a decision is made?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Exactly.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: The proposal from the industry, as I understand it, is that Greyhound Racing NSW would be appointed as Crown land manager if the lease was extended beyond 2027. I'm sure you're aware that this is an industry that currently is subject to a special commission of inquiry. That inquiry recently expanded its terms of reference because of a significant amount of evidence that came forward in regard to issues of financial mismanagement and other integrity issues. Will you be taking the findings and recommendations from the Drake inquiry into account when deciding whether Greyhound Racing NSW would be suitable to become Crown land managers in relation to Wentworth Park?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Definitely, but the question about the inquiry into greyhound racing should be directed to the Minister for Gaming and Racing.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'm not asking about the Drake inquiry. I'm asking you if you'll be taking that into account in regard to them becoming Crown land managers?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: All matters will be taken into consideration.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Obviously you would understand that many people in the community would have concerns about an organisation with this reputation being given the privilege and power to operate as a Crown land manager. What are those factors that you will use to determine whether they would be suitable to be a Crown land manager?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Because they're in the racing industry—is that what you're saying? That because they're in the racing industry, a lot of community has concern?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Because there have been many exposés around animal cruelty, there have been exposés about financial mismanagement and there have been exposés about integrity issues. As I mentioned, it's currently under a special inquiry. This is the second special inquiry for some time. So there are community concerns about an organisation that continues to have special inquiries and media exposés with concerns of corruption and illegal conduct. What factors will you use to determine whether Greyhound Racing NSW would be suitable to be a Crown land manager, given their dark history?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I mean, you're just assuming that—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Assuming that you would consider any factors?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That there's a lease already been signed up or agreed to.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: No, my question—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I mean, there are so many factors that you consider when you're looking at if—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Sorry, Minister, my question is what criteria—

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order: I don't want to interrupt the flow of questioning but we know this is question and answer, then question and answer. It's not just "speak over the Minister". I ask for that to be drawn to the attention of the member.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: To the point of order: The Minister was not being directly relevant. My question was very clear. It was about what criteria he'll be using, and the Minister started to answer a completely different question that I didn't ask.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Further to the point of order: The Minister was formulating his answer and he was delivering his answer. The Minister and indeed all witnesses are entitled to be able to answer the question posed to them and not be spoken over.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: But the question posed to them, not a different question.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: But not spoken over.

The CHAIR: Let me rule in 30 seconds. There are a couple of things to consider here. Just like yesterday, we can't have people talking over the top of each other, regardless of who the witness is. It's not good for Hansard. The second point I make is if there's a question of direct relevance, then the appropriate way to handle that would be to call a point of order. That way the Chair or the Deputy Chair could intervene and rule on the order of direct relevance, which we did yesterday. Going forward, let's try and follow those guidelines.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thank you, Minister, and all the officials attending today. You've seen the letter from Scott Kennedy, this very senior official at Racing NSW, dated 23 April last year. Do you feel duped in your dealings with Racing NSW given that you gave them the Crown land management category 1 status, but Kennedy here, writing to the Queanbeyan Racing Club, has said that that's only a first step to owning the land in the hands of Racing NSW and, furthermore, basically, "We're agreeing to go to market rent—that's what we're telling the Minister and the Government—but we're never going to do that." How do you look at this letter? Do you feel like you were led down the garden path by an organisation using you to have Crown land management as a first step to then having freehold title?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thanks, Mr Latham. That letter or that email that you're referring to was within the industry. It wasn't emailed to me. I had no knowledge of that up until you brought it to our attention.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I accept that, but this is what they're saying behind your back and this is what they intend.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, and it's quite a fanciful conversation really. Very rarely is Crown land transferred out unless there's a real major benefit to the State. But I really discount that as, as I said, fanciful. It's a fanciful conversation. In relation to the appointment of Racing NSW as a Crown land manager, it aligns with the priorities of the Crown land strategic plan by securing the sustainable management of Crown assets for local communities. Racing NSW brings experience and capabilities in land management, as well as in racecourse operations. Each of the jockey and race clubs that operate the five racecourses were consulted as part of the appointment process and confirmed their support for this new role for Racing NSW.

The appointment provides more opportunities for capital investment to maintain and upgrade these facilities for the community's enjoyment. It also supports regional industries, jobs, sustainable economic progress and improved facilities for social events and community activities. The department has recently become aware of concerns about the process of appointing Racing NSW as Crown land manager for Queanbeyan Racecourse. In light of these concerns, Crown Lands will re-engage with Racing NSW and the Queanbeyan Racing Club to review this appointment.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Are you aware that at Queanbeyan race club, Racing NSW hasn't collected any money from anyone for 18 months—not from advertisers or stable fees, track fees, council rates or water rates? There's a belief among the trainers at Queanbeyan that because they're not collecting any money—like you've said, they're some professional outfit; I dispute that. They're not collecting any money from anyone at Queanbeyan as the new Crown land manager, and the trainers believe that they'll just say, "The place is not financially feasible. We're closing Queanbeyan racetrack, and now we want freehold title."

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Mr Latham, I hear all that and I would've really liked to have known that before it was aired in the House. I'll look to address this issue. We're undertaking a review, and that review process is commencing. Any actions in relation to that point will be informed by the outcomes of that review.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Will the review include an analysis of why Racing NSW, quite extraordinarily, is not collecting money from anyone at Queanbeyan racecourse—not advertisers, track fees, stable fees, water or council rates? Why would they be doing that unless they've got an intention to say the place is not financially feasible? And they can close it down; this is one of the problems in what you've done. They're the regulator who can licence racetracks and close it down and then seek freehold title. Will that be reviewed?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It will be reviewed, and I will work with the Minister for Gaming and Racing as well throughout that whole process. We'll get back to you as soon as—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Did David Harris approve this category 1 Crown land management? In the SO 52 from Emma Hurst it's clear he was sent the documents. Did he ever say it was a good idea?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't recall. There'd been conversations about approving the five. The request had been in there for a long time, Mr Latham. On the face of it, you'd look at it and say Racing NSW as a Crown land manager would be a safe bet given the fact that it is the main operator in racing and also as a regulator, which I know is an issue that you have as well. But, on the face of it, it seemed like a fair arrangement. We communicated and got consent from each one of the clubs. If they're all consenting and it's the wish of those organisations, well, we've gone through the process of reviewing the whole request throughout that period and consented. Now, if there is anything nefarious or inappropriate that has occurred during the process, that will be flushed out in the review.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: But do you accept now that the Queanbeyan race club didn't agree to this proposition that on 21 March your official, Victoria Arthur, from Crown Lands was still seeking a signature of two directors, or one director and one secretary, which was never delivered? It was put by Racing NSW to two of the directors and they refused to sign, and the people who you're relying on to sign it weren't involved with the Queanbeyan race club last year. Do you accept that they hadn't given an agreement?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'd be happy to accept that—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: And who told Crown lands that they had agreed? In the documents they clearly hadn't. The suspicion is that Scott Kennedy said that there's an agreement when clearly there wasn't.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Mr Latham, I'll be happy to accept that after we've conducted a full review and fully understood what all the movements are on the boards. As you know, with a lot of these boards they are volunteers and they move around a lot. Whether ASIC information is updated in a timely fashion—all of these things need to be looked at. I can assure you that we will be doing a thorough job of that.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: They weren't mugs down there. One of them was Bernie Fraser, the former governor of the Reserve Bank. They had lawyers and other qualified people, so they knew what they were doing. They are adamant that none of their directors ever signed this. The secretary who signed it had left the club six months earlier and wasn't qualified to sign. Do you also accept that they never produced any board minutes agreeing to this because the board never considered it at Queanbeyan Race Club?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There would have been—from what I understand, there wasn't any notification of all this from Bernie or any of the others.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: No, because they never asked. You can't notify what you don't know.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: But I can assure you that we will conduct a thorough investigation into all of this—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You should.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —and we will take appropriate action.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Why would Crown lands, doing due diligence, seek board minutes to say that Queanbeyan Race Club was approved? They never existed and they never will exist. I feel sorry for you, Minister. Someone in Crown lands has told you to gazette this in May last year when those board minutes were never, ever delivered—and never could be delivered—indicating an approval by the Queanbeyan Race Club. How did that happen?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: To be honest with you, Crown lands could have made the decision to move without consent.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I know.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was something that we asked for. If there has been any misconduct or anything inappropriate there, we will uncover it. We are determined. It's like anything, Mr Latham. There are always issues that come up within ministries, and you address them. That's what we are going to do here.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: There's the odd problem and then there are organisations that couldn't run a chook raffle. The papers to this indicate that six different people at different times were involved at Crown lands. It's chaotic and confusing. They confused themselves. People went on leave and people didn't return phone calls. Are you conducting a review of the general efficiency of Crown lands? Honestly, they are an embarrassment to you, Minister, on the papers that were produced. They obviously need some form of administrative overhaul to handle these types of matters so much better in the future.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Through the review process, we will look at all of those interactions.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: As for your confidence in Racing NSW, the due diligence document does show a concern about a conflict of interest as the regulator. I am quoting from the department's document. It states, "With Racing NSW as the regulator of horse racing in New South Wales, existing Crown land managers may be concerned about consequences if they were to refuse a request to relinquish their current role." Racing NSW could deregister all these clubs if they refused to hand over their racetrack. Doesn't that point to the basic wrongness in making them a Crown land manager? They are the regulator of the track and now, in these five instances, they are regulating themselves.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In terms of the operations of Racing NSW, I think you're best to ask those questions to the relevant Minister about its operations and the fact that it is also the regulator. That is how it has been forever and a day.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you take on notice if David Harris ever approved this? I think it's outside the Thoroughbred Racing Act that the regulator is now running a racetrack.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! Time has expired.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you take that on notice and find out if Harris ever approved it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, happy anniversary.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It is good to join you again on another one of your life milestones. Minister, would you agree that the demand for nine-hole golf courses is much less than the demand for 18-hole golf courses?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I really can't comment.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That's not a position that has been put to you by Golf NSW or by any of the stakeholders within the golfing community?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Maybe particular golf courses, but I really don't have an opinion on what the demand would be for one over the other.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's not an opinion really; it's the facts.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There's a golf course close to my electorate that's a nine-hole golf course and it's very, very popular. I don't know whether the demand would be greater if it was 18. A lot of people are time poor these days, so a nine-hole golf course could potentially be quite popular. I can't give you a comment.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, with respect to Moore Park Golf Course, I think from your diary it has been shown that you met with Moore Park Golf Course and Golf NSW surrounding that proposal. Is that correct?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, they came and discussed their proposal.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The 18-hole proposal, which provides both a community public space benefit and also the 18 holes to be retained at Moore Park. What's your view in terms of that proposal?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I thought it was a good proposal. Essentially, it's not a decision that falls in my lap, so I've discussed it with the relevant Minister, being the Minister for planning, who is responsible for the decision.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you have taken that up with the Minister for planning in terms of advocacy for the proposal?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We have conversations regularly about many things. I can't recall whether I have or haven't.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: As the Minister for Sport, have you had shared with you the design and planning works that have been undertaken by Hassell Limited with respect to the proposals at Moore Park South?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: From memory, there was a little booklet that they provided which had the scheme that they were proposing within it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But what about in terms of the Government's proposal for Moore Park South? Has that been shared with you as the Minister for Sport?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, it was not shared with me because it's not relevant to my ministry.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So you've had no involvement in terms of that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, following media reports that the Minns Labor Government's repurposing of the Moore Park Golf Course could cost up to \$200 million, have you been asked in terms of any budget allocation from the Office of Sport to support this proposal?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I haven't had any conversations with anyone in relation to the park. As I said, I'm not the relevant Minister responsible for that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, with respect to the 18-hole golf course proposal and that reduced footprint, you said that that seemed like a reasonable proposal to you but you're not the portfolio Minister. As the Minister for Sport, do you believe that is something the Government should take up?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's a matter for the Premier and the relevant Minister to make that decision. I can't really comment on that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: As the Minister for Sport, in terms of the proposal as it stands, to reduce Moore Park Golf course to nine holes, have you been brought in at all for your consultation with respect to how the rest of that park will be used, whether it be allocated for sporting fields or the like?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not at this stage, no.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you had any advocacy from any of the other organisations that may be interested in using those facilities around Moore Park South, whether it be golf or—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's not my recollection that I have.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So AFL or NRL—no other bodies have come to you and said that they wanted more facilities in that precinct for their sports?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's not my recollection that I've had a meeting in relation to that. Whether someone has passed a comment at one of the many sporting events that I go to, I really can't give you an answer on that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: As the Minister for Sport, have you offered your own views—I know you've got an electorate not far from that precinct—about what sort of fields should be in that area and where the demand is, whether it be AFL, which is growing in popularity in the eastern suburbs? Is that something you've advocated for—oval-shaped fields, for instance—to be included in any reconfigurations?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: As I said, I haven't contributed at all to what the layout or what the scheme is going to be there.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It seems like you've got an interest in golfing in your portfolio. Turning to the Carnarvon golf course now and the proposal that brings both your Sport and Lands portfolios together, will you be turfing out thousands of golfers at Carnarvon?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Let's just make it clear that Carnarvon golf course has a lease to 2035. There are still 10 years left on that lease. I'm currently not readily turfing anyone out of anywhere.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, are you making an assurance that nothing will happen at Carnarvon until after 2035?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think it's fairly well known that, as the Minister responsible for cemeteries, we've had an enormous shortage of cemeteries land. We need to futureproof the cemeteries space. We are looking at a number of sites and we are considering them. Once we make a decision that we want to go further with a particular site, we'll consult with the community before the Government makes any decision.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, one of those sites you're looking at is the Carnarvon golf course?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I said that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What are the other sites that you are looking at?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's not for me to say. I don't want to have another 20 petitions coming at me when we may not even make a decision.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Are any of those sites in Botany, for instance?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We are doing what we can to try and secure burial space for the future, and we're looking at a number of sites. We are looking at a number of sites, and we will make a decision on that, and we will disclose that at the time when we are ready to go the next step.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, are you looking at Strathfield golf course, which is directly adjacent to the Rookwood cemetery?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I just said we are looking at a number of sites. We're not going to disclose any of the sites.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Is that one of the number of sites?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You can ask me the same question 10 times, and I'll give you the same answer.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, have you met with the operators of Carnarvon golf course?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've met with Golfing New South Wales. I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But the operators of Carnarvon golf course—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't recall whether there was—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I think there was some media commentary that Golf NSW suggested to Carnarvon golf course they meet with you following their meeting where they had serious concerns for the future of Carnarvon golf course. I believe that Carnarvon golf course have sought a meeting. Have you met with them?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not sure if any of my staff or officers have. I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: What are you sure of, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll wait for the Chair to come back to keep Wes in control.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you had discussions, Minister, with the member for Auburn or the member for Granville about the Carnarvon golf course proposal?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I have had conversations; robust conversations.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I would imagine that those members might give you robust conversations.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: At the end of the day, MMP are responsible for the sites. We will work through our process to establish and to try and secure burial land and—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And turf out the golfers.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think 90 per cent of golf courses are on Crown land. It's always going to be an issue. But, by the same token, we didn't sit on our hands, like your mob did for 12 years, creating an absolute mess in the cemetery space. I've been on the front foot, introducing reform and restructuring the delivery of burials for our society. I'm not going to stop until I sort that out. I want to futureproof—I want people to feel comfortable that they have somewhere to bury their loved ones. I'm going to continue to do that while I'm sitting in my job.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, what's the plan for the golfers at Moore Park if they are to be displaced? There have been reports that already there are huge, long waiting lists at surrounding private golf courses, often at up to \$40,000—at the Lakes, for instance—to join. What's your plan for the golfers there if they are turfed out of Moore Park?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've met with Golf NSW on a number of occasions, and we have a very, very strong, positive and productive relationship. We will work whichever way we can to assist the golfing fraternity. That's all I can say.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And how will you assist them?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In terms of details on particular clubs, particular sites—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Apart from empty words and platitudes, how will you assist them?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There are no empty words.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not going to roll out and make commitments just to satisfy you, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's satisfying the thousands of golfers, Minister Kamper.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There is one site, and that's Moore Park. It has been very clear. The position of the Government is to open that up for open space and amenities for the dense community in and around there. That decision has been made. I might be the sports Minister, but it doesn't sit in my hands. It sits in the hands of the relevant Minister.

The Hon. WES FANG: I just want to move now to the Dubbo sports hub. Since coming to government, can you tell me how much the Labor Minns Government has allocated to the Dubbo sports hub project?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Dubbo sports hub project was a commitment from—goes back to 2018, Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: Correct. Since you came to government, how much money have you committed to the Dubbo sports hub project? Do you need it in multiple choice?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order: Honestly, it doesn't really need saying, but there are rules about courtesy to witnesses. Please ask the Hon. Wes Fang to frame his questions in appropriate manner to the Minister.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I do uphold the point of order. My warning to the Hon. Wes Fang is, if he wants to have a run of questions, he should be mindful that he will continually be stopped if he breaches anything. So please keep that in mind if you want to be able to ask the Minister some questions.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you, Chair. Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We'll reflect back. There was a commitment made in 2018. I think the current member for Dubbo—I'm not sure if he was in the seat at the time. I'm sure he wasn't. But the Police Citizens—

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, you are not actually being directly relevant.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Police Citizens Youth Club NSW was awarded—

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The Hon. WES FANG: My question was since 2023—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! A point of order has been taken.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: My point of order is that Mr Fang did not give the Minister even five seconds to begin to answer the question before he interjected inappropriately.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: That's true.

The Hon. WES FANG: The Minister was not being relevant.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I remind the member of what I said previously. Minister, yesterday in budget estimates we received some advice around Ministers being directly relevant. I want to remind you of that as well. It's very similar to question time, so we ask Ministers to be directly relevant to the questions. Thank you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you, Deputy Chair. But he asked me on a particular commitment there at Dubbo. I'm just giving a little bit of history, which puts it into context, because there was—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: A little bit is fine, but not too much.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I just started. He never even let me complete the first part.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I understand. I wasn't reflecting on your answer in this particular instance. It was more of a general reminder to make sure you are directly relevant.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I'll ask again. Since you came into government in 2023, has the Labor Party committed any money to the Dubbo sports hub?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Mr Fang, the Police Citizens Youth Club was awarded \$9.3 million in funding under the Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund in 2017-18 for its proposal to construct a multi-sport facility in Dubbo on land owned by Charles Sturt University and Dubbo Council.

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm going to move on, if that's okay, Chair. Obviously—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund—am I allowed to continue to answer?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I was asking the member to stop.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Regional Sports Infrastructure Fund in 2017 was a formal grant program administered by the Office of Sport. The former Government, despite announcing it multiple times, failed to ever get this project out of the ground. The project was first announced before Dugald Saunders was even in Parliament, and now he is the leader of the party.

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm getting to it.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, there has been a point of order.

The Hon. WES FANG: The Minister is not being directly relevant to the question.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I agree. Minister, we don't need a long history lesson. I think the question was very clear from the member. If the member would like to restate it or move on, I will leave that to the member.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I'll ask for the third time now. Since 2023, when Labor came to power, how much money has the Labor Minns Government committed to the Dubbo sports hub?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Following the execution of the funding agreement, \$9.3 million was paid into PCYC NSW in 2023. I'm advised that the original proposal at Charles Sturt—

The Hon. WES FANG: What date in 2023 was that, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not sure. It's probably on record somewhere.

The Hon. WES FANG: Were you in government at the time?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll take it on notice for you, Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you, Minister. When did you get advised that the PCYC's variation request to move the Dubbo sports hub from the CSU site to the Dubbo Sports World site—when were you advised about that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I couldn't give you a date on that.

The Hon. WES FANG: Take it on notice?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Take it on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you. Given the request was simply to construct the facility at a different location but had the same scope and was within the budget, would you consider that a variation or a new project?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't comment on something that I'm not across on the full scope.

The Hon. WES FANG: You're the Minister for Sport.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You've just thrown out a statement.

The Hon. WES FANG: There's a note. Have a look.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I wasn't advised because it was the responsibility of Minister Moriarty to address that type of variation.

The Hon. WES FANG: Given that it's called—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Office of Sport has been more like an agent, assisting with the delivery of that.

The Hon. WES FANG: Given that it was called the Dubbo sports hub and given that PCYC was involved and everything else, you weren't made aware of the variation request at all?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Maybe my office was made aware of a variation request, but—

The Hon. WES FANG: Maybe? Do you recall it being raised with you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You should be putting these questions, though, to Minister Moriarty.

The Hon. WES FANG: Well, they're important for the people of Dubbo, Minister. These questions are important for the—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: If they're important for Dubbo, they should have been addressed over the five years by the previous Government.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, your Government has cut the funding.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It didn't seem like anyone really cared over the previous five years, Mr Fang, and they continue—

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, were you made aware—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —to fail to deliver for the community there.

The Hon. WES FANG: Were you made aware by Minister Moriarty—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! I remind members to not talk over each other.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, were you made aware by Minister Moriarty that she was about to release, on 18 December, a press release saying that the department was cutting the funding? Were you advised? Were you made aware? Were you consulted?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I was advised at some stage. I don't know what date.

The Hon. WES FANG: Before or after it happened? Were you consulted?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not going to sit here and try to think about whether it was a day or two before—

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, it's budget estimates. I'm literally here to ask you questions about this issue.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, Wes, you know that that doesn't sit at the top of my head.

The Hon. WES FANG: What does sit in your head, Minister?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I have a lot of issues that come to me every single day.

The Hon. WES FANG: What does sit in your head?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm not sure much does, Minister.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, how about you start conducting yourself like a normal human being?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

The Hon. WES FANG: The people of Dubbo want answers here.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We've seen your form, Mr Fang.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! Minister, please.

The Hon. WES FANG: My what, sorry, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Your form.

The Hon. WES FANG: My form?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! There has been a point of order.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Again, the Hon. Wes Fang is not complying with our resolution about treating witnesses with courtesy. It's veering very close to stunt-like proportions at the moment.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: The other thing as well is I had just called order because obviously Hansard is going to be struggling to put this in the transcript when both the Minister and the member are speaking over each other. I uphold the point of order. I don't want to remind the Hon. Wes Fang, of course, that the rules have changed here in regard to calling members to order. I just want you to be mindful of that. Things were getting a little out of hand. You have just under two minutes left.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Chair, if you ask me what tie I wore on 18 December, I'm not going to remember. This is the type of line of questioning. It's just—

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm not sure you'd remember what you had for breakfast, Minister. I'm going to hand over to my colleague.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you very much, Minister. Turning now to another indoor sports facility, Penrith, has the Crown land required for Penrith City Council indoor multi-sports facilities been transferred to Penrith council?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Are you referring to the stadium?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: This is the multi-indoor sports facility.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll take that on notice, actually.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Sorry, we might have to take that on notice.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So you don't know if the Government has entered into any land transfer agreements with Penrith council in relation to this project?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not off the top of my head. The land is under Minister Scully.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll have to take that on notice, and we can come back to you on Tuesday, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Okay. Thank you very much. So the land in question does not sit with you, then, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you, Minister.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I want to touch briefly on the status of the NRL grand final beyond 2025.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Is there a question?

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes. What is the status of the NRL grand final beyond 2025? Have you had any discussions?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The grand final and negotiations around the grand final are with Minister Graham.

The Hon. WES FANG: So you're not involved in that either? You're the Minister for Sport and you're not involved in trying to ensure that New South Wales keeps the NRL grand final beyond 2025?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I continue to work with the ARL Commission. I do. Obviously—

The Hon. WES FANG: Is it Minister Graham or you?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! The member's time has expired. You may finish the answer, Minister, but I remind the Hon. Wes Fang that he can't ask any further questions.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: New South Wales is the home of rugby league. We continue to work with the ARL Commission to secure a longer-term future for the NRL grand final in Sydney, where it belongs. Some 101 out of the 103 grand finals have been played in Sydney, and the greatest moments in grand final history have all happened here in Sydney, so it's obviously something that we would like to maintain.

The Hon. WES FANG: All but one have been played here, and the greatest ones have been in Sydney, yes. That's on you, Minister. Thank you. We say thank you to you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Billions have been invested in new world-class venues. We are the homes of the NRL, and this is exactly where the future of the game belongs. Obviously it's always a priority of mine to work to have the grand final held in Sydney.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Once more with feeling!

The Hon. WES FANG: Kamper was there with a sand bucket, running out—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Shall I stop when he is talking so that Hansard picks it up properly?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: That's fine. If you have finished your answer, Minister, we'll be moving to crossbench time.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Good morning, Minister. I want to ask you a couple of quick questions. You've just been asked about NRL, but you predominantly—I assume, as the Minister for Sport—would be more concerned with local community sport. That's your priority, is that right, Minister—making sure young kids get access to sport and have an opportunity to play sport?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, absolutely. Grassroots is very important.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Grassroots sports, yes. I think grassroots sports are important. What would you see as the biggest barrier at the moment for children and families in participating in local sport?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think facilities are important. We need to continue to invest in facilities. I can see that there are great opportunities in terms of growing women's sport.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: What's a barrier, though? What's another barrier besides the facilities? Would you accept that costs are often a barrier for families?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Cost of living is—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Cost of living is a huge issue.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's no secret.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I want to ask you about football specifically. I've had a long-term interest as the former member for Bankstown, and I'm sure you have as the local MP. Football would be the number one sport that most families are registering. I think it has the highest number of participants in New South Wales. Most children and their families pay a registration fee to be a member of their local club. Do you accept that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: And those fees are then redirected to associations and to Football NSW. Is that right, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, correct.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: For example, Leppington Lions charges about \$450, I think, roughly, a year; Liverpool Olympic, roughly about \$400 a year. Part of that portion of money is then redirected to the southern districts association. Do you accept that's how clubs work, generally? I'm just giving an example of south-west Sydney.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Generally. I mean, it's not just one code of sport that I deal with as the sports Minister.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: No, but I'm talking about football. I'm specifically concerned about football because it has the highest number of participants in New South Wales. Minister, the reason that I raise Leppington, Liverpool and the southern districts association—are you aware that the southern districts association donated money to Sussex Street, over \$5,000?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, I'm not aware of that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You're not aware of that? Are you aware they also donated money specifically to the members for Leppington and Liverpool when they were candidates? Nathan Hagarty received \$3,300 when he was the candidate for Leppington. Charishma Kaliyanda also received \$3,300, when she was a candidate, from the southern districts football association. Is this the first you're hearing that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I just don't—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You're not aware of those two grants? You're not aware that Southern Districts Soccer Football Association gave \$5,720 to NSW Labor? You never heard about that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't necessarily sit there and evaluate everyone's—who donates to whom. You know it yourself.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: There were only two local sporting groups that gave money to the Labor Party, one being Southern Districts Soccer Football Association, the other being Macarthur Football Club that gave \$4,460 to NSW Labor. Did the Office of Sport give any grants to Macarthur Football Club or southern districts that you're aware of?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We hand out and administer so many grants through the Office of Sport.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Any big infrastructure announcements for them, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll take it on notice.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Do you know that in September 2023 they gave \$14.5 million to Macarthur Football Club?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That's quite an investment.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: That's a big investment. Do you know about that? I think you were the Minister in September 2023.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: What type of grant was it?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Football in schools.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Was it all to Macarthur? I can't remember.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I think it was shared between Macarthur and Western Sydney.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's right. That was the program.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Labor also announced in the pre-election that they would give \$8 million to Macarthur. I'm not sure of the proportion that Macarthur got of that \$14.5 million. Maybe you could take that on notice and let me know how much Macarthur got.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You are asking about specific grants. As I said, we administer hundreds of grants.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Can you also take on notice how much the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association received in grant funding from the Office of Sport? If you can't answer that, can you let me know how much funding they might have received?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not going to have any of these in my head. I know Mr Fang would expect me to.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I know they are not in your head, but you can take it on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: I expect you to do a lot, Minister. You are a Minister.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: What do you think, Minister, about the fact that you've got sporting associations like this soccer association and a local soccer club giving funding to that degree to the Labor Party? Have you got a directive out of the Office of Sport about giving advice, perhaps, to sporting organisations whether it's appropriate to give that type of political funding?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know. I can't pass comment on that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: But you have a view on it, don't you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've never received any donations from clubs. In fact, I have donated a lot.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: No, I know. But these parents are paying \$440 to \$450 to register their kid at their local club. That club then pays a large proportion of that fee to the soccer association. Do you have a view on whether that's appropriate?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know. I don't know how it's funded or whether there are others that donate to the club.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I checked. There were no other funds to the Liberal Party and there were no other funds to any other party. For some reason that local Southern Districts Soccer Football Association gave more than \$5,700 to Sussex Street.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know the circumstances around it.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You don't know anything about it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know whether the association was independently funded from some other individual or what it was. I can't comment because I don't have any information in front of me.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Is there a directive that you have or your Office of Sport has about whether it's appropriate for football clubs and these football associations to make political donations? Is there a view? Would you give a directive, Minister, that perhaps it's not appropriate that they used parents' registration fees?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: With any grant, there is always probity and due diligence done and what is specific within that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Did the Office of Sport do their due diligence when they gave the \$14.5 million to Macarthur Football Club and Western Sydney Wanderers and double-check whether they—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They would have checked the circumstances around that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: They would have checked that Sussex Street also received, I think, \$4,000 from Macarthur Football Club? Do they check? I'm asking you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know. Is Macarthur Football Club an association? Is it private?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Macarthur is a football club. It's not private. It's a football club that parents have to pay a registration fee to join. They have to pay a registration fee for their child to play.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Are you talking about the Macarthur—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: There are two different donations. Macarthur Football Club gave a donation to the Labor Party and also the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association. It seems like they might share a director.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm happy to look at what you're referring to, Ms Mihailuk.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I want to know what funding the Southern Districts Soccer Football Association received from your office—the Office of Sport—and I want to know about the Macarthur Football Club. We know they received funding. I want to know whether you, as a Minister, or your office were notified prior to actually giving the \$14.5 million over or whether you were aware or whether you even asked those questions. There should be a due diligence check.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You are asking me to comment on whether there has been any funding. I'd like to establish that first and then we can review it.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You've got the Office of Sport representative here. They can bring it back for me in the afternoon and we can get some information back today. Can you make that commitment, Minister? Can you take that on notice for this afternoon?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We'll take that on notice, yes.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: It is a concern to me that I could only see two football clubs that have done this for the Labor Party. It's a huge amount of money. It's odd to give money to candidates as well. At the same time, they are receiving this level of funding. What I want to know, apart from just taking it on notice, is whether you would also look into whether there should be an actual directive about whether it's appropriate for not-for-profit sporting organisations to give that kind of money.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They are not prohibited donors, I don't believe.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: They are not prohibited donors but I'm asking you to consider looking at that and whether it's appropriate, because the parents are paying predominantly the full cost of how these clubs are run. They rely on council-run facilities, but you and I know that they basically exist because of the registration fees. The admin levy or fee, or whatever you want to call it, is how these clubs and associations survive. Would you accept that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, I accept that clubs—I'd rather have a look at the detail that you are presenting to me and then go through that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Do you want me to table the donations from the Labor Party? Have you got a list of that? It might be in your suitcase. Or do you want me to hand it over?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In my what? I missed that, Ms Mihailuk.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's in his Aldi bag.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: In your suitcase.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't carry a suitcase, Ms Mihailuk.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You're smarter than that, I guess.

The Hon. WES FANG: Is he, really?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's lovely chatting to you again, Ms Mihailuk. I've missed you.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I'd like you to look into that. I will wait until the afternoon for your representative to respond.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, when I was speaking with you before I asked you what the criteria would be in regards to whether you would determine whether Greyhound Racing NSW would be a suitable Crown land manager, and your response was that I have assumed that you would consider making them a Crown land manager. Are you not giving consideration to that proposal?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not ruling anything out at this stage. I'm not going to make the announcement today, Deputy Chair. I said that earlier.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'm not asking for an announcements.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Nothing has been struck off at this stage. We will provide clarity on the decision-making process in due course. I assure you that you are going to be one of the first I tell.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Wonderful. That's good news. Do you know if Greyhound Racing NSW is currently the Crown land manager in respect to any other land in New South Wales? Perhaps you can take that on notice, if it's not something you've got front of mind.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I will take that on notice, yes. I've got about 3,000 or 4,000 Crown land managers.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: If you could take that on notice, that would be great. Have you had any recent discussions with the Minister for Gaming and Racing in regards to the extension of the lease for Wentworth Park?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I have lots of discussions with the Minister. We collaborate all the time. There has been nothing of recent.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Have you had any recent discussions with the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces in regards to the decision?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't recall. There may have been conversations about it, but not that I can recall.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: The concern here is that the 8,000 homes and 46,000 jobs are predicated on the space of Wentworth Park being returned to the community for those homes to be built for those jobs. That is for both the strategies. That's for the Pyrmont Peninsula Place Strategy and the Ultimo Pyrmont place strategy. Given that we have a cost-of-living crisis and given that there is also a major housing shortage at the moment, I would assume that that would be something that would be really front of mind for this decision. This morning in the other session you were saying that there is no rush on this decision and that you are really going to take your time. One of the other concerns with the community is that on the line are 8,000 homes and 46,000 jobs if this was to be signed over to the greyhound racing industry.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't think I said I'm really going to take my time. I said we haven't made a decision as yet and I will get back to you when that decision is made. We can talk about all of the potential on the site. We can sit here all day. Actually, I wouldn't mind doing that and taking up all the question time. But the truth is that I did say earlier on that the greater utilisation of that site and better utilisation of that site is something that is front and centre on our mind.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Will that be weighed into your decision, the fact that, if the lease is given to the greyhound racing industry, that could jeopardise those 8,000 homes that were planned and the 46,000 jobs?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think I said we will consider all factors.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I want to get from you what the most recent advice is that you've received in regard to the \$6 million disputed loan between Wentworth Park Sporting Complex Trust and the Greyhound Breeders Owners and Trainers Association. Have you had any advice or further advice in regard to whether government is liable for that loan?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I haven't had any further advice. I think you asked me about this.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: It was unclear at the time.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was unclear. I think the situation—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: The advice that the department has received is that we're not a direct party to any of the loan agreement.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So the Government would not be liable for the loan?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: No.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, according to your diary disclosures, you also met with the National Rugby League twice in the second half of 2024, on 19 September and 6 December 2024. What was the purpose of those meetings?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Whatever is on my disclosure. As I said, I can't recall every conversation. Sometimes there are multiple issues you may discuss.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, I've seen an internal risk assessment conducted by Crown Lands produced under the Legislative Council call for papers. It raised concerns about the conflict of interest in Racing NSW both acting as regulator of the racing industry and the Crown land manager of racecourse properties. In the light of this obvious conflict, why was Racing NSW still appointed as the Crown land manager for those racecourse properties?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think I discussed this earlier when Mr Latham was asking the exact same question.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I understand he was asking some other questions about it. I'm asking specifically now about the internal risk assessment.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The fact of the matter remains that Racing is both the regulator and the operator. It is a unique setting. But there is also confidence that the investment in the Crown land facility potentially would be better suited through the presence of Racing. I'll take on notice—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Do you want—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, if you could assist me there.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I might come back to the department this afternoon. Minister, maybe you misunderstood the question. I want to specifically ask about the internal risk assessment. There was an internal risk assessment that came up in my SO 52 that Mr Latham was asking about earlier. The internal risk assessment highlighted an obvious conflict. In your answer just now, you said that you have confidence that Racing NSW should be appointed as the Crown land manager despite the advice that you've received that there is actually an obvious conflict of interest. I'm wondering how you, as Minister, dealt with that conflict of interest. I'm keen to hear from the department this afternoon, but I want to hear specifically from you, Minister, about what sort of consideration you had given to that internal document around that risk assessment and the conflict of interest, as the Minister.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll take on notice what process was—I can't recall specifically the last meeting I had in relation to that. As I said to you earlier, there are thousands and thousands of managers out there and a lot of times we struggle with the ability to manage particular facilities. Obviously with the presence of Racing—their balance sheet and their ability to maintain a facility would definitely be relevant to this. The fact that both parties were consenting to that management arrangement—it sat within Crown Lands for—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Sorry, the concern that has come up is that both parties weren't necessarily consenting and that's one of the huge problems there.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's under investigation. On the face of it and the inquiries that Crown Lands have made, it appeared that they were.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Are you saying that you don't recall seeing that internal risk assessment that said that there was a conflict of interest with Racing NSW?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I just want to get some information to check whether that would have been part of the information that was provided to the Minister.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So maybe it wasn't actually put in front of him?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: It would be part of Crown Land's due diligence, as you've obviously identified from the SO 52, but I don't have the briefing note in front of me so I can't advise whether the Minister was advised on that or not.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, has Racing NSW expressed to you or your department an intention or ambition to become the Crown land manager for further racecourses or other Crown lands?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not familiar with any other requests.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So there are no other proposals in front of you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not familiar with any other proposals—whether there is something in the system that hasn't got to me yet.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Has Racing NSW expressed to you or your department a desire to purchase or take private ownership of the Crown lands that they currently manage?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not to me, no.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: To anyone else, to your knowledge?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't believe so.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Not to the department in this term of government.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, did you consult with the racing Minister in making your decision, given that he has responsibility for the Thoroughbred Racing Act that regulates Racing NSW, in regard to making Racing NSW the Crown land manager?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm quite sure that I had a conversation with him. In terms of the details of that conversation—this request was sitting in the system, as I said, before we were even in government. It didn't seem like there was anything controversial about it. It seemed to make sense. We moved forward and completed the process.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, now to Parramatta North. I note you were in Parramatta yesterday at the pool, but Parramatta North is a little bit further afield. You're on a collision course with the Albanese Government here. The Federal member, Andrew Charlton, has launched a petition entitled "Press Pause" on the rezoning of Parramatta North. I just wanted to give you the opportunity to respond to Mr Charlton's calls on Parramatta North.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I love talking about Parramatta North. I'm quite excited about completing the Parramatta puzzle there. It has been on the cards for over a decade, again. It's been on pause for a long, long time. We had to move forward and complete the work towards completing the rezoning process. The beauty of our proposal is that we've really considered all the interests of the community, the heritage, open space, and our proposal there will be to deliver 2½ thousand quality homes. There are 21 hectares of open space, appropriate setbacks from the heritage parts of the precinct and also setbacks from the waterways. There will be 12,000 high-value jobs through the Westmead Health and Innovation District. It's only positive for Parramatta. It's not time to pause on this. It's time to press the accelerator.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So Mr Charlton is wrong?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not sure whether you're supporting my position because I remember—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, I'm asking you on the positions. I ask the questions today. You might get the opportunity in a couple of years time.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —you and the deputy leader were holding hands, and walking and cuddling up to Mr Minns about moving forward to do some positive stuff about delivering housing. I think this is a perfect example of where we can get the balance right. I'm very encouraged by the fact that we're also going to be—a part

of the whole process will be to revitalise or—there are 30 old heritage sites there. Let's also remember that a large amount of derelict land is just sitting there doing nothing. It's time to move forward and get this thing done. I won't be pressing pause, only play or fast forward. That's what we're doing here. We're moving forward with this. It's going to be fantastic for Parramatta as a whole. I noticed there was some silly article yesterday. I hope it's not the mayor.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Who was the silly article from?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The general manager of Parramatta council was talking about how they don't want homes, they want more employment space. It is really crazy that they should be focusing on—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: It's not crazy.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: We don't want jobs now, Minister?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: That's a fair comment.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Aren't you the Minister for Small Business? You don't want jobs? It's crazy, apparently.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: There is 20 per cent vacancy rates in office space in Parramatta. I think the council would be best served focusing on some type of strategic planning to sort that out. We're going to create jobs and homes here, and complete an unfinished part of Parramatta.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Point of order: I've just noticed the clock is not running.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Have we finished? Can I get a cup of coffee?

The CHAIR: I'll take it down to five minutes. Is that about right?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If we can start now, that's fine. Minister, please continue.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Can't we go for a coffee break now?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: No, come on, Minister, keep going.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think I've told you that I'm not into pause, I'm into play.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You're here to play; that's good to hear, Minister. With respect, Dr Charlton said that he was blindsided by the decision. Did you have any conversations with Dr Charlton before commencing the Parramatta North rezoning?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: His office was emailed for a briefing.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Did they take that up?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Eventually but probably a day or two before the announcement. I think maybe it was the holiday period or whatever.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What were the dates when you offered him a briefing and when did the briefing occur?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I haven't got that date in front of me.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Will you take it on notice, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, I will take it on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, when did you brief the member for Parramatta on the Parramatta North rezoning?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think a week prior.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was that a similar time to Dr Charlton?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thereabouts.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The Federal member for Parramatta has expressed frustration over the lack of consultation—he claims—regarding the decision, describing it as a kick in the guts after efforts to secure World Heritage listing for the Female Factory. What do you say to this?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm disappointed. I think this is an opportunity to really celebrate this wonderful proposal. It's really interesting. The feedback that we get from community where they're saying, "We don't want housing" or "We're upset about it", they're saying, "We want more housing. Why aren't you putting

more housing there?" As a matter of fact, historically there was a proposal for a greater amount of housing there, but we've considered all the issues. It's on public exhibition and we're consulting on this.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The Federal member for Parramatta has stated that the plan would, and I quote, "jeopardise the World Heritage listing of the Female Factory by putting up to 30-storey buildings on the land around the iconic heritage site". What advice did you receive with respect to the World Heritage listing before proceeding with the rezoning?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: From what I understand, the setbacks that we've created, the height reductions, should not impact at all on the World Heritage order. There are plenty of examples around the world where there's housing around heritage properties. You just have to walk around the Parthenon and have a look at the housing around there, in Athens.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You've mentioned the Colosseum in some of the public comments; you've mentioned Westminster Abbey. Do you think Dr Charlton's comments are unfounded then?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think we've got the balance right. Dr Charlton's entitled to his position, but as far as I'm concerned, we're consulting with the community, and overwhelmingly I think the community's quite positive about it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, with respect to the explanation of intended effect, it contains multiple MUI mixed-use zones. Why did you choose to have MUI zones in your area rather than dedicated commercial or residential zoning?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Why did we choose mixed use?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yes, rather than dedicated commercial buildings or dedicated residential buildings in that area?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I might hand to Leon.

LEON WALKER: It's a 20- to 30-year delivery time frame for the entire precinct, so it is important that we have some flexibility in there and we're not binding a future delivery pathway for the precinct. It's a very significant precinct, as you know, connecting the Parramatta CBD and Westmead Health and Innovation precinct. Building in some flexibility for that is important.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What assumptions has the Government used in its modelling of the precinct regarding the expected ratio of homes to commercial spaces?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I pass back to Leon, if that's okay.

LEON WALKER: A lot of the commercial is built around the future university and innovation precinct to support Westmead. The work is on the back of that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, what are the plans for road improvements at that site and around, particularly with congestion on Church Street? What's the Government doing to address these concerns as part of the Parramatta North proposal?

LEON WALKER: As you're probably aware, there's a traffic study that was included within the report submitted for the consideration of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. I'm not a traffic expert, so I can't talk to the specifics of it, but an expert has produced that report. That will be considered as part of the assessment.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I know from past memory and involvement that Westmead Public School is severely overcrowded and has been a significant issue for successive governments in that area. What plans have you got for new schools in the area as a result of the increased densities of Parramatta North?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's a matter for the education Minister. That's probably a good question to ask the education Minister.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But there's nothing you have proposed as part of the Parramatta North precinct at all?

LEON WALKER: There's no school within Parramatta North precinct. It could include child care but not public school, junior or senior.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: University.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, what role did Reflections Holiday Parks CEO Nick Baker have in relation to the Holiday Parks reserve trust board members?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'd have to check. There's a process in place for the selection of board members.

The Hon. WES FANG: So you're saying that he did have a role?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know. I will take that on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: Has the Reflections Holiday Parks net profit ratio as a percentage of revenue changed over the past three years?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: As a percentage, I will take that on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, why was the decision made to exclude projects with a value below \$100,000 from the 2024-25 round of the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund grants?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I will take that on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: The 2023-24 round saw 144 grants totalling around \$14.6 million. With an inability to bundle projects to meet the minimum \$100,000 criteria, it excluded some of the smaller community projects. Do you anticipate there will be fewer grants awarded in 2024-25 due to this?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The CRIF provides funds for investment into Crown reserves and assets that are valued and cared for by communities across the State. In 2023-24 CRIF funding delivered \$14.6 million through 144 grants to improve Crown reserves.

The Hon. WES FANG: I said that.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In 2024-25, the funding round will offer around \$10 million in grants to the highest priority projects and \$4.5 million will be reserved for strategic emergency grants. This year's general project grant round is targeting highly utilised reserves, with projects that will have the most significant community impact. The intention is that the majority of CRIF funding will go to reserves that see the most visitors wherever they are in the State, with a smaller amount—

The Hon. WES FANG: Now that you've read your note, Minister, can I—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm sorry for coming prepared.

The Hon. WES FANG: No, if you were prepared—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You've read your question; I'm going to read my answers.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The CHAIR: I will hear the point of order.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Without wanting to interrupt the Minister, I'm concerned that we're getting into a situation again where we're not hearing what the Minister has to say in answer to a legitimate question. It is a legitimate answer and I would like us to be able to hear the end.

The CHAIR: Interjections are disorderly. If you have a point of order around relevance, you can put that to me, but I think the Minister is being relevant even if he is—

The Hon. WES FANG: Rambling and reading notes?

The CHAIR: Even if he is relying on some of his notes, which he is entitled to do. Minister, you have the call.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The intention is that the majority of CRIF funding will go to reserves that see the most visitors, wherever they are in the State.

The Hon. WES FANG: You've read that line already.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: You interrupted, you goose.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll start again.

The Hon. WES FANG: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The intention is that the majority of CRIF funding will go to reserves that see the most visitors, wherever they are in the State.

The Hon. WES FANG: The Minister is now not being relevant to the question that I asked.

The CHAIR: Sorry, Minister, there has been a point of order taken.

The Hon. WES FANG: The Minister is just not being relevant. He has already read this part of the note. It's also not relevant to the question that I asked anyway.

The CHAIR: Technically, under the standing orders, he is being directly relevant, as frustrating as it may be. He is being directly relevant because he is addressing the question.

The Hon. WES FANG: He's actually reading the part of the note that I gave him as part of the question. I'm not sure that he is being relevant.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: You can't have it both ways, Wes.

The CHAIR: No. Mr Kamper, you have the call. Can I suggest you start from where you—

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Start again.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll start with the paragraph.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you want some crayons so you can mark where you stopped reading last time?

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: If I had a crayon, yes, it would be great, Wes. The intention is that the majority of CRIF funding will go to reserves that see the most visitors, wherever they are in the State, with a smaller amount held for such things as emergency repairs and critical maintenance as issues arise. The assessment of CRIF applications will also take into consideration community impact, deliverability and affordability.

Applications for the 2024-25 funding round closed on Friday 22 November 2024. Announcement of the successful projects is expected in May 2025. A further \$4.5 million is being held for strategic emergency grants and other grants. Each year, Crown Lands receives funding requests for urgent maintenance on Crown land from crown land managers. These requests will continue to be considered and assessed on merits and against set criteria. The strategic emergency grants and any other grants program developed will be administered in accordance with the New South Wales *Grants Administration Guide*.

The Hon. WES FANG: That was brilliant, Minister.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you.

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm going to ask the rest of these questions of somebody that is actually going to know the answers. I will hand over to my colleague, Scott Farlow.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order: My point of order is gratuitous unsavoury comments of the member directed to the Minister. This is budget estimates. The Minister of the Crown has come here with all his staff, prepared in detail for this and has been subject over the course—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Come on, Greg, you're eating into time—you know it.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I've been patiently sitting here and not saying anything up to this point about the gratuitous comments that are quite audible. I just think it's disrespectful. He knows that at budget estimates hearings there is—and I'll go to it specifically because he doesn't seem to have been made aware of it—the treatment of witnesses with courtesy. It's clearly not happening.

The CHAIR: I appreciate that. We all know about procedural fairness in terms of treatment of witnesses. That doesn't include snide remarks and funny one-liners at the end of our questions or the Minister's answers. Can we keep that to zero, if at all possible, please? Mr Farlow has the call.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, Camperdown is one of your land audit sites. The Government announced recently a revised plan there for 300 additional units and 200 build-to-rent units. Landcom is the lead on this site, is that correct?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's correct.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Why didn't Landcom get the opportunity to develop the site nearly a year ago when you first made the announcement that it would be 100 units that were completely within the realms of the private sector?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That was announced under the property—

LEON WALKER: Do you want me to take it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes.

LEON WALKER: The Government Property Framework has been developed over the course of the last 12 months. It was formalised at the end of last year. Initially it didn't provide the framework for offering sites to Homes NSW and Landcom in the first instance. That's been rectified through the process of the land audit. It was then offered to Landcom and they've identified the willingness or the desire to take it on and develop the site. You might be aware that originally that land had been identified principally for commercial use, so Landcom has come in and done a full or thorough study of that site and has identified the opportunity to increase housing on that particular site, given the housing crisis.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But in the first tranche of that land audit and those first sites that were offered, there were other ones that Homes NSW took the lead on, weren't there?

LEON WALKER: Under the Government Property Framework there's an order, so Homes NSW gets the first dib.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yes, and second choice is Landcom?

LEON WALKER: Landcom is second. In respect of the hundred that you're referring to, the land audit, when it assesses sites, identifies potential based on existing planning controls. For Landcom to deliver that site, they will need to get approvals to develop the 500-odd homes they've identified as part of the master plan.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Landcom effectively will have to seek a rezoning on the site. Is that correct?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's correct.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And that is the process that the Government will be going through for that site?

LEON WALKER: Yes, it's a site-by-site process. As you well know, every site has its unique attributes. For this particular one, I think it's a fantastic outcome that the Government, through Landcom, is able to deliver 500 sites, a mix of key worker housing and market housing.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Turning to another one of those sites with unique attributes, 301 Samantha Riley Drive at Kellyville, are there any development constraints for the site that has been selected from the land audit at 301 Samantha Riley Drive at Kellyville, half of which are intended to be social housing?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I think we'll have to take that on notice. You're getting into Planning questions, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: We'll come back to that this afternoon, potentially. Minister, with respect to central Barangaroo, another grand announcement that the Government has made, are you concerned at all that under your low- and mid-rise plans there will be taller buildings in Belmont than there will be at Barangaroo?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's interesting you ask the question, considering what we inherited in relation to Barangaroo. It's been sitting there for, what, 12 years.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You've got five storeys there, Minister.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: For 12 years you just had it stuck. The way the Government worked through the whole process there at Barangaroo, we've sat down from day one and worked out—you know, from the time I became Minister I've said, "Okay, how do we get this happening?" That's what is important. It's about moving forward. Is that bell the end? I'll continue later.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: To be continued.

The CHAIR: I will ask a couple of quick questions before I hand to Government members, if they want to ask questions. Minister, on Coopers Island access, I know your office has been working with mine and I thank you on that. Just on the alternative access points, have any of them been assessed for viability beyond doing a desktop review? I know there have been some proposed sites, but from what I can see, I don't think they've been assessed as to whether they're viable or not. It seems like it's just a bit of a desktop review. I'm just wondering whether there is going to be any work done to assess their viability as legitimate alternative access points.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Eurobodalla Shire Council, New South Wales police and Crown Lands are working together to resolve the conflict over the access and use of Coopers Island causeway by recreational fishers and a landowner who uses the causeway for vehicles and stock access. Detailed historical status investigations determined the causeway is not Crown land. In September 2024 Crown Lands wrote to the key stakeholders, including the landholder, Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW, council and New South Wales police to inform

them that the causeway is not Crown land. The causeway is freehold land owned by the Kirranda Pastoral Company.

A survey commissioned by Crown Lands confirmed there is no public access to Bowns Creek and from the public road known as Coopers Island Road. Crown Lands is working with the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW and council to investigate alternative land-based access opportunities within Tuross Lake and the surrounding areas. Coopers Island Road is a public road managed by council. It dissects private land and terminates where it meets the Crown waterway and adjoins a rock causeway and wooden bridge, providing access to a private dwelling and rural property at lot 2A DP12290.

The CHAIR: Can you take on notice as to the alternative sites? That brief that you read doesn't address the alternative sites. I know there are three or four sites that have been flagged with Recreational Fishing Alliance as potential alternatives, but it seems like it's a bit of a desktop review.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll take that on notice.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: We can come back with some further information in the afternoon. We are definitely in discussion with recreational fishers and with the council.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Minister, the Government has outlined as one of their initial priorities that the public service needs to reduce its reliance on contractors. What steps have you taken to achieve this priority?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's a great question.

The Hon. WES FANG: Because you wrote it!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That was a pet thing for me as well: the cost of contractors and the blowouts that we saw with the previous Government, especially in the last three years of that Government. The Minns Labor Government has delivered on its election commitment to reduce spending on contractors, with more than \$450 million in savings on external consultants and individual contractors already realised in its first full year in government. My office and I routinely have conversations with the agency heads about what more can be done to reduce contractor numbers and where it makes sense to do so. I'm confident we will. But it's not just about reducing spend. It's also about increasing the capability of the public sector and ensuring core public work is being principally done by the public service.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Despite the guffawing of those opposite, I do have an interest in this area, having sat on the consultants inquiry, so I appreciate your answers on this. I wonder if you could give us an example in your portfolio of how you're not just cost cutting but striving for a better balance of public service work being done by public servants.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Ms Kaine—

The Hon. WES FANG: Dr Kaine, actually.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Dr Kaine, sorry. Value NSW is a great example, Dr Kaine. They value all land in New South Wales for the VG which underpins almost 10 per cent of annual State revenue. Since late 2023 Value NSW has been on a journey to transform its service delivery. I am immensely proud of this work—and I'll ask Mr McLachlan to provide greater detail in a moment—with some key statistics recently becoming available demonstrating the success. Broadly speaking, this transformation has returned around 50 per cent of core public service work to public servants, saved money in the first full year and is forecasted to avoid significantly more to 2031.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Minister, I wonder if you could get quite specific and let us know how much money has been saved.

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Absolutely, Dr Kaine. In the first full year Value NSW undertook almost 800,000 land valuations, saving \$1.7 million, with more into the future. We're doing more and we're saving more. While we expect costs to fluctuate year on year, overall the forecast shows that, with the model expanding from next month and with Value NSW responsible for around 1.5 million valuations annually, we expect to save up to a further 28 million to 30 June 2031 that would have otherwise been required to be expended in an external model. Whilst this is a forecast only, and costs in the external market continue to fluctuate, we're confident that it's solid, with more than 4,500 tender data points observed mostly in the last year and with a now established and highly functional internal capability and capacity to do it.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Thank you, Minister. I appreciate you detailing that, particularly how we're developing that internal capability. Have the cost savings come with a reduction in quality for the valuations being undertaken by Value NSW?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Absolutely not, Dr Kaine. On the contrary, Valuation NSW has outperformed external delivery for quality and timeliness of valuations. Mr McLachlan, can you provide some further information around this?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Can you read it a bit better?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: His acting will be better.

The Hon. WES FANG: Did you get a note as well? Is this scripted?

The CHAIR: Order!

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Could I please have respect for my staff?

The CHAIR: Order! Mr McLachlan, you have the call.

STEWART McLACHLAN: I think it's a really great example. In regard to quality, the 800,000 valuations we're now performing internally have outperformed the external market when statistically checked. We perform a variety of checks and balances with various algorithms to ensure accuracy, fairness and quality. We've performed that to 100 per cent compliance rate versus a 98.6 per cent compliance rate externally. In relation to timeliness, excluding one LGA that was delivered late by the external delivery model, internally we have, when delivering supplementary valuations—so when a property is subdivided across New South Wales or the boundary changes, a new valuation is requested; there are about 20,000 to 30,000 of them per year—delivered those through our internal model two days faster than the external market can deliver them.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: There are some impressive figures there—some impressive results. Have you seen any other benefits in bringing it back in house?

STEWART McLACHLAN: The short answer is we have. I'm really proud of some of those benefits. In particular, we've seen significant employment benefits. We are now the largest valuation employer in New South Wales. We have created equal or greater jobs as a result of the move internally. In addition, and prior to the transition, we had a high turnover rate and had significant issues—which I know Mr Farlow would be aware of—attracting staff and retaining staff. Since we have made this decision and moved valuations internally or balanced the delivery model, we've seen recruitment numbers spike dramatically. I'm pretty proud to say that in 2024 we broke the department's record for the most applicants for a single role in that year in Value NSW.

In addition, we increased in job satisfaction and engagement through the People Matter Employee Survey. We moved from 53 per cent in 2022 to 71 and 73 per cent respectively, which is a huge move—20 points in a survey over two years. In addition, we moved from having most indicators well below public sector averages in that survey to having every single question above public sector averages in two years. But it's not just about saving money for me. It's about building in-house capability and capacity to deliver for New South Wales. We've done that with a culture focused on delivery. It's something that I'd like to thank Kiersten; Leon; the Minister; Sally Dale, the Valuer General of New South Wales; and Josh Etherington, the former Valuer General of New South Wales. Most importantly, something that I want to put on the record is to thank the almost 300 value-adders who are responsible for the significant milestones in the public service.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: That's really interesting to hear. It's good to get very specific about how these policies affect employment and satisfaction on the ground, so thank you for that. I'm also interested in the geographical spread of those jobs. Are any based outside of Sydney?

STEWART McLACHLAN: With our workforce, 52 per cent is based in regional New South Wales and the remainder is in Sydney. We obviously value across New South Wales. We have staff as far north as Murwillumbah and as far south as Queanbeyan. We have staff based across Orange, Bathurst, Albury and Dubbo as well. We obviously have staff based in the areas that they need to value. That's the commitment we made when we moved the model internally, and it's a commitment that we'll continue to keep.

The Hon. WES FANG: What's wrong with Wagga?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: The department does have a presence in Wagga.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Thank you, Mr Fang. It's my turn. Mr McLachlan, just another question. Are there plans to expand the model or to build on these positive results?

STEWART McLACHLAN: We've been transitioning to the hybrid delivery model for the last couple of years. We think—in discussions with the Valuer General, the Minister, Kiersten and Leon—we've got it right. It's a balanced model. We think that having a balanced model enables better service delivery. The statistics that we've talked about today demonstrate the success of what we've done, I think. They also demonstrate the capacity and capability of the public service when we really turn our minds to those things. It's expected for us to stabilise the rising contractor costs in the external market, and that's what the forecasting shows. But at this point in time we believe we've struck the right balance. We believe with that balanced delivery model comes competition and innovation, which is obviously a really good thing for the valuation system.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Thank you very much, Mr McLachlan. It's nice to hear the good news story as well these days.

The CHAIR: That takes us to morning tea. We will come back at 11.15 a.m.

(Short adjournment)

The CHAIR: Welcome back. We will continue with questions from the crossbench.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Minister, can you rule out any transfer of title to Racing NSW for these five racetracks that you've passed on to Crown land management?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Absolutely, Mr Latham. We're not in the business of transferring land to anyone. As I said earlier, only when it suits the greater interest of the State or the community would we consider that, but it would be a very rare occasion. Whatever commentary was in that email you are referring to, as I said, is fanciful.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It's a serious commentary from the person who is basically second in charge of Racing NSW, so it's not a lighthearted matter at all, but I thank you for that commitment. Can you also rule out giving Racing NSW any further Crown land management, given the way in which they have mishandled this and misled you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: As I said, there's a review underway. We're going to get to the bottom of all this. From what I understand, there's no application for any further transfers. I thank you for bringing it to our attention, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You're welcome. In the SO 52 document that Ms Hurst brought forward, there is mention that initially Racing NSW was looking at eight or nine tracks over which to become the Crown land manager. Is it possible to identify the three or four extra that didn't eventuate, please?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, we're looking at that. The five that were identified were sitting in the system. The request there, as I said to you earlier, was in the system prior to my becoming Minister for Lands and Property. Since you've asked for the additional sites, I'm sure we will take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It precedes you as Minister—I think it goes back to Kevin Anderson—but the original bid was eight or nine. That's mentioned different times in the documentation. I'm keen to find out which ones they are. Minister, wearing your Small Business hat, in regard to due diligence, was there an awareness that Racing NSW was a notorious bad payer? I'll give one example of a racetrack that you passed on to Crown land management. They promised Coffs Harbour track a major upgrade of irrigation costing \$250,000. Coffs Harbour got the contractor to do the work and then said to the contractor, "You have to get paid by Racing NSW. They didn't give us the grant, but if you bill Racing NSW, that's how it's going to be handled."

Eighteen months later, the contractor hasn't been paid. I assure you that if you talk to people in the racing industry around New South Wales, Racing NSW is a bad payer. Mr V'landys, although it's not strictly his money, is going to die with his first dollar. They never spend anything; they are a bad payer. Aren't you concerned, as small business Minister, that around the State small businesses don't get paid by Racing NSW, and they were never going to live up to their promise of sound financial management of these racetracks or anywhere else?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thanks for that information, Mr Latham. That's the first I've heard of them being a bad payer. I'm not someone who really hangs around the racetracks or the racing industry.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You should.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Any intel is valuable, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Will you look at due diligence conducted by Crown lands in the future? They should look at and inquire into the reputation of the organisation for paying their bills.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'd assume that due diligence would look to the character or conduct of an applicant, but thank you for providing us with that feedback.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You're welcome. I did raise this matter with the chair of the board of Racing NSW, Saranne Cooke. She wrote to me on 17 February, saying—I wasn't aware of this, but I'm asking you, Minister—"The New South Wales Government was contemplating to introduce legislation to have a vast majority of Crown lands managed by local councils." They manage them already, don't they—the local park and other facilities? Local councils are the biggest Crown land managers of the State already, aren't they?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They are very prominent managers of Crown lands.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It couldn't be done any other way.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's right.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: That's not news at all.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's old news.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: She was saying that Racing NSW was concerned that "some local councils would not renew leases to race clubs". Have you heard that?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I haven't had any representations in relation to that.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: If Racing NSW wanted to quarantine race clubs from the abandonment of their leases by local councils, wouldn't they try to get local government leases? In the five cases, none of those were local government authorities, were they? They were all race clubs and trusts.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's right.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: So that's not correct either. She goes on to say in the letter, "We have and will provide long-term leases to race clubs." But that's not the situation in Queanbeyan. When do you think this commitment to provide long-term leases for local community involvement and the running of race clubs is going to be fulfilled? At the moment at Queanbeyan there is no-one in the race club office. The only thing that happens is that Scott Kennedy—it's a strange thing for a guy who is 2IC—comes down the day before the Queanbeyan race meeting. He is only there for two days and then it's vacant again. This is not the quality Crown land management that we are after, is it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: As I said to you earlier, we are conducting a review into that whole appointment.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Will you look into all those aspects at Queanbeyan?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: If you could table that letter, that would be of value to us.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Your office has already got the letter from Mr Keller. This is the one from Ms Cooke. By leave, yes, I'll happily table that.

Document tabled.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Furthermore, in terms of the answer that was provided about racing infrastructure being boosted at these particular tracks, the information I have is that these works were happening anyway. Barriers were being replaced at Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour, and plastic running rails were coming in as a safety measure. There has been no additional Racing NSW investment in these five tracks, as was initially promised. Can you have a look at the answer that Racing NSW has provided to see whether these are additional commitments at the tracks or commitments that were already in the pipeline?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll have a look at that. Racing NSW has advised Crown Lands that since becoming a Crown land manager in May 2024, it has supported a range of capital investments in the five racecourses it manages. These include completing a major reconstruction of the Port Macquarie course surface, providing a much-improved racing and training surface for participants and stakeholders; installing at Port Macquarie and Coffs Harbour racecourses the new Simtrack starting barriers to increase horse and rider safety; rolling out upgraded proper PVC running rails at all five racecourses, which is to be completed by June 2025, to further support the safety of riders and horses; and re-asphalting roadways in the stabling precinct and upgrading irrigation and water management at Coffs Harbour racecourse. Does that assist?

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The information I have is that these are statewide programs that were already in the pipeline. At Port Macquarie they rebuilt the track. Racing NSW botched it, and this is the second

go at it after there was litigation. Minister, in the SO 52, again, there is a whole series of draft press releases headed "Giddy-up"—that's great—"Racing NSW to manage five regional racecourses". Why wasn't there ever a public announcement of this rather than the gazetting? I know we should all be reading the gazetting to overcome our insomnia, but surely a public announcement should have been made for something this significant. Why were there so many draft press releases but none were issued?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was essentially the transfer of management of those sites. It wasn't as if the character or nature of the activity on the site was going to be any different. A gazettal is an announcement. I'm not sure what you want to hear from me, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I've never seen so many draft press releases, that's all.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's not as if there has been a massive change of use or activity at the site to say, "This is what we're doing that's going to be different here."

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: If you changed the management of Crown land in the future, would you make a public announcement rather than just the gazettal, which is the most obscure way of doing it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes. I think in terms of racing, we will take that on board, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Minister, thank you for your attention to this because it's a major concern to people in the racing industry, particularly at Queanbeyan, where they feel that they have been totally disregarded and disenfranchised. I thank you, your staff and Treasurer Mookhey—who handled the matter in the House—for the prompt way in which you have responded and undertaken the review. Is there an expectation for when the review will be finished, please?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No. I've signed off the review, so—a number of weeks, I suppose. I don't want to give you a strict timeline, because there's a lot of matters to investigate here.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thank you. Just one final thing, again on racing at the Sydney International Equestrian Centre. In the proposal from the Australian Turf Club for the training facility there—Office of Sport is in charge of this—are the woodlands safe? Are the woodlands from the Western Sydney Parklands safe? The map I saw, from the ATC, indicated they were going to take and bulldoze the woodlands for that training facility at the southern end of SIEC. I'm an urban environmentalist. It's not really recognised around the place. The Greens haven't got on to this, but I am almost single-handedly protecting the woodlands.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Latham's love of woodlands.

The Hon. WES FANG: Compost Toilet Latham.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: While I'm appropriately not a party to the unsolicited proposal process through which the New South Wales Government is considering this—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Mr Wang, settle down.

The CHAIR: Continue.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Shall I start again? It eats up Mr Wang's time. It's good.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Had to get the Wang-ometer in at some stage.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: He's done it.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: There's a big crowd waiting for this.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The boss will be replaying this one as well.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Sorry, Wes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Sorry, Minister.

The CHAIR: Plough on. You were provoked, Minister Kamper.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What's the story, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: While I'm appropriately not a party to the unsolicited proposal process through which the New South Wales Government is considering this, it is a matter of public record that an unsolicited proposal was received and was of sufficient interest to warrant further development and progression to a more defined project. I further understand the proposal does include relocating a number of horse-training elements of Rosehill Gardens to Sydney International Equestrian Centre at Horsley Park. I do not expect the

Office of Sport to become increasingly engaged in this proposal as the process moves forward, and I look forward to providing updates to the House at the appropriate time.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The House? That's our House, I suppose.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: To you, yes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you take on notice about the woodlands please?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes. We'll take that on notice.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That would be a question for Greater Sydney Parklands. I can take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Well, the Office of Sport, they run SIEC.

The CHAIR: I did allow for a bit of back and forth beyond time. Ms Hurst?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Thank you. Minister, I might just give you this. This is the attachment of the risk assessment for the appointment of Racing NSW as Crown land manager that I mentioned before. There is a range of risks here, but one of the risks, as I mentioned, was the conflict of interest that was indicated. Just given that you weren't sure if you'd seen this document before you made a decision, I just thought I'd provide you a copy of it so you can have a look. But I want to talk about Valuation NSW. In the report published in September last year, the Joint Standing Committee on the Office of the Valuer General expressed their concern about the ongoing practice of Valuation NSW selling and sharing personal information, from a privacy perspective. I know I've raised that with you previously at budget estimates. The joint standing committee made a recommendation to you:

That the Minister for Lands and Property consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the appropriateness of Valuation NSW providing and selling data on property sales to organisations through licence agreements.

Minister, have you acted on that recommendation from the committee?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In January 2024 the Valuer General implemented new licence agreements governing the provision of property sales information to data resellers. These licences were enacted following concerns raised by the New South Wales Privacy Commissioner and a subsequent review.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, could you just speak up? I'm just struggling to hear you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The review identified opportunities to improve property sales related services for improvements to data governance and quality and enhance privacy protections for New South Wales landholders. Revenue generated from these agreements has been used to cover costs associated with the provision of the data and to fund the data and privacy team within Value NSW, to monitor licence compliance and ensure data quality and privacy protections are maintained. The Value NSW data and privacy team was established in 2024 and has since created an audit framework. The first of Value NSW's annual audits to ensure compliance with licence conditions is near completion.

Charging data resellers for property sales information broadly brings New South Wales into alignment with other jurisdictions across Australia. De-identified property sales information remains accessible on the VG's website, with restricted usage provisions. The licence agreements approved by the VG in '23 include stringent privacy protections in response to concerns from the Privacy Commissioner about the misuse of personal information. The licences with data resellers have a duration of three years, after which Value NSW will conduct a review to ensure the data provisions and licences remain appropriate.

Terms have been established with data resellers for full data supply agreement, providing comprehensive property sales information to data suppliers, contingent upon compliance with licence agreement terms, with a flat-rate administration fee of \$750,000 per annum for tier 1. Limited data supply agreement offers a restricted subset of property sales information to data suppliers, including vendor/purchaser surnames, with a flat-rate admission fee of \$100,000 per annum. Out of the five engaged data resellers, three opted for comprehensive property sales information, while two selected agreements for restricted data access.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Thank you. That gives me a bit of an overview about what Valuation NSW is doing in this space. If I take you back—the question, Minister, was, have you taken any action on the joint standing committee's recommendation that the Minister consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the appropriateness of Valuation NSW providing and selling the data?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Stewart, if you could get us on the consultation process please.

STEWART McLACHLAN: The recommendation, I think, from memory, was supported in principle. Obviously we will have ongoing conversations and update the upper House committee on—I think it is scheduled for 5 May. But I can say that the Valuer General routinely meets with stakeholders. We had a meeting just yesterday with a key stakeholder in the data supply space. Licence agreements were raised in that meeting, discussing that, and we, obviously, routinely have conversations with the Minister's office about those things as well.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Thank you. Minister, are you taking any action in this space yourself?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I am. I think Stewart just has explained to you what we are doing.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I understand what the department's doing. I'm just wondering if—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: What do you mean by "action"? What sort of action are you referring to, Ms Hurst?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: The recommendation was the Minister consult with relevant stakeholders. So I guess my question is, Minister, have you personally consulted with any relevant stakeholders to get yourself across these concerns?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I haven't had any direct meetings, no, but I will consult with them.

STEWART McLACHLAN: Through you, Minister. It's probably important to note, Ms Hurst, though, that it is a three-year licence commitment. So, until those licences are lapsed, there is no ability to change how those licences are structured. Noting that they are, in our view, the most rigorous across Australia for the data supply space and secondly that we have committed, through the joint standing committee and through the Valuer General and the Minister, to conduct a review of how those licences should be formulated or not formulated at the conclusion or close to the conclusion of the licence period, which is three years.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Thank you. Minister, in November the Australian Information Commissioner found two companies were in breach of that Privacy Act. These companies were Master Wealth Control and Property Lovers. Despite these findings, Property Lovers are still advertising a platform for finding distressed home owners. And people who sign up are encouraged to target potential motivated sellers, such as people going through family law proceedings or facing repossession of their homes. There are some really serious concerns that that information is still being sold in the first place and getting into the public domain, where it can still be, obviously, misused. And it seems that that is an ongoing issue, given what's happened here. Have you given further consideration to these issues or had further advice, given this very recent case in November?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I agree with you in relation to the seriousness of those situations with those two companies. I will take it on notice in terms of what further work has been done within my department in relation to it.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Thank you. I am just going back to your diary disclosures. On 28 August last year you met with the Hon. Robert Borsak and the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia. Do you recall what that meeting was about?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not off my head. I will take that on notice.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Just over a month after that meeting, the Office of Sport opened its \$800,000 Safe Shooting Program for applications. This is noteworthy, given that the Sporting Shooters' Association have received grants from this program in the past. Do you recall discussing any funding being given to the Sporting Shooters' Association in that meeting?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't recall any funding.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: You don't recall discussing funding with them?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'd also like to ask you about a meeting you had on 28 November with the NSW Farmers Association, together with the department of planning. Do you recall what that meeting was about?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was a Crown land issue in terms of licensing or renewable. I've got a vague, vague, vague memory of that. There could have been a number of issues, though, Ms Hurst, so I can't give you those details.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Could I get some more details on that on notice, please?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: On 1 July you had a meeting with the Hon. Mark Banasiak and the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW. Do you recall what that meeting was about and which portfolio of yours it related to?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Most likely Crown Lands. Most likely the issue that he asked me questions about earlier in relation to the recreational fishing.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Most likely or you don't recall?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't be certain. I'll take it on notice.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: If you could take that on notice, thank you. Minister, it has now been over 20 months since the final report of the New South Wales chief scientist on synthetic turf was published. Are we still waiting on the whole-of-government response to be able to provide an update on that?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's Minister Scully's.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's Minister Scully's, and we're waiting on guidelines and a response from the Minister.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: The NSW Planning website states that the response to the report will be coming to Cabinet sometime. Are you able to give us any indication when you're expecting to see it? Obviously there is some cross-portfolio in that space.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't give you a date or a timeline on that. It's the responsibility of Minister Scully.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, what do you view is your role as the Minister for Multiculturalism in maintaining social cohesion in New South Wales?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: That's a really good question, Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: I thought so.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Social cohesion has been under pressure of recent times, there is no about doubt that, but it's not failing. It's not failing. We can have everything perfect in our society, but if we don't have social cohesion, we have got nothing and it all falls apart. It's very important that we focus on maintaining social cohesion within our community.

The Hon. WES FANG: Would you say that you have a good relationship with all of the cultural communities that you represent?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think I have a good professional working relationship with most of the multicultural communities, yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: Since the start of 2025, could I ask how many times have you personally spoken with the Jewish community leaders?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I couldn't give you a number. I speak to community leaders all the time, Mr Fang, and especially over the recent year.

The Hon. WES FANG: An estimate would do, Minister, since the start of 2025—and we're not even at the end of February yet, so we're talking about seven or eight weeks. How many times have you personally spoken with the Jewish community leaders?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It is so regular. It's a regular occurrence. I'm communicating with all community leaders on a regular basis, and there has been—

The Hon. WES FANG: Would you estimate it's once a week?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Can I just finish one answer?

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm just curious as to what you would estimate—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not going to sit here and guesstimate how many times. On numerous occasions I speak—as I said, on a regular basis.

The Hon. WES FANG: So once a week, would you say?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order: The Hon. Wes Fang has asked the same question four, five, maybe six times, and the Minister has answered.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: He's trying to assist the Minister.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: He's answered. It's appropriate that he moves on.

The Hon. WES FANG: There's no standing order to say that I can't ask the same question numerous times.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: If you start badgering the Minister by asking the same question over and over again, there is, yes.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I suspect if the member feels he hasn't had the question answered, he can re-ask the question, but he should be mindful that it doesn't go on for too much.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you, Chair. I'll move on anyway. Minister, do you normally have these conversations in person or via phone?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Both, in person or via phone.

The Hon. WES FANG: So since the start of—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I also attend a lot of multicultural events. On that basis, you're meeting a lot of the community leaders through the events. I've got the faith council that I work with on a regular basis. Again, community leaders sit within that. I think you could say that I've been fairly active in terms of engaging with them.

The Hon. WES FANG: Well, maybe we'll ask them. Since the start of 2025, how many times have you personally met or spoken with the Muslim community leaders?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I regularly meet and speak with Muslim community leaders.

The Hon. WES FANG: Again, once a week, would you estimate?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm not going to guesstimate. I am in constant contact with Muslim leaders.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you meet with them in person or via phone?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In person, at events, by phone—it's a regular occurrence. Keep in mind that I have Muslim representation on the faith council, and I have regular contact with representatives on the faith council.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Mr Fang, it's hard for the Minister to give you a straight answer on this because it's largely dependent on what the circumstances of the day are, in terms of the communities that he is supporting. Sometimes he could be on the phone numerous times a day with one community; other times he might be not wanting to pester communities for the sake of talking to them. It's very variable, depending on the circumstances.

The Hon. WES FANG: I appreciate that, Mr La Posta. That's why I put a time frame on it and said since the start of 2025, what was the approximate number. I haven't actually got an approximate number yet, but that's okay. I'll move on.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Where do I start to establish that approximate number, Mr Fang?

The Hon. WES FANG: Every time you have a conversation with them and speak to them about the issues of social cohesion, which is exactly what I'm trying to ask you about.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Are you saying that I need to be keeping a Roman numerals-type log of every single community leader that I speak to on a daily basis?

The Hon. WES FANG: I don't mind if you use normal numbers, Minister. It doesn't have to be Roman numerals. I would appreciate—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've got a number of responsibilities, Mr Fang. I won't keep—

The Hon. WES FANG: I would appreciate you being able to provide any answer on this.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I will not commit to keeping a Roman numeral-style log for you. I will not do it.

The Hon. WES FANG: What about an abacus?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, I won't do it.

The Hon. WES FANG: I don't care how you do it, Minister. I would just appreciate—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Mr Fang, I have—

The Hon. WES FANG: I would like to have an understanding of how you're doing your job.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I am constantly engaging all of our community leaders and the general multicultural communities that I meet with on a regular basis. That's one thing no-one is going to criticise me about, because they know that I'm always on the front foot when it comes to addressing community issues.

The Hon. WES FANG: "Front Foot" Kamper—that's what we know you as.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You saw purely during the Wakeley issue how we were able to move so quick to settle things down over a period—

The Hon. WES FANG: On that point, Minister, then, I'm going to ask you this: Have you visited any of the sites of the recent antisemitic and Islamophobic attacks?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not of recent, no, I didn't visit the sites. The Premier visited them.

The Hon. WES FANG: Not recently? Since 2025?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: But I've been on the phone whenever—

The Hon. WES FANG: So the Premier is out there doing it; you're not with him. You're the Minister for Multiculturalism.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: What's the point you're trying to make?

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm trying to work out how you're doing your job—or is the Premier doing it for you, Minister?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The Hon. WES FANG: Is the Premier holding your hand on all of this?

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! Minister, there is a point of order. The Hon. Wes Fang will come to order.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: The Hon. Wes Fang is being discourteous and also provocative and attempting to get some attention for himself, maybe.

The Hon. WES FANG: To the point of order: I'm going to take a point of order now so that we can stop these interjections from the Government. Budget estimates is designed to be robust and strong questioning of the Minister. If the Minister is not able to answer the question, that's on the Minister. We don't need Government members seeking to say that this is disingenuous, because I'm holding the Minister to account for the very job that he's supposed to be doing.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: "Discourteous".

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: She didn't say that.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Could I make a comment?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Yes, I would like to make another comment too. We have Peter online.

The Hon. WES FANG: If the Government wants to waste our time, I think there need to be brakes put on that. Ultimately, the Minister is supposed to be answering these very questions.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Wes, we've been so controlled with all your silliness.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! The Hon. Peter Primrose?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Only that I agree with many things that the Hon. Wes Fang says, but we are bound by the procedural fairness rules. That is what the Government is saying. For many reasons, I think he more than anyone else should be aware of those rules because many of them were implemented as a consequence of some of his actions. Leaving that aside, I would argue that the Government is simply pointing out what are the rules that have been adopted by the House.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I don't want to get in the way of robust questioning. I think that there is a need for robust questioning. But in this particular instance, the Hon. Wes Fang was talking over the Minister. The Minister was attempting to answer the questions, but I couldn't hear what those attempts were. I remind the Hon. Wes Fang to give the Minister a moment to actually answer those questions rather than peppering him with further questions. Otherwise, we will continue to see points of order being taken. The Opposition has the floor.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I was just asking before whether you have visited any of the recent antisemitic and Islamophobic sites that were attacked. Have you visited any in 2025?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I said to you that those sites that were attacked I haven't visited. But I have visited—I can't recall what visits I've made and when I've made them. Whether they are Jewish leaders or Muslim leaders, I am in constant contact with them. As I said earlier, we have the faith council and other groups that I'm regularly in contact with. I don't understand where you are trying to get to with this questioning. My connection with the community leaders has been rock solid throughout this whole process. Keep in mind that we have had enormous challenges from back in October 2023.

The Hon. WES FANG: Those were self-inflicted challenges, though, weren't they, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They were not self-inflicted challenges.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I am going to ask you—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We have had enormous challenges throughout that whole period. I have been proactive in trying to maintain peace and harmony and connection with all of the community leaders. What I have found rewarding is that, no matter what those challenges are amongst those communities, we have been able to still continue to get them together at council meetings—

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I am asking—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —and make decisions together and work together through difficult situations, including providing joint statements—

The Hon. WES FANG: Statements make the world go round, Minister, but I am just—

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —and common positions on things—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! Sorry, Minister, I am interrupting you for a point of order.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: We have used best endeavours this morning to be patient with the Hon. Wes Fang. I am just wondering at what point in which he actually has to be called to order formally. I am foreshadowing that that is something that we will start to pursue from now on, in terms of his obnoxious and rude behaviour towards the Minister. Ample warning has been given. It was very much telegraphed in my last point of order and now we will start to pursue it. I won't pursue it now, but you are on notice, Wes.

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm not sure what the point of order is.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Either am I.

The Hon. WES FANG: Is there a point of order?

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: You have to demonstrate courtesy and respect to the Minister and you must allow him to answer. If you don't like it, you can take a point of order; but you can't keep talking over the Minister. It's just not acceptable.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I remind the Hon. Greg Donnelly to direct his point of order through me.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I'm sorry, Deputy Chair.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Yes, I have warned the Hon. Wes Fang previously that he is on thin ice. He may continue.

The Hon. WES FANG: I live on thin ice, Deputy Chair.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order—

The Hon. WES FANG: No—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It was a remark, Greg. Take a chill pill.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: It's not necessary, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. WES FANG: Stop wasting time. You don't need to protect him.

The CHAIR: Order! I will hear the point of order.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: This is the precise point I am making.

The Hon. WES FANG: Stop wasting time, Greg.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! The Hon. Wes Fang has been warned multiple times that off-the-cuff comments will continue to probably see—

The Hon. WES FANG: Deputy Chair, I will take a point of order that your comment was off the cuff as well, talking about thin ice.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I wish to take a point of order in terms of—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: That was not off the cuff. That was a comment in regards to a warning about how close you are to being called to order officially. It was a warning that you will continue to waste your time if you continue to enact the behaviour that you know is likely to ensure that there is another point of order. You have the floor.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, you have agreed that you are the Minister responsible for social cohesion in New South Wales. Obviously, after the Allawah synagogue attack, they would have appreciated having the Minister for Multiculturalism attend. You did attend, didn't you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I didn't attend, no.

The Hon. WES FANG: You didn't attend?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, I had something else on. The Premier was there. It's not just about attending a particular event; it's also about the work we are doing with—

The Hon. WES FANG: It wasn't an event. It was an attack, Minister.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I thought you said an event.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: There has been a point of order.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: I'm not sure how often we have to keep saying the exact same thing, which is that the Hon. Wes Fang should not be speaking over the Minister. If he has an issue with the answer, he can take a point of order, as is the process, and address it that way. It is continual flouting of your ruling that he should listen or take a point of order and not speak over the Minister. It is enough.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I didn't feel that that was speaking over the Minister. I felt that that was a much more calm conversation. I feel that, so far, the Hon. Wes Fang has pulled back a little. I am going to keep an eye on it.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, you didn't attend. Why not?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't tell you. I haven't got my diary in front of me. I can't recall what I was doing. I was definitely doing a lot of work in terms of pursuing changes and engaging with the community in relation to whatever the impact has been on the day.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, let me ask you this—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I work very closely with my agency. If you are talking to anyone in the Jewish community, I am the last person they are going to say hasn't been proactive in working with them and assisting them through this process, because that is where you would be clearly wrong.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, why do you think the Premier attended?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Premier and I communicate—

The Hon. WES FANG: Why do you think the Premier attended?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —every day, Mr Fang, and especially during those periods.

The Hon. WES FANG: Why do you think the Premier attended?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We work together to address and assist during times of crisis—

The Hon. WES FANG: Would you agree—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —or difficult times.

The Hon. WES FANG: Would you agree that the Premier attended because, ultimately, the support that that provided to the Jewish community was important? Would you agree that your attendance would have also demonstrated your support for the community?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The Premier's attendance is extremely important. It is very important that the community is aware that the Premier of this State is attending the meeting. By the same token, during those times, I'm at the forefront of doing whatever we need to be doing to keep harmony and to keep control of the situation. I have worked very closely with my agency. We have been proactive on every occasion whenever there has been an incident. I have always communicated my position as the Minister. As I said earlier, I am in constant conversations and connection with the Jewish community.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Through you, Minister, Mr Fang, you have been a member of the House for a long time. You know the complementary roles that government needs to play on this. The Premier is the head of the Government. If he is positioning himself at these things, that is a good message to send to the community. The Minister is working behind the scenes, complementing the message of the Premier. They don't need to be in the same place at the same time to send a strong message to the community. The soft diplomacy of the Minister during these difficult times, I cannot question. As an agency, any time we have deployed the Minister to make a phone call or call any group, he has been there. We need to acknowledge that in the last 12 months there have been 79 global elections that have had a destabilising impact on New South Wales, and also the conflict in the Middle East.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Ms La Posta, I do respect and appreciate you and your answers to this inquiry but we have limited time with the Minister. I am sure we will come back to you this afternoon and we can get some of your insights on that. Minister, it is a concern to all of us in terms of the attacks on places of worship. In November last year there was an announcement from the Government and from yourself with respect to the safe places of worship grants. That was a \$5 million announcement. I'm just seeking clarification as to whether that \$5 million is in addition to the \$15 million you previously announced or whether it is part of that \$15 million that you previously announced.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's a part of the \$15 million.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So it isn't an additional \$5 million? So that is not a \$20 million program? That's still a \$15 million program?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, it was an additional amount that we're releasing.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Mr Farlow, we brought forward some of those funds to this year to help with the current tensions that are there. They were phased over the estimates but we brought forward, I think, an additional \$2 million to supplement the program.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So that funding round that ran from November to December last year—how much was available in that funding round? Was it the full \$5 million?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Correct.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Which organisations received funding in that round?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: We can give you the full list on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How many applications were received in that round?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: We funded 103 different religious organisations with the \$5 million. As you said, before the program opened—the latest round of the program opened on 7 November and we were intending to close applications just before Christmas but, because of the continued escalations of tensions, we kept the applications open for this round of funding until 9 January. Again, same parameters as the original program—between \$5,000 and \$250,000 per application.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The spate of attacks on Jewish synagogues has been very concerning, including the one at Allawah that Mr Fang referred to. As we know, with Jewish synagogues in particular, they utilise the services of armed and unarmed security guards to protect their religious sites, which obviously comes at a significant personal cost to each synagogue and the community security group throughout the Jewish community. However, this grant program specifically excludes security personnel or guards as items eligible to receive funding. Why is this the case and do you think that this should be revised in future funding rounds?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's something we could consider. During this period there has been greater police presence and support throughout this whole period. But, yes, definitely moving forward we're doing whatever we can to try and capture—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, will you look at expanding that to security?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We'll look at whatever we have to do to protect our places of worship and to protect the Jewish community, especially during these times. I'm hoping and I'm trusting that a lot of the initiatives and legislation that we've introduced in the House will work. We need to continue to communicate how important it is out there. I'm 60 years of age and I can't remember a time when we had this type of open antisemitism in our community. That's why we're on the front foot and we're serious about stamping this out. It's one thing people saying these things out loud, but even the fact that they're being thought in people's heads—that's the part that really concerns me. I think we need to continue to engage and communicate. I'm always calling upon my agency to assist in whatever way to try and work—

The Hon. WES FANG: He has to because he doesn't do it himself.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order!

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Chair, it's my anniversary today and I'm here—

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Minister, I'll hear the point of order.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: He's not your wife.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Order! I'll hear the point of order from the Hon. Greg Donnelly.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Deputy Chair, you have sat through this all morning. I submit that a formal warning be given to the Hon. Wes Fang for his last comment. He did it deliberately. It's the normal slap in the face after he's finished his question or someone else has finished a question. He really needs to be formally warned. I think we've come to the end of our tether. It's now midday. To be perfectly frank, I've had a gutful of you, Wes, a complete gutful.

The Hon. WES FANG: I've had a gutful of the Minister's answers.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I just remind the Hon. Greg Donnelly to direct his comments to the Chair.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: He needs to be put on a formal warning.

The CHAIR: I'm in the difficult position of walking in on what was obviously a controversial comment. I didn't hear it.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It may be fortuitous that you weren't here.

The CHAIR: Maybe it was. I didn't hear the comment. But, going back to my previous ruling where I said we shouldn't be making these comments, that was my warning to everyone. I will uphold the point of order and, Mr Fang, I will put you on one call. That warning was to everybody. In fairness, everyone had it. Who are we up to now? Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Minister, can I say happy anniversary to you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: A very significant milestone. I've tried a few times to get to 41 years and got absolutely nowhere near it, so I very much envy you. I'm sure the second half of your day will be more enjoyable than the first half.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm looking forward to it.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: We wish you all the best. Can I just take you up on one of those comments you made regarding antisemitism. You said we haven't seen it before in New South Wales, which is very true, to this extent. Why do you think it has happened this time?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know. Mr Latham, I think, in many respects, the one big pitch that the Premier and myself have been making right through is that we need to be extra careful that we don't allow issues that occur overseas to be imported into our wonderful multicultural community here in New South Wales and Australia, actually. The fact of the matter is there is such diverse representation within our community. If we allow every single issue that's a problem overseas to infect our multicultural—it will fall apart. It's really important that—unfortunately, many try to politicise or aggravate through times like this. We have been rock solid right

through. We work with all communities. There has been a spate of attacks on our Jewish communities that, let's face it, we haven't seen before—trying to burn down childcare centres, horrible language all over walls in Sydney especially. We've seen other bizarre incidents like where we've had a situation with that caravan and the unfortunate stuff that we saw on—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Do you think the Government has been slow? I'm glad to hear you make those comments. But has the Government been too slow in getting that message out, the message being "You've won the lottery of life to come to Australia or be born here. Don't bring the hatreds of the Middle East to our country. Enjoy the best of our culture and values and leave those hatreds and violence and resentments behind"?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think we've been saying that from day dot, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Are you sure?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've been very strong on that in every statement that I've made, every bit of communication.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The Premier has expressed shame that the protest at the Opera House on 9 October 2023 was allowed to occur, where not only did they break the street protest laws; they were given a police escort to go down there. We know some of the things that were chanted. Do you share the Premier's shame that that was allowed to occur?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I regret that that happened. Sometimes during times like this it is very difficult to predict outcomes, or you don't expect certain things. There were people that were mourning their lost ones that were there at a vigil at the Opera House.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Well, the Palestinians weren't. They seemed to be celebrating the terrorist attack.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Unfortunately, that occurred. I do share the Premier's sentiment there. But, moving forward, we need to really reinforce how important it is that we don't allow certain sentiment to come into our communities because it doesn't end with one situation. It doesn't end just with the—it's not just about the Middle East. There are problems all over the world.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Do you agree with the Premier's sentiment that multiculturalism is not up for debate, can't be debated, when obviously some things have gone wrong compared to the original theory of multiculturalism that we need to confront?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We've got a multicultural community. I think we're invested there, Mr Latham. I truly believe that we as a State have—we've always boasted that we've got one of the finest multicultural communities in the world. I don't give up hope, and that's why we will continue to invest and work really hard to maintain that status. Social cohesion is not something you take for granted. You have to continue to work at it. That's the hard work that we're doing.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I thank you for the work you've been doing. I know how many functions you attend and also the protocol in government if the Premier attends. He's the head of government and Ministers don't necessarily need to be there. They can attend to other work. I know the work you've been doing and how busy you are, but I also know the original theory of multiculturalism. We look at Gough Whitlam and, to some extent, Malcolm Fraser as the fathers of multiculturalism. The Whitlam vision of multiculturalism was a blended society. You can look down any street and you'd see different races, religious groups, all taking the best of everyone's culture and ideas, including, of course, Australian culture and values.

But don't you think that original theory, which was fantastic, hasn't been realised in practice when you look at some of the ethnic enclaves in Lakemba, Harris Park, Chatswood, Cabramatta? I know Mrs Whitlam was upset about what happened in Cabramatta. I'm not saying these are necessarily bad places, but they don't match the original theory of multiculturalism. They run the risk that if you have an enclave and it is inward looking, perhaps hate is allowed to fester as people talk about another group. It would be a lot better if we did have that blended society and better settlement and dispersion patterns of migration instead of what has emerged in Sydney now. I live in south-west Sydney and we don't have any of this antisemitism stuff, but to me, in the current environment, it looks like Lakemba versus Dover Heights.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We have the recent issues, but it's not about giving up on the vision of multiculturalism.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Do you think that original vision was a lot better than what we've actually now got in practice?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't believe that it's really that bad in practice, Mr Latham. I attend so many multicultural events and everyone is celebrating each other's backgrounds, even events like iftar dinners during Ramadan. If you look at the cross-section of the community that attends these events, and celebrates and enjoys and joins in the practice, they get greater appreciation for other cultures. I have always looked at New South Wales or Australia as the Baskin and Robbins of—

The Hon. WES FANG: Where is this going?

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It's rainbow ice cream.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We have so many different flavours of people and communities. We are much richer because of multiculturalism. Because we get a few glitches along the way, I don't think it's about giving up. It's about working hard to maintain it.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You're a product of it yourself, and I appreciate your sincerity.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm from an ethnic background.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: As multicultural Minister, Do you join with the head of ASIO this morning in condemning *The Daily Telegraph's* stupid stunt at Newtown where they tried to stir up division and hatred with a plant who went there to generate a headline and manufacture rather than report news? Would you urge the media to be a lot more responsible? This is a serious issue.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Absolutely.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Fostering division and stunts are not the way to go.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was mind-blowingly stupid. I think it's incumbent upon all of us to try and maintain harmony and peace, and stunts like that send us in the opposite direction. I agree.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Mr La Posta, you made a comment earlier on but it was cut off. You said that global elections have been destabilising New South Wales. What did you mean by that? We normally think elections are a good thing. That's how we got here.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I think any election and a free and fair election in a democratic society—and I think the last State election was a great example of that in terms of the transfer of power between former Premier Perrottet and Premier Minns in terms of how civil they were in that engagement. Just to correct the record, it was 76—in terms of the Australian government export finance website. It states there are 76 scheduled elections around the globe in 2024, 71 of which are obviously free and fair, so there's probably five in there. I think that we are more connected as a society than we have ever been before because of the virtue of the fact that we all have—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Which elections are destabilising us?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It's not a matter for me to comment on that. That's the Australian Government website that we're referring to.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: But you did comment on it. You said global elections are destabilising New South Wales.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I think that more and more what happens around the world globally has an impact on people in New South Wales. I'm not saying it is destabilising New South Wales, but I definitely think it has an impact in terms of winners and losers in different political parties around the world. We can't be naive to the fact that there are instances in this country, and in this State, where there are, particularly because of the size of our diaspora communities, pressure put on some of our communities from time to time about—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Finally, do you too condemn *The Daily Telegraph* stunt? As head of the agency, have you communicated that to them?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I support the Minister's statement, and I think the comments from the ASIO secretary are incredibly strong. I think right now—and you touched on this before and you touched on it really eloquently around the challenges that we have as a country—just because we have multicultural legislation, that doesn't mean that we don't all have a common adherence to Australian law and the Australian values. I think we have a lot of work to do off the back of all of these instabilities to reconnect people around what our Australian values are. We should be proud of our legislation, but never take that for granted.

The vision of Whitlam: one in two of us has a parent born overseas, almost one in three of us are born overseas, more than one in four of us speaks a language other than English at home. You and many senior members of this Parliament were sitting at the Faith NSW dinner three months before the atrocious attacks on 7 October

2023. We practise 139 different faith traditions in New South Wales. That's something that we should be incredibly proud of but can never take for granted.

The Hon. WES FANG: Did you get an invite to the Faith dinner? I didn't get an invite.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I can't remember. That's my time, thank you.

The CHAIR: They probably sent it to Drummoyne. Minister, can I go to everyone's favourite topic at the moment—the Dubbo sports hub—and apologies if someone has already asked this when I have been ducking in and out.

The Hon. WES FANG: We might have asked it; we might not have gotten an answer, though.

The CHAIR: Okay. Were you consulted before the lion's share of the funding was withdrawn by the Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Western New South Wales?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I was advised that that was going to occur, yes.

The CHAIR: It has been put to me by members of the delegation that came to Parliament last week that you were, and still are, supportive of Dubbo getting a sport facility, and an extension of that was that your portion of the funding remain in Dubbo. I want to give you the opportunity to either correct or confirm that, because obviously your name has been used.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Any proposal needs to be put to us as a fresh proposal. The funds were transferred back to Minister Moriarty's department.

The CHAIR: What about your portion of the money?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know what the makeup of that is, but they would need to put some form of proposal to us for us to consider. Everything has to be on its merits. There was a proposal considered in the past, there were funds granted and five years later nothing happened. This is the whole thing.

The CHAIR: I don't want to necessarily get back into the tit for tat and history of it all because I don't think that's helpful to the people of Dubbo. Something that was interesting from deputy secretary Mr Bolton yesterday was that he said it was a very rare or strange way of doing things in having tripartisan funding and responsibility between three departments. Would you agree that that mode of doing such a project is obviously rare but also problematic?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't know if I agree. It was the structure that was in place before I became Minister. I've inherited this situation. I can't go into the full detail of the history of it.

The CHAIR: If you had your time, is that how you would have structured it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think if we had committed that as a government back then, we would have done it differently and got the job done and not sat down.

The CHAIR: Going forward, if there is a new proposal put forward, because I know PCYC has bought an old site and has a plan to develop that as a sports hub, would you want all the money being laid at your feet and your department's feet to manage this project given that you're the Minister for Sport and it is a sports facility?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I haven't really thought about it that much but it sounds like a sensible way to approach it. I don't know the history, how it evolved. That was the structure that was in place at the time. Generally speaking, it's handled by the one agency.

The CHAIR: Are you able to give any guarantees that the portion of the money that was coming from Office of Sport will be quarantined and remain in Dubbo for sporting facilities?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't give any guarantees. There's a component that was already exhausted within the original project with planning, whatever, so it's about what ends up—I think there are funds that have to come back.

The CHAIR: Do you know what that portion was that was exhausted?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, I haven't got that in front of me.

ADAM BERRY: If I can possibly assist, the amount administered by the Office of Sport in relation to the grant or committed by the Office of Sport originally was \$9.3 million. As the Minister has just alluded to, a portion of that fund has been expended on the project planning and development to date. The unspent amount actually isn't final at the moment. We're going through an acquittal process with PCYC where they're providing us the detailed evidence of what's been spent reasonably on the process. Once we get to the end of that process,

then we will actually know what the balance of the funds is. Ultimately, how that gets spent becomes a matter for government.

The CHAIR: Yes, and I know this is a bit of a hypothetical, Minister, but if that portion is significant as a percentage of the total funds, wouldn't it make sense that we proceed with a project regarding some sort of sporting facility so that that money isn't, effectively, wasted?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'll consider whatever the proposal is, once I've had a good look at it.

The CHAIR: Mr Berry, do you have an anticipated date as to when you'll know what that figure is in terms of what's been acquitted?

ADAM BERRY: It's actually reliant on PCYC providing us the information.

The CHAIR: You haven't given them a timeline or time frame that they need to do that?

ADAM BERRY: They were notified, I believe, on 5 February and they're now preparing information for us.

The CHAIR: Minister, can I just go to an announcement that you made around the Multilingual NSW Academy back in October, so a while ago. There was \$7½ million for essentially a Multilingual NSW Academy. Do you have any breakdown of what that \$7½ million was going to be spent on? Was it physical infrastructure? Was it staffing?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I might ask Joe to provide you with the detail on that.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It's a couple of different things. Thanks, Chair, for your question. It's about effectively providing a one-stop shop across government to be able to access our interpreter and translator network for critical dissemination of core government messaging—things such as the silicosis campaign, things such as the health campaign that's being developed at the moment and things such as the learnings that came out of COVID, effectively, which were that we want there to be no barrier to cost around disseminating critical information in language in a timely manner. That helps in supporting the dissemination of that information. Within hours of a media release or a statement going out in English it can then go out in different languages.

The second part to all of that is the scholarship program or the academy component, which is upskilling our existing interpreters and recruiting new interpreters and translators. We have a number of interpreters and translators that are getting on in age. They are older members of our community. So we're looking to create the next generation of interpreters and translators that can undertake that work and also, to some of the points that Mr McLachlan was talking about, rather than that work going to private providers, looking to bring that back into house from a government perspective in an efficient manner.

The CHAIR: That was going to be my next question: Is the ultimate aim to bring it back in-house? Because what I've heard back from communities is that it's not necessarily a race to the bottom, but the first thing that people consider is cost and they go to the cheapest option, which might not be the best quality option. When we're talking about translation of important information, it should be about the quality of the translation, not what is the cheapest.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Spot on. The reality is that all of our interpreters and translators are NAATI accredited. You can't always get that through private providers. The intention of that work is to help in upskilling them. You might have an interpreter and translator right now that might be helpful to do a driver's licence translation in the Department of Customer Service, but we need them to be able to do medical or court work. They need to do further studies and accelerate their learning and get higher levels of qualifications to be able to undertake that work. It's about upskilling our existing interpreters and translators, and also recruiting the next generation of interpreters and translators.

Because of the work of the former Government—and I do want to acknowledge them—and that continuation into the current Government, we've been able to see us able to grow our interpreters and translators. We got down to under 600 interpreters and translators. That wasn't enough to undertake the critical work. We now sit at about 1,000 interpreters and translators to be able to do that work. Similar to the story that Mr McLachlan shared earlier, our intention is to grow our government business. We've brought on two or three new clients across government this year. Similar to the Minister's sentiments before, there's only one way forward and that is to put the foot down and keep growing our government business. I do want to acknowledge and thank the Minister for his leadership in working with other Ministers—Housing and others—to help support us in getting that work going forward.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It doesn't come without challenges, building that capacity and the systems that are required to deliver this and coordinate such a breadth of translators throughout. I think the important thing

here is we're gradually embracing a greater amount of work as we build that capacity. I am, I must say, very impressed with the work from the agency in relation to this space.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I might pass to the Opposition.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, on 19 November 2024 during question time, in answer to a question about business insolvencies, you raised toll relief and energy relief for small businesses. There is no toll relief for small business under your Government's policy and there is no evidence of any energy relief in sight. What cost relief of any kind has your Government got for small business in New South Wales?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The main focus in terms of small business in this State has been the support they've required during a very difficult period—you mentioned a difficult period—and our main focus has been to deliver services to small business to help them through the challenges in running their business. Many times costs are associated with not having direction and being held up when it comes to working through business challenges, red tape or having access to the appropriate agencies that can assist a business moving forward. That's why our focus has been the Business Bureau and our commitment was to deliver a unit within government that supports business on an ongoing basis. That wasn't there before. There may have been some business services, but our Business Bureau has been of enormous assistance. Currently the New South Wales Government provides financial relief to ease the cost of living through toll relief. People that are in business do travel and there is toll relief. The toll relief rebate scheme, which commenced in January 2023, enables eligible sole traders with a personal and/or business toll account to claim a 40 per cent rebate. You just said that is not the case.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Not for small businesses, though. That is for a sole trader, not for a small business.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: A sole trader is a small business.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It is not every small business. It's an individual defined class.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'd like you to tell every sole trader out there that they are not a small business. There is toll relief. And eligible small businesses receive also an energy relief of up to \$325,000 in the financial year 2024-25. That is relief. Can you provide to me a reason why that's not relief?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, apart from the Business Bureau, what other items do you have which are cost relief for small businesses?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've explained to you. The relief we're giving businesses is support. We're changing settings, whether it's for the night-time economy or whether it's for outdoor dining; we're making it easier for businesses to do business. That's saving money. Small businesses are not necessarily looking for handouts. I know the previous Government made a habit of throwing money around, but small businesses aren't seeking cash handouts. They're looking for support. They're looking for us to get out of their way.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: They're looking for a business bureau. They're looking for a toll-free number.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: If you want to know—Cas, could you provide all the other supportive—

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: In terms of cost of living and cost of doing business support, the bureau offers a number of supports. You can connect with a business concierge that will help you navigate through different areas of government, different grants that might be available—hand-hold you through that process. That is all free of charge. We also have our Business Connect program; you can connect with an experienced adviser on a range of different core business topics to upskill businesses or to help them grow, and that is eight hours worth of free advice. We know that small businesses can't afford to go, necessarily, access that information privately, but that information and those sessions are available to them free of charge. There is a SafeWork rebate currently available—that's \$1,000—to help you purchase safety items to improve work and health safety for your workers and your business. There's the Active and Creative Kids voucher program. If you're an eligible provider—and we have over 5,000 of those in the State—you can access support through that program.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you. We might come back to this.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I haven't finished.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But now that you've mentioned Active and Creative Kids, I think we're a long way from small business relief, and we're talking about programs that this Government has cut down significantly so that very few people are actually eligible to claim them.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: They're programs that weren't funded moving forward—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Programs that were completely funded.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: It is a current program available.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: —by your Government. You know that and you know what we inherited. We're just trying to clean up that mess.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, I know the cost relief that people used to get in New South Wales and I know what they get under you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You've left us an enormous amount—going towards \$200 billion in liabilities, and we have to fund that interest cost.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's a world of difference, and you know it too.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Don't go there.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And now you're funding defibrillators by postcode as well. Minister, let's go on. New South Wales has the highest rate of business closures in the country. Why has this happened under your watch?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It hasn't happened under—we are the largest State. We have 880,000-odd small businesses in New South Wales. Business insolvencies spiked following—there's challenge in economic conditions, including business cost pressures and weakening consumer demand and the recovery of historic debts by creditors. We also need to keep in mind that there were historic legacy debts that were sitting within businesses which the ATO weren't recovering. They've stepped up their recovery process over so many years, and that's heightened it. That's heightened the numbers.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So you blame Albo for that, do you?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't blame Albo. As I said, the fact of the matter remains that these liabilities were holding up and propping up a lot of businesses. At the end of the day, once they're called upon, once they've had to make good—the Federal Government has got a right to chase its liabilities at some time.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, is your Government considering indexing payroll tax to CPI?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Not at the moment, no.

The Hon. WES FANG: No proposals? No consideration?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No proposals, not at this time—not dissimilar to the thresholds for payroll tax that sat under longstanding Coalition governments for years. It was actually Kristina Keneally—a Labor government—that brought about the greatest increase in thresholds.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, you realise that raising the payroll tax threshold or indexing it to inflation could save struggling small businesses at least \$64,000 a year annually. Why have you not provided relief so far?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: In terms of small businesses, around 90 per cent of small businesses don't incur—don't pay payroll tax. So those dramatic numbers, the way you've characterised it—it is not as dramatic as you say.

The Hon. WES FANG: So the 10 per cent that do aren't worthy of—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Payroll tax is a big—I've spoken about payroll tax. I spoke about it in my inaugural speech. I detest it. I hate it. It should have been gone when the tax reform was introduced by the Howard Government. He promised us that payroll tax would be gone. Unfortunately, that didn't occur, and we're stuck with it. It does form a very large part of our revenue. If you want to go into what's charged, talk to the Minister for Finance about that—if you're allowed to ask questions at that budget estimates hearing.

The Hon. WES FANG: Who knows?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you spoken to the Minister for Finance about that, Minister?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I have spoken to the Minister for Finance. I talk about payroll tax all the time. I hate it. I hate payroll tax. I've said that from day one. I said it in my inaugural speech.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I hate it too. I did in mine too.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Unfortunately, it forms a large part of the State's revenue stream. We wouldn't be able to manage the State without it.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, what do you say to those small businesses that consider that you've prioritised public sector wage increases over prioritising them by reducing the payroll tax payable?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I think that's a really disgraceful question. The public sector sat there in negative wages growth for so many years. It's not good for business either if people haven't got money to spend on consumption, so let's put that into perspective too.

The Hon. WES FANG: So that's your answer to the small businesses.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: What I say is that we as a government are essentially running a workforce and we had problems retaining frontline employees because of negative wages growth. Just like every employer out there, it's hard to maintain workers or to gain new workers.

The Hon. WES FANG: So instead of—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It was important the number one—

The Hon. WES FANG: Instead of rejecting the proposition, you've effectively said yes.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No.

The Hon. WES FANG: You've said, "Yes, that's right."

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Let's not degrade the people who work for the government. They do fantastic work.

The Hon. WES FANG: "We're prioritising our public sector workers over the—"

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Everyone who sits around me are absolutely magnificent.

The Hon. WES FANG: That's what you've said. I get it.

The CHAIR: Mr Fang, Minister—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: All you're looking to do is degrade working people.

The Hon. WES FANG: I get it.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: You had a cap there—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. WES FANG: You gave me the answer.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can't remember—

The CHAIR: Minister!

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'm still completing my answer.

The CHAIR: I know, but your colleague has called a point of order. Neither of you have been able to hear it over your bickering at each other.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: My point of order is that we couldn't hear because there was discussion over the top of each other.

The CHAIR: Exactly.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: If Mr Fang could restrain his comments to let the Minister answer his question and then pose another question, that would be helpful.

The CHAIR: It's not helpful for Hansard if we get into a shouting match at each other. I'm not going to get into who started or who provoked who, but it ended up being quite ridiculous on both sides. Can we go back to question, answer, question, answer? Minister Kamper, have you finished your answer? Can we go to the next question?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Go to your next question.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, you outlined before about the toll relief that was available. I'm having a look at your \$60 toll cap. Explicitly on the Service NSW website it says toll spend that is not eligible

includes "on vehicles registered for business use" and "for business trips in vehicles registered for private use". So what are you saying to small businesses when it comes to your toll cap? You said here before that there was toll relief, but explicitly on the Service NSW website it says that doesn't include both business trips in private vehicles and vehicles registered for business use. So what are the option for businesses?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: My understanding is it is available for sole traders.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Correct.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Is that correct?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: It's available for sole traders.

The Hon. WES FANG: What if it's for business use, though?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: This is on the \$60 toll cap?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: This is for the 40 per cent cashback for sole traders when they spend \$402 a year.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So that's the former Government's policy that's ending this year.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: It ends on 30 June, yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What's going to be available for small businesses after 30 June?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: We'll work through that. We're working through that.

The Hon. WES FANG: Are you committing that there's something for small businesses?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So there will be something for small businesses?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's a matter for the transport Minister and for the Government to make a decision on that, but we're working through our toll review.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: We'll watch this space. Minister, brokers in Queensland and Victoria do not pay payroll tax on commissions. Why is New South Wales making it harder for brokers and for homebuyers as well?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Brokers were levied payroll tax in arrears under the previous Government and, subsequently, since we formed government we've performed a review in terms of the arrangements for brokers and created guidelines on what constitutes labour costs for the purpose of payroll tax. There are some legacy issues. It's my understanding that there's an appeal to a court outcome that didn't work for the brokers. The outcome wasn't to their advantage. You're talking about mortgage broking?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yes.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Most mortgage broking operators now, with the guidelines, will probably be okay moving forward. The greatest issue is the legacy cost and arrears that they have been lumbered with. That's what I've had a substantial amount of representations about from the broking industry.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Minister, the Government had policies for GPs with similar problems. Will you endeavour to create a policy for brokers in the same situation?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Absolutely. They have similar problems, but any previous payroll tax wasn't refunded. The situation predominantly with the mortgage broker situation is the arrears of the past years and the liability that was established prior to the new guidelines moving forward. They have all restructured the way they operate to no longer be liable. It's quite a complicated area.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It is.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The main issue that I've had to deal with in speaking with the industry has been the arrears, and it's generally the much larger operators too.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, since you became Minister you have done 131 speeches in the House, but only five of them have been about small business. Is small business a priority of yours?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Of course it is. As I said earlier, I've spent my life in small business and representing small business, Mr Fang. That's why I went about setting up—I understand what small business needs. It needs to be able to interact with government and it needs support from government. A lot of times it can't actually define what that support looks like. Government needs to be able to manage a variety of issues when

small businesses are facing challenges. When it comes to speaking in the House, I've probably had about two questions from the Opposition on small business in the House in those two years.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So that accounts for half of your speeches.

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm not talking about questions. I'm talking about—

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I have spoken five times but I have only had two questions. That shows the concern from that side.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, I'm asking you now. You've basically been in the role for near on two years. You've launched the Business Bureau. Is that your only legacy, do you think, in the small business space, if you were to leave this ministry now? Can you think of anything else you've done in the small business space that leaves a legacy?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I am very proud of the Charter for Small Business and the Business Bureau. The work of the bureau shouldn't be under-appreciated. There have been some really difficult situations where businesses have needed assistance, and we've been able to engage the Business Bureau. I've mentioned on previous occasions the collapse of the F6 tunnel works there that impacted so many businesses. I was able to send a team out; that was really prompt. I got an enormous amount of positive feedback from that. The bureau was out there addressing a lot of the issues post the horrific situation at Bondi.

The Hon. WES FANG: Minister, speaking about small business, some of those small businesses are in the multicultural media space. At last estimates we asked you how much the New South Wales Government was spending on advertising with traditional multicultural media in the past 12 months. You didn't have a figure. Are you able to update us with a figure now, please?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The spend on media—

The Hon. WES FANG: Multicultural media.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: The spend on multicultural media is something that's managed by Minister Dib. I don't keep track of that. I did make a commitment to review how funds were being spent and whether the multicultural media units have been getting a fair share, where the Government has potentially neglected to utilise their platforms.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you have a breakdown there?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I've created a review, and that has been conducted. The Business Bureau—

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Recently we had a marketing campaign, and we've partnered with Multicultural NSW on that. There was a spend of \$89,000 there.

The Hon. WES FANG: Could we get a breakdown of that figure by language, please? Minister, are you able to provide maybe a wider—

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I can tell you the languages now, if you like.

The Hon. WES FANG: Great.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Arabic—

The Hon. WES FANG: Can I grab that this afternoon?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: How about we provide it for you now to save extra work later?

The Hon. WES FANG: Can I grab it this afternoon, if that's all right?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Sure, we can talk about it this afternoon.

The Hon. WES FANG: I've got a few more questions that I want to put to the Minister. In December 2023 the New South Wales Government approved and updated its Multicultural and Aboriginal Advertising Policy Guidance to increase expenditure from 7.5 per cent to 9 per cent of the total advertising campaign budget. That policy was implemented last July. Can you advise if the 9 per cent target has been reached?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I'd ask you to direct that question to Minister Dib when he's here.

The Hon. WES FANG: Are you not aware?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: It's not my responsibility.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you know what the spend has been since July?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No, I don't have that in my head.

The Hon. WES FANG: Of the percentage that was spent, are you able to take on notice how much was provided specifically to independent multicultural media outlets?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I don't have that in front of me, no.

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you take that on notice? Is that all right?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I can take it on notice, yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: Have independent multicultural media outlets raised any issues with the updated policy following the Department of Customer Service review and its subsequent implementation?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Minister Dib has taken—

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you talk to Minister Dib about it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, we have. Essentially, I've committed to put a review process in place. The bells have rung. Is it over?

The Hon. WES FANG: You can keep answering.

The CHAIR: Keep answering.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: I have followed through with that. I have sat in on a number of meetings with IMMA members, who were quite active in requesting this review. Now it's in the hands of Minister Dib. They are working—

The Hon. WES FANG: So you've washed your hands of it?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: No. As I said to you—

The CHAIR: No more questions—that was your time for questions. Mr Latham, take us through to 12.45 p.m.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Minister, I very much support your statement for small business that government should just get out of the way. That is the universal feedback that you get from small business in New South Wales. Will you undertake to commission the Productivity Commission to look at all the red tape and regulation affecting small business in our State to see what can be eliminated, with a strong target of minimising that burden?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, I think that's something I can undertake. I think it's very important that we do a review. Part of our commitment has been to work with business, especially on any new legislation or anything that comes through our Government. We have made an undertaking to properly understand the impacts on small business. Mr Latham, the other thing that's important is that if there are going to be any impacts on small business, it is about communicating those impacts properly. We don't want the situations we saw in the past with the previous Government where there were horrific outcomes, especially in the waste industry or with the plastic bag rollout, where \$500,000 was paid to some national park—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I think the Productivity Commission is an underutilised resource, so thanks for the commitment to the review.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, I think it's good.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: If they delivered a report in 12 months time, then for the next election we could have a really good policy debate and battle between the major parties to see who can eliminate the most red tape and compliance costs for small business. Ms Fishburn, are we going to have a racetrack at the Brickpit at Homebush?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I have previously said to the inquiry that I think it would be very unlikely that a racetrack would get planning approval at the Brickpit.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: That's the update?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Yes, it hasn't changed.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Thank you.

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you. I'll go and enjoy my anniversary.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Happy anniversary. Where are you going?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Thank you. We're going to celebrate with all the staff.

The CHAIR: He probably doesn't want Wes to crash it.

The Hon. WES FANG: Where's my invite?

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER: Yes, you can come. I don't know if my wife will be happy. Magda doesn't like you, mate.

The Hon. WES FANG: I think your wife would like me better than you, frankly, if I'm honest.

The CHAIR: You're not off the hook yet, Minister. Does the Government have any questions?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: No.

The CHAIR: Now you can enjoy your anniversary.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: If you invite Wes, you mightn't get another anniversary.

The CHAIR: We will reconvene at two o'clock.

(The Minister withdrew.)

(Luncheon adjournment)

The CHAIR: Welcome back after that brief lunch break. Before I invite one of the crossbench members to take some questions, I just might invite Ms Fishburn to come back to us with some of the items that might have been taken on notice this morning.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Thank you very much, Chair. We had a question about Reflections, which was: What involvement did Reflections CEO Nick Baker have with the process for recruiting board members for NSW Crown Holiday Parks Land Manager? The answer is that Nick Baker had no role in the recruitment process, other than providing input into proposed questions for candidates, at the panel's request—just to clear up that question.

We did have a number of questions in relation to Racing NSW as Crown land manager. The question that came up a number of times was around the Minister's awareness of the risk assessment that contained information about potential conflict of interest relating to Racing NSW's role as regulator. I just wanted to check the briefing notes so I could be sure of the content there. A risk assessment was attached to the briefing note which was provided to the Minister in May 2024, containing the department's recommendation for the appointment of Racing NSW as Crown land manager. It is very common practice in our briefing notes for us to identify risks and also to identify risk mitigations.

In the risk assessment, we did identify that potential conflict of interest in the role between regulator and Crown land manager. To mitigate the risk, the appointment instrument, which is obviously, essentially, the contract between Crown Lands and Racing NSW, required that Racing NSW develop policies that detail how Racing NSW will address the conflict of interest. Racing NSW has advised that it has prepared its conflict of interest policy, which is awaiting endorsement. So it's in process. Should we become aware of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, they will be handled in accordance with the department's complaints management framework.

In relation to the consultation with the five previous racecourse managers, it was the Minister who requested that the department consulted with them and sought letters of agreement. It's not actually a requirement for us to do that, legally. However, the Minister requested that we did so. And of course we undertook that direction as well. As the Minister detailed, we're currently undertaking a review in relation to the Queanbeyan appointment. That will be finished within about a month, so I'm anticipating it being finalised by the end of March. That review output, which is being done by the Government's area of DPHI more broadly, will come to both myself and the Minister. It will come directly to us.

We had a question as to whether Minister Harris approved the appointment of Racing NSW as Crown land manager. There's no statutory requirement for the Minister for Gaming and Racing to concur with or approve that. So it didn't go to Minister Harris. We had some questions in relation to rents at Queanbeyan Racecourse. Crown Lands at present is monitoring Racing NSW's performance in meeting its obligation. As I detailed, management issues have recently been brought to the department's attention, and we will be undertaking that review. I think we answered fairly extensively—or the Minister did—on capital works that were being undertaken at racecourses. We have provided, through the Minister, more response to this, in response to a question on notice,

LC 3270, so I will refer the Committee to that one as well. And we continue to engage with Racing NSW on its ongoing capital works program.

There was a question, if I recall correctly, from Mr Latham, in relation to the additional sites that Racing NSW were interested in, that were not put to the Minister. They were the Albury Racing Club, the Ballina Jockey Club, Bathurst Turf Club, Clarence River Jockey Club, Manning Valley Race Club, Mudgee Race Club and Murrumbidgee Turf Club, but they did not go through as a recommendation from the department to the Minister. I think that clears the questions that we were asked.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Fishburn. I'll pass to Ms Higginson.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Thank you very much, Chair. Hello, everyone. I just would like to ask you, I think, Ms Fishburn, about the Coffs jetty proposal, if that's okay. The application submitted by Property Development NSW for the rezoning pathway suitability and readiness assessment contains what could be described as significant errors. Specifically, it states that six hectares of railway land are to be rezoned as SP2, while only 4.2 hectares are actually being rezoned and a portion of this land is currently zoned RE1 recreation. So I just would like to know, why was this significant rezoning error included in the application? And did Property Development NSW advise the assessment panel and probity adviser of this mistake?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I will have to ask Mr Walker in relation to any advice that PDNSW may have given in relation to that. It was assessed through the State Significant Rezoning Policy to identify the pathway for rezoning. That doesn't actually undertake a merit assessment on the rezoning itself. It simply assesses whether it would meet the threshold as a State significant rezoning, as opposed to going through a council pathway. Once it is approved or otherwise to come into the State, if it's coming into the State, there is still the work that is undertaken to develop the planning proposal, which will go out to public exhibition.

It's a two-stage process. It's really looking at whether a proposal meets a threshold where the State would be better able to deal with it, in terms of a planning proposal, other than a council. In this instance, considering the scale, somewhat of the complexity and the level of community interest, it was determined that this would be better undertaken by the State. PDNSW are in the process of preparing that planning proposal, which will soon go on public exhibition. I don't have a date for you. That would be a question for the Minister for planning. That proposal will be the one that will go to public exhibition, that will require a response to submissions and that will be part of the consideration for a final rezoning.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: What is the threshold for a sort of public interest concern or further examination of the idea of rezoning public recreational land to allow for private development? Where in the mix and what is the threshold, what is the cut-off or what pathway does that happen?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Without being disingenuous, I think these are really questions that are better for the Minister for planning, because the questions you're asking are planning related rather than relating to lands. However, generally there isn't a single threshold in relation to when you would rezone RE1 land or RE2 land. Best and highest use would be a consideration, as well as what the land is currently being used for, presently. In relation to that specific proposal, the land that you're referring to—and I should state it's not on public exhibition yet, so I'm somewhat speculating as to what the outcome of the exhibition process will be—is currently not being used for any purpose. It's gated off. That would be a consideration: if it's being used for a particular purpose at a given point in time or whether it's, essentially, vacant land.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Using your phrase, without trying to be disingenuous here—and I mean it, as well—the Coffs jetty land is so clearly a contentious project.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'm very aware of that. Yes. Thank you.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: The referendum question that was asked, I think has been potentially interpreted very narrowly, particularly by Minister Kamper. I got a response, in writing to him, saying, "That question was very specific question about private housing et cetera. We're now looking at different—and we're going back to public exhibition."

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Correct.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: To suggest that it's because the land, if the land is sitting there, not utilised, when you've got a council that's trying very, very hard because the land is Crown land and they want to be able to access it—

LEON WALKER: Not all of the land is Crown land.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I think the parcel of land that you're referring to is not actually Crown land. It's the land that is the old ARTC land.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes. But that's what I mean: To suggest that because it is not currently being used is a Property Development NSW or a Crown Lands consideration in that—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: No, sorry. I just want to make sure I characterised that correctly. When you asked me the question, it was in relation to what type of considerations would make a change to RE1 land, so I was giving a general answer, not a specific answer. However, as you're aware, that parcel of land is not Crown land and currently is gated off and not being used.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: But it's adjacent with the Crown land, and that's the proposition.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's correct. There's multiple landowners in the area that is encompassed by the Coffs jetty proposal.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: In terms of Crown Lands and the whole proposal at the moment, what is the plan of the department and Property Development NSW? What is the proposition at the moment? It's going back to some public process?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Correct, the planning work is being finalised. When the planning Minister deems it appropriate, it will be put on public exhibition.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Has there been further input from agencies about the different proposal?

LEON WALKER: Since the last round of public consultation, which I think was in late 2022, that generated the version of the master plan that remains publicly accessible on the website. We've been working to finalise the planning proposal. That involves extensive expert advice. The reports that have been produced from that have then been through circulation, as is the ordinary course with a planning proposal. That has received feedback. The responses to that are being updated. Then we'll put forward a proposal that goes on public exhibition which, of course, is subject to the approval of Minister for Planning and Public Spaces.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Ms Higginson, just to add to that, earlier this year Mr Walker and myself both met with the council to discuss where the process was and to provide them with some of the assurance that I'm providing you that it will go back on public exhibition. We also met with the local Aboriginal land council, who have land interests in that area.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: I was just about to ask you about that.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: It was a very productive meeting, I think it's fair to say, Leon. We really want to work collaboratively to understand what their particular interest is. Ideally, our aspiration is to enter into an MOU so that they're able to utilise their land as effectively as they wish to and get economic outcome from it.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Has there been a whole-of-Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment done now?

LEON WALKER: I will take it on notice in terms of—what was the particular—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: It's an ACHA.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes, an Aboriginal cultural heritage assessment of that site and area.

LEON WALKER: There's a report that has been distributed, prepared on our behalf by Murawin, which goes through the consultation that has been undertaken. I will just take it on notice in respect of that specific report.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: It obviously is a planning consideration.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes, it is. I get that.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I wasn't trying to not answer your question. I'm saying that of course it will be picked up in the assessment when it's within the planning department. But we obviously want to make sure that the significant meaning for the local Aboriginal community is reflected in both the development outcomes and in opportunities for that community to get economic benefit and to make sure that cultural significance is represented.

LEON WALKER: This land is obviously bookended by Happy Valley and Ferguson's Cottage. Whilst they're not actually in the area subject to the proposal, we have Corambirra Point and Muttonbird Island, which are very significant to the local Aboriginal people. We see there being a fantastic opportunity to work with that community and—I don't know what the right words are—to solidify and promote Aboriginal outcomes that give them more certainty over that land going forward and, as Kiersten said, improve the outcomes for that community.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Do you think that improving the outcomes for all community, including the Aboriginal community, would involve any intention to onsell any of the rezoned land to the private sector?

LEON WALKER: The current proposal is only in respect of land use. There's no government decision in terms of future landownership or tenure.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Is there a way of guarding against that? Is that something that you're aware whether the department is promoting that, or is that in conflict with Property and Development NSW?

LEON WALKER: It's important to—and we've said this from the very start. The previous Government, and this Government, committed that all proceeds generated from this particular project are reinvested in that area. It's not in Coffs, it's not in the State; it's reinvested in that area. We're very focused on—and it's exhibited in the master plan that has been produced—improving the public spaces. That's boardwalks, sporting facilities, amphitheatres. There's a whole range of things that are included in that master plan that come from the proceeds that may be raised in the future. We're getting ahead of ourselves, because at the moment we don't have an approval for future land uses. That's the intent, but we're not there yet.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I did ask a couple of questions this morning that I also put on notice for this afternoon. Answers may not be ready. Mr Berry, are you intending on answering those?

ADAM BERRY: Yes, I can. Can I take it that your question is in relation to the \$14.5 million football—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Yes, I had several questions. I can go through them and remind you of them.

ADAM BERRY: Yes, I'll address that one first and then perhaps on the others.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Sure.

ADAM BERRY: That \$14.5 million Football in Schools program was an election commitment. It's a partnership between the Government and Western Sydney Wanderers and Macarthur FC, the two clubs, to provide football education and wellbeing programs. It is, however—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Sorry, it was an election commitment just to have that program, or specifically with Macarthur?

ADAM BERRY: I believe it's to deliver the program with the two clubs, but I will take the details of the election commitment on notice.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Yes, because there was an announcement that Macarthur had a pre-election commitment of \$8 million. There was an announcement that Macarthur would receive \$8 million.

ADAM BERRY: I would have to take that on notice. The program, however, and the administration of the funding is actually managed by the Department of Education because it is a schools-based program. It's not managed by us at the Office of Sport.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Did the Minister sign off on this, or did the education Minister sign off on it?

ADAM BERRY: I would have to take that on notice. I'm not aware. The second association was Southern Districts Soccer Football Association. I understand we have two grants current with Southern Districts Soccer Football Association. One grant is for the upgrade of Ernie Smith Reserve. It was funded as a 2019 election commitment, a grant of \$4.5 million. That project is still significantly underway. The other project currently being funded through the office of the southern districts football association is Knight Park, Fairfield, a lighting upgrade—although we understand that project was substantially completed shortly before Christmas, and we're just awaiting a financial acquittal on that project. In relation to both organisations, I understand—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: How much was that worth, the Fairfield one?

ADAM BERRY: Knight Park, Fairfield—\$350,000 total project cost. In relation to—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Is that a council application, though? Is that council grounds?

ADAM BERRY: I don't have that in front of me. I'd have to take it on notice, I'm sorry. In relation to both grants—and there were specific questions about donations—the New South Wales Government grants guide and the Office of Sport's own grants policy both require the declaration of any conflict of interest, but they do not specifically require declarations of political donations. In terms of what funds under any of our grant programs can be spent on, there are very rigorous grant guidelines, and funds are tied very strongly towards specific outcomes listed in the guidelines and listed in specific grant applications.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: When did you become acting CEO?

ADAM BERRY: I've been acting CE since 17 January. I did have a period of leave, so it's my fifth week in the role.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I might give you a bit of a break then, Mr Berry. I will leave that for now. Thanks.

The CHAIR: Is that it?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I will put more questions in supplementary, Chair.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Can I just clarify, Ms Higginson: An ACHA is being prepared for Coffs jetty.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: It is being prepared?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: It is being prepared. We'd require it for assessment, anyway.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Will that be released publicly?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I just need to get that detail.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I have some questions for Mr Berry about women's sports. I want to ask you some questions about the new Play Her Way strategy for 2024-28. Can I start by asking how much funding will be allocated to support the work outlined in the strategy over the next four years?

ADAM BERRY: Thank you for the question. We've actually got allocated to the women in sports strategy Play Her Way \$1 million directly to focus on leadership and culture initiatives, participation initiatives, partnerships and investment. In addition to the funding directly tied to the strategy, we also have partnership funding over three years in the amount of \$750,000 to Sport NSW. That is to support female leadership and gender equity projects and also a fast-track program for women coaches.

We also fund a number of other partnership projects—the Minerva Network for women in governance program and we've also got partnerships delivering specific legacy outcomes associated with the 2027 Netball World Cup program and Football NSW AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026. There is a combination of the million dollars directly tied to the strategy and a number of other individual initiatives as well. I would also say that our organisational support program changes have set specific requirements for our 96 State sporting organisations around gender equity on boards. We are actually trying to change to gender equity or gender balance on boards through sport from an executive level.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I have some questions about that as well. Are you expecting or waiting for more funding to potentially be allocated or do you think that the money that is there now is what you will be working with for the next four years?

ADAM BERRY: I expect through every budget cycle that there are initiatives considered. At the moment, we are focused on delivering those ones that we now have funded.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I am particularly interested in the part of the Play Her Way strategy around creating safe sporting environments and addressing gendered and domestic violence. Can you explain a bit further some of the work the Office of Sport will be doing around this as part of that strategy?

ADAM BERRY: I would have to take most of the detail on notice, I'm sorry, Ms Hurst. But what I do know is that one of the major barriers to female participation is typically facilities and so there is a lot of focus on facilities, but also in terms of providing pathways for coaching. That is why that is a significant funded portion of the strategy. In terms of the specifics of that, I'm sorry, I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: You might need to take this one on notice as well, but I noticed that the strategy discusses a few of the specific initiatives around grants for sporting organisations to create those safe environments. I was just wanting to get a bit more detail around what those grants will look like and how they will link back to creating that safer environment. Again, if you need to take that on notice that's fine.

ADAM BERRY: Yes, we'll have to take it on notice.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Another one of the strategies, as you mentioned, is to implement board gender equality targets for State sporting organisations. I'm just wondering what the timeline around this is and when organisations will be, potentially, required to reach gender parity on their boards.

ADAM BERRY: I'll take the detail on notice. My understanding is that we have required all the organisations to have plans that show their intent to change and then, through the course of the funding program,

we will actually be holding them to account on delivering the intent. At this stage, it's clear plans and intent to implement on different time frames. I will take on notice exactly what those time frames are.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Will there be consequences if those targets aren't met? How will that be dealt with, if boards are not complying with that?

ADAM BERRY: The intent is that the ongoing funding is connected to those outcomes, as are all the outcomes that we require of the State sporting organisations through the funding program.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So the consequence could be that either further funding could be rejected or the funding could be retracted?

ADAM BERRY: To a certain degree there could be funding consequences, but we're quite hopeful that a significant number of the State sporting organisations will be able to and will deliver the required changes. We're hopeful that's how it's going. We certainly feel like it is tracking that way.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Of course, nobody wants to have to come in with a stick, but I'm just more curious if there was an outlier that wasn't interested in being part of that. How is the strategy for achieving gender equality reflected in other grants programs operated by the Office of Sport? Do you have statistics around how much, for example, of the \$800,000 Safe Shooting Program grants scheme that recently closed will benefit female shooters?

ADAM BERRY: I don't have statistics in front of me. What I can say is that, when we are operating infrastructure grant programs, it is very common for us to require inclusivity to be designed into infrastructure projects. Inclusivity, typically, in the form of sports becomes female-friendly facilities and gender-friendly facilities as well as lighting to create a safer environment. That's typically one of the key levers that we've had, that requirement for inclusivity in infrastructure.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Is that requirement across the board for all of the grants or is it just for a selection of them?

ADAM BERRY: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I might ask Mr McLachlan to come up and value-add to these proceedings.

LEON WALKER: Don't encourage him, please.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAIN: The pun! That's a dad joke.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Everyone is saying it. It's trending.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I think Scott embraces the dad jokes.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: We've got to deal with him in the office.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Let's see if he can get some more of his KPIs up to date. Mr McLachlan, where are you up to in implementing a new valuation system, including the development of a camera to replace the 23-year-old legacy platform?

STEWART McLACHLAN: Very well progressed. We're hoping to go live on 28 April with the first phase of that. It is a phased delivery of the system. We're taking a staged approach. But the first phase, which we will be talking to staff about tomorrow, actually, with the Valuer General, is focused around the customer as well as the key interactions with the customer or the landholder. Our call centre will be moving across things like property transactions around changing title or property boundaries, and supplementary valuations, which I talked about this morning, will be in there, and the register of land values, which we have a legislative responsibility on behalf of the Valuer General to maintain—those things. The latter components around predominantly rating and taxing valuations and the mass valuation system will be built in the next six to eight months.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Is the total project cost still looking at about \$26 million?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I actually think it's cheaper than that. The total project cost is just shy of \$20 million. We are within budget. I think we're mildly over time. I think it was anticipated to be completed by the end of this year and we are forecasting that it will be completed by about March 2026, within budget.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: As a result of this upgraded system, we see in Victoria that local councils are able to receive their land valuations yearly, while New South Wales is on the three-yearly cycle. Will there be any changes envisaged as part of this new system?

STEWART McLACHLAN: We can certainly push valuations at any time, really. The reason that they are done on a three-yearly cycle is that, under the Valuation of Land Act, the Valuer General has a responsibility at least once every three years to do that. This year we have rebalanced those valuations across the cycle, so a third, a third and a third of councils are receiving the valuations, with this year—we commenced that only a month ago to try and balance the workflows but also improve the experience for landholders. If they do have an issue, inquiry or objection, we don't have to have protracted response times based on the volume. To try and smooth that work cycle, we have moved it across a three-year cycle.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: To that objection point, I noticed some of your comments previously. How are objections tracking compared to usual? Are they down, up, stable?

STEWART McLACHLAN: We actually had a meeting about this only last week with the Valuer General as well. At this stage, notices start to go out on 17 January for the third of the councils that are receiving those. But we do a staged delivery from now until around May. Each week there are about 80,000 notices that are posted. We wouldn't expect to see those volumes start to come in yet, although the ones that we have seen have not been in the same magnitude that we have previously observed. But our average across the nine years is that we do receive about 6,000 objections yearly.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Is that 6,000?

STEWART McLACHLAN: Yes, that would be the long-term average.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: In financial year 2023, though, it was 10,600. Is that correct?

STEWART McLACHLAN: This is where it gets a little bit technical, because you can object to other years. Predominantly, the objections we receive are for the valuation year in which the objection comes in. Ultimately, if you receive a land tax notice, you can object to the prior three years. Whilst it was 10,600, I actually think the number was closer to 12,500. But it was 10,600 for that valuation year and then we had another 2,000 give or take for previous valuation years.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Do you do any benchmarking with New South Wales objections compared to other States as a percentage of landholdings?

STEWART McLACHLAN: Formal benchmarking, no. Obviously, the Valuer General does have routine conversations and forums with valuers general from across Australia. What we can say is that it's very hard to compare because it's not apples with apples. We do run a different valuation system to how other States do it as well. But we would be of the view that our objection rate is lower than other States, sitting at, I think, 0.2 per cent, give or take—something like that.

LEON WALKER: Why are you looking at me?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I don't know. I feel like I've divided that up—just looking for a nod. No, I think that's about—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: He was hoping you had some value to add.

STEWART McLACHLAN: Just support, yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to the costs of the New South Wales land valuation system, as you said, it is a different system compared to other States. How does that compare to the cost of valuation systems in other States?

STEWART McLACHLAN: That would be a question that would be almost impossible to answer, noting that everyone has different legislative responsibilities. What I can say is the answers that I gave this morning about how we have changed our delivery model and improved competition—we have stabilised that cost space rather than what would be otherwise the more than almost certain scenario of an escalating cost base over the forwards. For the areas we are doing internally, we've stabilised it from the costs that it would otherwise have been last year.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: For instance, if we are to look at a New South Wales versus a Victorian comparison, New South Wales ICT costs are projected to reach \$8.2 million per year, which is nearly double Victoria's at \$4½ million. What is the extra value that New South Wales ratepayers, land tax payers and the general community are receiving as a result of that additional cost?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I'm not sure what costs you are quoting in Victoria, Mr Farlow. I'm happy to take that on notice to make sure we're comparing apples with apples, because it is a very difficult question to answer. Particularly in an ICT space, I do want to make sure that we get the right response back.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to the costs that the Valuer General charges councils and the like, what are the charges that the Valuer General is issuing to councils? Are there any projected changes into the future?

STEWART McLACHLAN: We're currently going through an IPART determination and there is a submission from the Valuer General for that on their website with an imminent draft report, as I understand it. Essentially, over the forward six years there is an increasing cost to operate the valuation system, and the main drivers of that is external valuation costs but also support costs. ICT is identified in the report as one of those drivers of cost. Importantly, though, in areas where we have internalised it, those costs are stable over the forward six years as opposed to escalating.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: In terms of that request or that proposal that has gone to the IPART, is that an increase of up to 38 per cent from 2025?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I always get confused between real and nominal terms. I understood it is about 34 per cent—is the increase.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Real and nominal differences, maybe, there?

STEWART McLACHLAN: It is.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Do you do a comparison with other jurisdictions and how that compares to what other States are charging?

STEWART McLACHLAN: What I can say is that I know IPART is doing a jurisdictional analysis as part of their terms of reference from the Premier and is looking into those things. But, again, it is very difficult—and I don't think they would disagree with this comment. It's difficult to compare across jurisdictions because of the valuation difference in jurisdictions and the responsibility of valuations. Even if a jurisdiction such as Victoria may provide land values as well as capital improved values, the degree or the valuation effort that may go into that land valuation system that is a subset of the capital improved values is completely different, or wildly different, to what is in New South Wales.

Similarly, an objection valuation could be in a different form or a different complexity to what it is in Victoria and vice versa. So it does make it very hard to compare. What I can say, though, is we operate, on behalf of government, the Land and Asset Valuation Scheme. There are about 95 valuation suppliers of that scheme. Where we do outsource work in Value NSW, which is about 50 per cent of our work, they are through competitive tender, which is, in IPART's view—and, again, I think they would share that view that where you outsource it is seen as the most efficient cost to do that service.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: In terms of Victoria and what is being added in Victoria—I guess the value-adding in Victoria—

STEWART McLACHLAN: I don't think they use the term. We're looking to make it proprietary in New South Wales.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So receiving two valuations in Victoria—both the land value and the capital improved value. Is that something that New South Wales is contemplating doing as well?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I'm not aware of any plans from the Government to change the valuation system. We do constantly get questions about moving to capital improved values, and the answer that I think the Valuer General would like me to give is that we do monitor that. We monitor how we could do it if we were ever asked to do it, but the costs are in the order of half a billion dollars to move to that system and we don't think it would be a viable move on the basis of a payback period.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How does Victoria do it more efficiently?

STEWART McLACHLAN: The main difference is they've always done it like that. For capital improved values, they have the database, they have the sales, they've inspected the properties. For us to get there, it's that big initial investment and it's a five-year period to do it. Once we're there, sure, it's just as efficient to operate, but it's the initial surge of cost.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It is the establishment of the system.

STEWART McLACHLAN: Exactly—which makes it insanely prohibitive.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Any consideration, for instance, of changing council rates from as they currently are assessed on the land value—changing to a capital improved value system would come with a half-a-billion-dollar price tag, would it?

STEWART McLACHLAN: That's what we estimate and that's what our reviews have shown. But, obviously, we remain ready to move to that system if we were directed by Government to do it. But we would obviously provide the advice that—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But it would need money to go with it as well.

STEWART McLACHLAN: A lot of money, yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: In terms of that and in terms of some of the work that has been undertaken, has there been a strategy at all in reviewing the system and looking at where there could be some further financial efficiencies that are gleaned from the new IT systems that you're undertaking?

STEWART McLACHLAN: There certainly is. It is something that the Valuer General and I discuss routinely. I think the problem that we have is we need to get the system operational. We need to work out the bugs, which there are and there will be many bugs between now and March next year when you roll out a new system. There's always bad code or problems to address. Once that's operational, we obviously have a view that there are significant opportunities for the New South Wales valuation system. I would probably say on that question that I would like to give Sally the opportunity to answer those questions at the Joint Standing Committee on 5 May.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: We'll get another opportunity. You spoke before about the size of the workforce increasing and bringing more in house. I think you just mentioned you are still doing 50 per cent which were by private contractors, is that correct?

STEWART McLACHLAN: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What has been that change in terms of the private contractor usage, considering the increased size of the internal workforce? So 50 per cent you're still doing externally. What was that previously when the staff were at around 130?

STEWART McLACHLAN: It was zero.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It was zero?

STEWART McLACHLAN: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So it was 100 per cent outsourced?

STEWART McLACHLAN: That's correct, yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It was 100 per cent outsourced, zero insourced. So everything internally was just effectively doing an assessment of the already contracted work?

STEWART McLACHLAN: There was contract management. We still operated a call centre—previously we still did that. So we received up to 50,000 calls per annum. We still managed the supplementary valuation workflows, where a council subdivides a property and then requests a new valuation, those types of things. We obviously had a robust—well, we still do have a robust, but we had a quality assurance process of monitoring contract valuation delivery, their work and the accuracy, fairness and quality.

The Hon. WES FANG: I'm looking for somebody to put some small business questions to, so I will ask Ms Gibbens. In relation to the Government's position on mutual gains bargaining, they indicated when they came to government that mutual gains bargaining would provide fairness to the system. But I'm yet to see a small business that is actually benefitting from that system to be employed. Can you name a small business at all or a group of small businesses that have indicated that they're supportive of that?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order: I'm not entirely sure how this fits within the portfolio area, particularly as the mutual bargaining system applies to public sector workers. There wouldn't be an application to business or small business in New South Wales.

The Hon. WES FANG: To the point of order: We're just trying to seek an idea as to how the Government policy is having an impact on small businesses and if there has been any feedback in relation to the Government policy on this.

The CHAIR: I'm probably not in a position to dispute whether it is or isn't within the remit. I imagine Ms Gibbens would be able to answer if it is or isn't.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I think that's a matter for the Minister for Industrial Relations.

The Hon. WES FANG: So there has been no feedback to you in relation to—

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: No feedback.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you have any evidence that the Government's workplace relations policies are having an impact on the wages that small businesses are having to pay their staff in order to retain or to attract workers?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Again, I think this is a matter for the Industrial Relations Commission Minister. We hear from businesses around pain points. That is not one that we regularly hear about through the work we do in the bureau. Whether or not it is raised through other forums, I can't comment on that.

The Hon. WES FANG: So it hasn't been raised at all?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Not through the work that we do around navigational support for small businesses.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Wages in the private sector are in the Federal jurisdiction.

The Hon. WES FANG: But through the Business Bureau, which the Minister has championed.

The CHAIR: Debate for this is probably reserved for the House. If you want to continue with your questions to the witnesses.

The Hon. WES FANG: Just in relation to the pinch points that you mentioned, what are the issues that are raised?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Some examples I can give around the work that we do at the bureau around pain points?

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: We do three things with our work in the bureau. We look at simplifying compliance, so working with small businesses to help them navigate through licence requirements and regulation. We also respond to pain points, so an example of that would be the work we've done with the Food Authority and the introduction of its new standards and regulation, and education around that to help small businesses comply. Finally, it's around maximising economic opportunities, so looking at the Northern Rivers procurement process that we're undertaking with our Business Connect program where we're educating businesses in that area so they're ready to attend for procurement opportunities.

The Hon. WES FANG: The Minister indicated in answers to questions this morning that the bureau was one of his answers to the increasing cost of doing business in New South Wales for small businesses. What are the practical measures that you can point to and say to a small business who comes to the Business Bureau seeking an understanding of what the State Government can do by way of grants, assistance, cost of doing business measures "Here's where you can start and you can apply for x, y and z"?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I can give you a good example around the work we do in procurement support. We have a business from the inner west. It's a female-owned business. They do e-learning modules. They came to the Business Bureau to ask for support around understanding what was available to them. Our business concierge took the time to get to know that business and really understand where the opportunities might be. They assisted to register that business with the buy.nsw supplier hub. They connected that business with a Business Connect provider, and that business was able to work with that provider around grant applications and tailored advice around the development and pricing so that they were able to tender through that process. The good news there is that they were awarded a tender with government around a trauma and vicarious trauma training e-module package.

The Hon. WES FANG: If that business then returned in, say, six months and said, "Appreciate the help we've received in relation to getting registered for and receiving and understanding the tender work, but now I'm trying to grow the business and attracting extra staff is a problem because we're trying to pay workers more and we're competing against the public sector where they can attract mutual gains bargaining and we're seeing all these high wage increases in the public sector. We can't afford it. How can you help me?", what would you say to that business?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: We would connect them again—and they would be able to come back and ask that because we have an ongoing case management-type relationship. In the meantime, we would be proactively sourcing information to them that might be relevant to their business, but if they came back to us and said, "I'm at this stage of my business now and I need further support," again probably in that scenario that you describe, we would connect them to Business Connect. We know that businesses that go through that program with that really tailored support looking at individual needs for businesses get some really good outcomes.

Business confidence increases. We see an increased growth in their business and that leads to more employment within a business.

The Hon. WES FANG: Is there a way of attracting financial assistance to recruit and retain staff? Is there any provision for that?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: There is no grant available at this point in time, but, again, as I said, there are opportunities to talk to a Business Connect provider, which would give you guidance free of charge on that and extra knowledge and upskill.

The CHAIR: I might start off by coming back to you, Mr La Posta, on the translation services questions we were discussing before the break. You talked about trying to internalise or bring translation services probably back more within government. How do you see that working when the industry is highly casualised and there's a high proportion of women? Also where do you see the relationship between what the Government will be doing and NAATI? Will NAATI still continue to exist under this model that you're looking at?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: The market became completely capital. You eloquently said at the start, and this is a sentiment a lot of interpreters and translators express, that it was a race to the bottom. Government was forced to largely procure on the basis of price, so quality was questionable, the accreditations associated with the quality was questionable and price became the dominant factor for which contracts government did or didn't engage with. The previous Government—a testament to them—and the current Government have looked to turn that around. We went through significant industrial relations reform in 2022. That reform gave us greater flexibility in terms of the industrial instrument to employ our interpreters and translators. It's debatable but it's now considered best practice in the country that a lot of other States and the national jurisdictions are looking to replicate around minimum assignment times, minimum telephone interpreting assignments, minimum face-to-face entitlements and all of these different things.

To the credit of colleagues in the justice system, they stuck with us the entire time because they knew that accuracy for court translations was paramount. We've had them as a major client the entire time. To the credit of the New South Wales police, they agreed with the same sentiment, so they stuck with us the entire time. To colleagues at Service NSW, they also stuck with us because of accuracy around drivers licences and birth and death certificates. We're now going through effectively a marketing campaign to get all the other parts of government back to us. That's tricky because a lot of other parts of government might have pre-existing contracts—two years, three years, five years—with different providers, but my focus and the focus of our language services division is to bring other parts of government back to use government-qualified interpreters and translators.

To your points around their employability, the majority of those interpreters and translators are casual. They like the flexibility of being casual, although some of them want greater job security. We're looking at models whereby we can have permanent part-time roles where they can do a telephone interpreting assignment for Service NSW and then be in an AVL court session that afternoon and give them sort of five to eight hours of employment three, four, five days a week. We're trialling that in the largest languages at the moment, particularly Mandarin where we have two full-time Mandarin interpreters that work within the agency. We're now looking at piloting programs within the court system for Arabic interpreters and potentially Vietnamese interpreters and those major languages to help in the distribution but also the regularity of work.

The CHAIR: Where will NAATI fit in all this? At the moment they don't register or de-register translators. Is there going to be a process where we can potentially deal with ones that aren't providing quality work?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes. NAATI is the accrediting authority, separate from us.

The CHAIR: But they don't have the actual power to register or deregister translators.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: They won't give accreditation to those who they don't feel satisfy the requirements. A lot of the challenges that NAATI is experiencing, particularly within new and emerging languages, isn't necessarily the grasp of their mother tongue; it's their grasp of English that is the challenge for them. What we're trying to work with them at the moment is supporting them. I'm down in Melbourne in a couple of weeks sharing interjurisdictional best practice in this space with RMIT University and other partners—Language Loop Victoria and others—to look at how we can support NAATI in not necessarily lowering their standards, but improving the pathways in the lead-up to their assessments to boost the accreditation. Because you're right; there's too many failure rates. For a lot of people who go through the time and the energy—and we do all of this good work through our scholarship program or the academy to get them there—and then they fail and they become despondent.

The CHAIR: Do you see AI potentially causing a risk to the provision of quality service? Given the nature of language and different dialects, AI probably doesn't have a place in translation services?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It's like ChatGPT. I've seen plenty of council mayors and others quickly have a ChatGPT speech in whatever they're about to walk into. The reality is you can't ignore the technology solutions. You can look at them as enablers, but I think there is a significant risk to government if it is outsourcing its interpreting and translating offshore, or if it is abdicating its responsibility to have human accuracy in terms of the work that it's doing by simply using Google Translate, ChatGPT or others.

The CHAIR: We know that is happening now at the moment—for example, staff in health systems using Google Translate rather than a translation service because it's quicker and cheaper.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes, and it's a challenge for government because right now we have finite budgets that are already in place. Let's say you're in the department of education and you're doing parent teacher interviews; or you're in the department of housing and you have sizable contracts for telephone interpreting for those that don't speak English to get access to social and affordable housing; or you're in the department of planning and you've got mechanisms—we would need to come in and provide a cost-competitive model to them, but also relay and reassure them that the accuracy of our work will offset, potentially, the time that they will then be spending fixing errors where they've either gone for the most cost-competitive pricing model or potentially they've inadvertently been supporting models that are either digital models without human review or they are models that are potentially outsourced.

To the credit of the secretary head, Greg Wells, and others around the table, we're working incredibly closely with their departments to bring that work across, which, Chair, to be honest, it's a good story. If we can get more security in terms of this work for interpreters and translators, my hope is we can arrest the decline in terms of people wanting to be an interpreter and translator. I would argue that we've got the largest possible business, in terms of the New South Wales Government, to focus our energies on.

The CHAIR: In October you hosted a free multicultural water safety day in Wollongong. Obviously water safety is a big passion of mine, particularly to do with rock fishing and concern for how many people of multicultural backgrounds we lose in that sport. What else are you doing, other than that free day that you had in October? Because it's not just you have had a free day and the problem is solved; what else are you doing in this space around multicultural water safety? Anyone from the Office of Sport should feel free to chime in as well.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It's a tricky one because it sits across—

The CHAIR: The Rock Fishing Safety Act is a nightmare because it sits across three—

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It's almost in a sense you've got Surf Life Saving NSW or Royal Life Saving New South Wales, depending whether it's a river—if you're at Wagga Beach, that's a very different scenario than if you're at Coojee Beach. Then if you're rock fishing, that sits in a different department to where surf lifesaving sits, which then sits in a different department if you're in a national park. The point that all of us are trying to do is focus on the people that are most at risk and sort of walk away from who has the direct responsibility and focus on how are we collectively trying to work.

The statistics, as you said, are damning. Migrants are overrepresented in terms of our drownings. Whether that be at Penrith or whether that be at Coojee or Kiama, it's something that we need to collectively address. But I guess I can give you comfort in knowing that we had Surf Life Saving NSW come out and talk to our senior leadership team in advance of last year. We're collaborating across a number of languages, supporting a lot of their campaigns, looking at mechanisms to create advisory groups and others to help guide and steer their work. All of their campaigns are now getting better and more involved and targeted in terms of—a good example is that one: free life jackets for those that register and those sorts of things as well. As a government, we're better. Are we perfect? Certainly not. Is it a requirement for all parts of the Government to work together on this? Yes.

The CHAIR: This one-off day in Wollongong in October—are we going to have more of those? Are we going to expand them and take them out elsewhere other than Wollongong?

ADAM BERRY: Mr Chair, if I can speak, I won't speak specifically to the day at Wollongong. What I can speak to is the commitment. We announced yesterday, in fact, a learn-to-swim program that is targeted towards exactly those most vulnerable communities—culturally and linguistically diverse communities, some of our regional communities and Indigenous communities—that are all collectively over-represented in drownings. Over the last two or three months, the Office of Sport conducted a market process. We went to learn-to-swim providers and basically awarded contracts across 10 regions of the State where those providers will provide free 10-week programs—not just to children but to adults, people of any age. The qualification requirement is that—a multicultural community background, an Indigenous background or being socio-economically disadvantaged.

It's a great program, targeted right at the people who need it the most. It is, as Mr La Posta said, part of a bigger problem and a bigger need, but it is designed specifically for those communities. That will start delivering, we expect, in the coming months. Potentially by around about April or May, those providers spread across the entire State will start delivering 10-week programs over the next two years.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I have some questions for Mr McLachlan. Following on from some of my questions to the Minister this morning about the privacy and data team that was set up to monitor and enforce the conditions of the new licensing agreements regarding the use of property sales data. At estimates last August you said that audits had just started to get underway. This was somewhat covered already but I just want to get an update from you about where those audits were up to.

STEWART McLACHLAN: Building on the Minister's answer this morning, the audits are now complete. We have advised the Privacy Commissioner of that. The important thing to note is that of the five companies audited, there were no non-compliances observed or found in terms of their licence conditions, which is no mean feat. Having discussions with the industry and with the Valuer General, I think the statement about the changes we brought in 18 months ago are best practice for the provision of that data across Australia, with many other jurisdictions still in the review phase of what they will or won't do. Most notably, the Queensland Valuer-General is still reviewing what that may look like in their landscape, whereas we've done that initial review. We have proposed or have implemented licence conditions that we think strike that balance of protection of privacy but also the provision of data to the industry, which is quite important. Obviously we will review that, in consultation with the Minister and the Valuer General, towards the end of that three-year period.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: I'm glad to hear there were no instances of non-compliance. Are there any other trends that have come up through those audits that you're able to share, or any other findings?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I don't think so. We observed minor administrative things around how licences are distributed by those data resellers and whether or not it appropriately attributes the data to the Valuer General in New South Wales and those types of things, but nothing in terms of privacy protections. The Minister took a question on notice this morning about response, if any, to the findings in the Federal outcome.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Yes, the joint committee.

STEWART McLACHLAN: The important point there is it was a Federal observation; they're looking across seven States and Territories. I think the important point, from what we've found, is that in that it is two companies, from my understanding, that are operating illegally. They are scraping data from multiple sources. It is not the provision of property sales data in its sole form. It is scraping court lists and scraping other information on publicly available websites in an illegal way—that is how I understand it—as opposed to, "There is an issue with the data provision that we are providing in New South Wales under strict licence conditions."

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So you're saying that those two companies weren't getting any data from New South Wales?

STEWART McLACHLAN: They may have been scraping that data illegally but, certainly from the audit that we've undertaken, there is no illegal provision of data in breach of the terms of the conditions.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: But was there information that they were able to get through Valuations NSW, or do we not know?

STEWART McLACHLAN: That would be a matter for the Federal privacy commissioner.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So there is a possibility that one of the avenues that these companies were using was getting—

STEWART McLACHLAN: It's certainly not something we've observed through the audits that we've undertaken.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Are you considering making any changes to the licensing agreements such as the type of personal information that is provided for sale or the way that it is enforced or structured in regard to those licensing agreements?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I think the simple answer is no. The more detailed answer is, of course, we will be as the three-year period comes to fruition, which is about 18 months away. I know the Valuer General is certainly minded in that respect, and to understand the pros and cons of the licences, what has occurred during the three-year period and whether or not amendments should be made. But, again, I think it's a June next year type of discussion.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: So we will have a bit more information next year if something is going to be changed?

STEWART McLACHLAN: It will certainly be in the review phase; that's for sure.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Last time we spoke about ensuring that what was clear on the Valuations NSW website was where people could make a complaint if they had concerns that personal information had been misused in breach of the licence agreement or other privacy breach. I wasn't able to find any information about that on the website other than a very general complaints page. Is there anything on the website that I've missed? Can you point me to any part of the website which specifically addresses that, or is it more that people would have to use that very general complaints page?

STEWART McLACHLAN: I'll need to take that on notice. What I can say is that in the past year we have transformed that website and reduced the pages significantly. We removed 800 documents, some dating from over 40 years ago, which were probably not well visited, if at all. We have tried to streamline it in terms of best practice, working with the Department of Customer Service on their whole-of-government approach to OneGov, I think it is. Whether or not that was in line with that in terms of having a single complaints portal as opposed to a specific privacy one, I'll need to take on notice whether it's one or the other or both.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: Fantastic. If you could also take on notice if that's the avenue or if there was some sort of other avenue and now it has gone down into that, that would be fantastic.

STEWART McLACHLAN: Sure, I would be happy to.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: I want to turn to the Camperdown dive site, if I could.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: WestConnex?

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Yes, the essential worker housing. Given that site has been promoted as essential worker housing, what proportion of the total dwellings will be specifically allocated as affordable housing? Is that something someone here would know or not?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I think that's a question for Minister Scully's budget estimates towards Landcom.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: In Housing?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Yes. Mr Wendler will be in attendance for that.

LEON WALKER: There was obviously publicly released information about that, but that's right—that's the appropriate forum.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: In that sense, is that the agency that's leading?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Correct. Landcom will be preparing the relevant planning documents, so they are assessing the apartment mix as part of that.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: I'm curious about the Blackwattle Bay public housing at the former Fish Market site. Is that something that you might have some information on? I apologise—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's an INSW question. Tom?

TOM GELLIBRAND: The site of the existing Fish Market is going to be brought to market for the development of housing in the near future. We don't have an exact date for that yet. In terms of social and affordable housing, our approach is to comply with all the requirements of the City of Sydney. My understanding of that is that they require 7.5 per cent of—I think it's expressed as gross floor area dedicated to affordable housing. We are complying with that.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Is there any impetus to not just meet it but beat it?

TOM GELLIBRAND: Not in terms of our engagement with the private sector. We'll engage with the private sector to get them to bid for the development rights, and then they will go through the process of developing their own development applications, complying with all the standard requirements that will exist. There is an opportunity for them to look at the market, but they are trying to engage with them. It's open to them to do more than 7.5 per cent, but that's the base.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: Wentworth Park and its future use after 2027—is that something you can speak to?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: The Minister did speak to that this morning.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: I'm sure he did.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: No, and I will repeat what the Minister said, because it is a Government decision, not a bureaucratic one: No formal decision has been made at this point.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: So nothing about future use or anything to do with the site at this point?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Obviously you would be aware that there has been an application to extend greyhound racing, but the decision hasn't been made.

Ms SUE HIGGINSON: If I can go back just briefly to the Coffs jetty site, if that's okay. I acknowledge that I'll ask questions in terms of the rezoning further. With that proposal—I know it's going back—will there be a continued commitment to social and affordable housing, whatever the proposal that goes out for further discussion?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: The proposal that goes out obviously hasn't been finalised at this point, so I'm being a little presumptuous to answer that question. It is a rezoning proposal; it is not a development application at this point in time. The rezoning proposal, as you'd be aware, generally looks at what the land use is, not what the tenure mix of a development would be. That would be dealt with at the development application stage. Although, to round that out, we are aware that that is an interest of the council, so it's obviously something that the department is conscious of and PDNSW is conscious of as well.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr McLachlan, you cited the \$500 million figure before in terms of the upgrade to capital and improved value. In 2016 the IPART report assessed information from Valuations NSW or the Office of Valuer General or whatever it was at the time—for want of better terminology.

STEWART McLACHLAN: We found better terminology.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I think it was \$100 million at that time. What has been the increase since then?

STEWART McLACHLAN: Simplistically, costs have gone up. The main cost of moving to the system is not so much a system cost or ICT cost, although I'm sure that would not be insignificant. The main cost is about inspecting every property to get the attributes. Between 2016 and now, we have seen the cost of valuation increase—certainly not since 2016, but talking since the last IPART determination, we are seeing the costs of valuation in the external market move 43 per cent to 50 per cent, and that's on top of CPI.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Are you suggesting that the 2016 figure would have just been for the technology improvements, so to speak, rather than the—

STEWART McLACHLAN: I understand that it was still for inspections but, from what I understood, it wasn't to the same rigour as the current review that we undertook for the Valuer General, with the assistance of a former Valuer General. Essentially, at a basic level, we looked at the cost per valuation of a property. I don't have the figure at the top of mind, but it ranges. You would expect it to fall—I can get the figure, but let's say it falls between \$20 and \$30. The range to merger the system was around \$350 million, \$400 million or \$500 million. But that's how much it would be, and that's comparative to what the private sector would do it for.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: At that time the Centre for International Economics thought it would cost less. I think I've seen subsequently that Domain has also indicated that it could cost less than that. Do you dispute all of those assessments or evaluations?

STEWART McLACHLAN: At a broader level, we would say that that's not accurate and not our view. But, ultimately, everyone is entitled to their own modelling and their own economics. Certainly, in the latest review we did, it certainly falls closer to \$500 million than it does to \$100 million.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you. I think that's it from me for you, Mr McLachlan, so I'll hand over to Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: Just in relation to small business closures, we have seen New South Wales tourism is down from 2019 levels. We have also seen more closures in New South Wales than any other State between July and December 2024, in the hospitality region. What assistances are available to hospitality businesses in New South Wales to try and overcome the challenges of the current market?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: While we are seeing insolvency numbers increasing, we are also seeing an increase in new business. In the same period you've just quoted, from July to December, we have had 89,000 new businesses start in New South Wales, which is up from last year—I think 3,000 more than the same period last year. The bureau will provide services to businesses starting or in trouble and thinking they might need some support with insolvency coming up. We help out all businesses. In terms of businesses that are concerned around

insolvency issues, we are able to, again, provide our Business Concierge service, navigating through what might be available, referring them on to different programs across government. That includes the Small Business Debt Helpline, the Rural Financial Counselling Service.

Our Business Connect advisers can also sit down with those businesses and work through different areas, such as managing cash flow, business planning. They can also work out and sit with them around potential new income streams in that business planning but also help them around creative ways to exit, if there is no other opportunity, because we know that is important as well, to exit with dignity. In terms of a number of free resources for all industries, around podcasts and online training to learn about the different indicators that your business might be in trouble, we have a podcast on knowing if your business is in danger of becoming insolvent, the key indicators for your business in financial distress, as well as e-learning modules around insolvency and administration. We aren't targeting industries, but we have this available to all industries through our offering.

The Hon. WES FANG: I'd be curious to know if you've got the data around the number of small businesses that opened or started in the previous financial year, that are still going in this financial year or currently. You said that, in the last set of recorded figures, there was a 3,000 number increase, but I think you said 84,000 started. Was that about right?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Eighty-nine thousand started.

The Hon. WES FANG: So 86,000 businesses started the previous 12 months before that. How many of those 86,000 are still operating? Do you have that data?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I don't have that data. I can take that on notice. But we know that last year just over 4,000 went insolvent.

The Hon. WES FANG: What's the trend looking like as we move forward now? Have you got any projections as to what you think it's going to be?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I don't have a crystal ball. All I know is that—

The Hon. WES FANG: Has there been any modelling done?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: Not through the work that we do in the bureau. We are absolutely available to businesses that need support at any life cycle. As I said before, we can help businesses when they are starting out, when they are maturing and looking to grow but also if they are looking to exit with dignity as well. That is the services that we wrap around our customers, and we are always being proactive around adding and looking across government, looking across Commonwealth, all three levels, State and local, around what services and grants are available for businesses and packaging that up.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you have a figure as to any assistance that's available to a startup business? You might be looking to start a new business. It might be a hospitality business, a cafe, a fish and chip shop or something in an area. Is there any financial assistance available from the New South Wales Government to that business?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: There are a number of different grants available for different industries. There is also the SafeWork rebate available to all businesses.

The Hon. WES FANG: Was that the \$1,000 for safety?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: A thousand dollars for safe work improvements. If you've got a specific startup question, I can take that on notice for you, to get a list.

The Hon. WES FANG: I guess I'm just curious as to, if we have got increasing insolvencies in small businesses as we are moving forward—and certainly the numbers would appear that that's the case—whether it's more likely that a business that's been operating for a number of years, that is in financial difficulty now is more likely to continue operating if it was provided assistance in the intermediate period right now so that it can get through the bounce, shall we say, and move forward, as opposed to providing those grants to a new business that then is folding in 12 months, because it would seem from the questions that I've asked that there is no real financial assistance that's available to struggling hospitality businesses and tourism businesses at the moment. We are seeing record insolvencies in that sector, yet there is no assistance, and we are providing assistance to new businesses, which may or may not be still in existence in 12 months. Would that seem a reasonable proposition?

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: There are no direct, related hospitality programs at this point in time. That's not to say there hasn't been. We have just done the working with Environment around electronic chargers for tourism and hospitality venues. That's a program that we supported just in 2024. There are different programs that come up at different times. It's a decision of Government around what programs they invest in at any one time.

The Hon. WES FANG: So there's been no foreshadowing with you or anybody else around the potential government assistance to be rolled out in any future grants announcements to provide small businesses and tourism businesses with a little bit of relief in the current tough economic climate.

CASSANDRA GIBBENS: I'm not aware of any at this point in time.

The Hon. WES FANG: Thank you. I'm going to move now back to Crown Lands. So, Ms Fishburn, I imagine that I'll put the questions to you, and you might be able to direct them as appropriate. Have any details of the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund strategic emergency grants been finalised yet?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: No. We are in the process of assessing the CRIF grants. The emergency grants are, obviously, for emergency circumstances, but the major CRIF grants are under assessment.

The Hon. WES FANG: Have you got any details around how the application processes and criteria are being looked at?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: In terms of how are they being received by people?

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes. How are they being considered?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: The department is undertaking an assessment, and we will make recommendations to the Minister in due course.

The Hon. WES FANG: Can you provide some examples as to the type of project or expenditure that would be considered for a strategic emergency in the Crown reserve space?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll have to take that on notice, and I'll come back with some examples.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you know what the budget is for the strategic emergency grants in '24-25?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I believe it's \$4.5 million. If you give me a second, I can get to that page and I can tell you exactly.

The Hon. WES FANG: I can give you a few seconds. I'm very generous that way, in time.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Thank you. Very generous of you. Yes, I was correct. It's \$4.5 million.

The Hon. WES FANG: This is why you are the secretary.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Thank you. Value-adding.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's catching on.

The Hon. WES FANG: I tell you, if you haven't value-added and you are sitting at the desk today, there's going to be some real questions asked of your performance.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: How did you manage to get at the table, Wes?

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I broke the good karma.

The Hon. WES FANG: The crowd dealt with you. It's all right.

The CHAIR: Move on.

The Hon. WES FANG: Crown road enclosure permit fees—I'm foreshadowing the topic so we can turn to the right page. Since the progressive removal of the concessions for Crown road enclosure permit fees—that's a mouthful—beginning on 1 July 2024, has been an increase in the number of landholders who have relinquished or decided not to renew their permits?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'm sorry. I'll have to take that on notice for you.

The Hon. WES FANG: That's fair. I couldn't even read the question out myself. If there are, can you quantify this in the number of landholders, number of enclosures or in revenue terms? I imagine that it'll be taken on notice.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: We will definitely have to take that on notice, yes.

The Hon. WES FANG: Has there been an increase in the number of landholders converting enclosure permits to freehold titles since the removal of concessions began? I imagine that would also be—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Correct.

The Hon. WES FANG: I have two more, and I imagine they will be—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's right. The numerical ones I would almost always want to take on notice, because we want to make sure we give you accurate information.

The Hon. WES FANG: What additional resources and funding have been dedicated to land management activities, such as bushfire mitigation or weed and feral pest management, normally undertaken by the enclosure permit holders?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll take that on notice. We do have a general fund for bushfire management, but I don't know the quantum of that that would be there.

The Hon. WES FANG: I appreciate that. Have any additional staff been engaged regionally for land management activities in response to changes resulting from the removal of concessions?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Again, we'll take that one on notice.

The Hon. WES FANG: I appreciate that. The intermittent services levy—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Interment.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Interment services levy.

The Hon. WES FANG: Yes, sorry.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll just ask Ms Hickey to come up. You stumped me on the "intermittent services levy". I was like, "I think I'm pretty good, but I've not heard of that one."

The Hon. WES FANG: As I was swiping across, I was trying to read it as the words were moving. I should have just waited until my slide had stopped.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's fine. I'm sure Ms Hickey would be happy to answer.

The Hon. WES FANG: Ms Hickey, welcome to the table. As at budget estimates on 28 August 2024, Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW staff consisted of 14 FTEs, plus three temps and at a full capacity would reach 23 FTE. What is the current staffing?

JENNIFER HICKEY: Nineteen.

The Hon. WES FANG: Are you able to indicate where the staff are located?

JENNIFER HICKEY: Do you mean if they are in regions or not?

The Hon. WES FANG: Just in general.

JENNIFER HICKEY: Generally Parramatta, and three in the regions.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you have those regional locations? You better say Wagga. You really better say Wagga.

JENNIFER HICKEY: I can't say Wagga, sorry. Dubbo, Orange and Forster.

The Hon. WES FANG: The question is not here, but I'm going to say shouldn't you consider Wagga—no. From 1 July 2024 the interment services levy was extended to cemetery operators outside the metropolitan areas, and it was anticipated this would increase Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW revenue by \$5.05 million and \$5.15 million in its first and second years, respectively. What additional compliance and education and training activities have occurred outside of metropolitan areas since 1 July 2024, and where?

JENNIFER HICKEY: I might have to take some of that on notice. But I can tell you that in terms of the engagement with operators generally, we've issued 52 newsletters with information in there to operators.

The Hon. WES FANG: One a week?

JENNIFER HICKEY: Pretty much, yes. This is in the last year—since March last year. We've had seven locations for our roadshow; six of them were in the regions. I'm just trying to remember: Maitland, Orange, Dubbo, Wagga, Armidale and Coffs Harbour, I think.

The Hon. WES FANG: I stopped listening after Wagga.

JENNIFER HICKEY: Okay, there you go. And Sydney. We've had 36 webinars for operators and invited funeral directors to that as well. We've undertaken 17 clinics with operators who've wanted to deep dive into some of the trickier conditions that they didn't understand—a lot of them local councils. And we've undertaken 11 document reviews in terms of things that they wanted us to check for them before the compliance work started.

The Hon. WES FANG: Excellent, very thorough answer. Thank you. I don't know if you were reading off your notes or not. You did it so, well. It was good.

JENNIFER HICKEY: Well, I have the numbers here.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Ms Hickey, while you're at the table, has your office had any role in terms of identifying new burial spaces across the Greater Sydney region?

JENNIFER HICKEY: You might remember that last year the Minister released a strategic statement, and in that it was highlighted that CCNSW should work with the Crown operators to try to identify burial space. We have done a few different things, including working with Planning to get the State significant development pathway up and running. Our Crown Lands colleagues worked with Planning to get an exempt and complying development going as well. We've also tried to look at other things with Crown Lands and with the MMP. They have looked at exhaustion rates, done an audit of exhaustion rates and identified where they could put more burial space within existing cemeteries. Yes, we're aware of the proposals that they were looking at, but nothing has come to us formally yet.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So it wasn't your led process?

JENNIFER HICKEY: No, it was them.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That was Metropolitan Memorial Park's, was it?

JENNIFER HICKEY: The understanding is that they need to do consultation before they come to government.

The Hon. WES FANG: Ms Fishburn, do you have any information on the independent review into statutory framework for small-scale titles?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: For the towers?

The Hon. WES FANG: For the small-scale titles around Lightning Ridge in relation to opal mining and the like.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: You'll have to excuse me. I don't generally take the Crown lands questions.

The Hon. WES FANG: I don't normally ask the Crown lands questions.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Can I have your questions, and I'll just quickly get one of my staff to find the right page for me.

The Hon. WES FANG: I understand there was an independent review into the statutory framework for small-scale titles in New South Wales, which was reported on in June 2024.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: We might have to take this on notice. We're just having a look for you.

The Hon. WES FANG: I appreciate that. Maybe someone can get an answer by the end of the day. In relation to recommendation 11.4 of that review, what additional work has been undertaken by the Lightning Ridge area opal reserve manager to improve safety within the preserved fields at Lightning Ridge?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Even if I did have a paper on that, I would be taking that one on notice. It's quite a specific question.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: My wife is from Lightning Ridge—I can help—the real regional areas.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It doesn't mean that we'll dismiss you earlier.

The Hon. WES FANG: It's the first time today. That would be great. I appreciate it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Joe is always happy to help.

The Hon. WES FANG: He's always to help. Will this result in any increase in the environmental levy paid by mineral claims holders?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I don't have a note on that, so I'm going to have to take these questions on notice, I'm sorry.

The Hon. WES FANG: Mr La Posta, can you provide any—

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I won't get in the way of Secretary Fishburn's position.

The Hon. WES FANG: I just thought I'd ask.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: A career-limiting move.

The Hon. WES FANG: In relation to recommendation 15.4 of that report, what additional income streams has or is the Lightning Ridge area opal reserve manager implementing to reduce reliance on landholder compensation payments?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll take that one on notice. We will try to get something in the break for you. I literally don't have a single thing on this.

The Hon. WES FANG: Understood. I just put the question anyway.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's fine. We're always happy to take your question.

The CHAIR: I can indicate from everyone on the Committee that we are happy to release Mr McLachlan. Your value-adding days are over today.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You've added more value today than ever.

The Hon. EMMA HURST: That was a bit dramatic.

The CHAIR: Also, Ms Hickey, we are finished with you—I mean that in the nicest possible way.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: She works in cemeteries and crematoria. There are lots of in-jokes.

The CHAIR: Mr Head, Mr Wells and Ms Gibbens as well, and I think Mr Frost. I'm looking at Mr Farlow for confirmation.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yes, Mr Frost.

The CHAIR: I can indicate to Mr La Posta that both Ms Hurst and I are finished with you. Your freedom lies in the hands of the Liberal Party, unfortunately.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Sorry, we're keeping you. You haven't had one multiculturalism question from us in the afternoon session.

The CHAIR: We are now breaking for afternoon tea. We will come back at 3.45 p.m.

(Stewart McLachlan, Jennifer Hickey, Graeme Head, Greg Wells, Cassandra Gibbens and Mark Frost withdrew.)

(Short adjournment)

The CHAIR: Welcome back to this afternoon's session. I believe, Ms Fishburn, before we go back into questions, you have some things that have been taken on notice.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Yes, thank you, Chair. It's actually one of the questions that you asked us in relation to which other sites Crown Lands has been working through with the recreational fishers association as alternatives to Coopers Island. The department has identified two potential areas: sites fronting Coila Lake, at Coila, and another location fronting Tuross Lake, at Turlinjah. This information has been provided to the president of the Recreational Fishing Alliance NSW. As I said, we are working through.

The CHAIR: I think it is my turn for questions. I might stay with you, Ms Fishburn. This is a Crown Lands road issue as well. Feel free to take it on notice. For a bit of background, there is a road down in Tumut called Cockatoo Road and there is some dispute over who is responsible for maintenance of this road. My understanding is that HumeLink are increasing their use of this road as part of their work, and then there is the question of who is responsible for this road. My first question is does Crown Lands currently maintain any section of this Cockatoo Road in Tumut or have they ever been responsible for Cockatoo Road?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll have to take that one on notice.

The CHAIR: My understanding is one of the landholders has been paying nominal fees to Crown Lands for access. I'm just wondering whether that means that you are actually responsible for road maintenance. It's strange that one out of eight residents would pay a fee but the other seven wouldn't. Could we maybe get some confirmation as to why that resident is paying a fee for the road?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That's quite a detailed question, so I'll have to take it on notice. I think you understand that, as a general principle, the responsibility of the department or Crown Lands as the road authority is about the administration of legal access to the road, and we are not a road maintenance authority. I'll put that out as a general statement and then I'll take the particulars of Cockatoo Road on notice.

The CHAIR: I think that probably will do us for the moment on that issue, until we get some more information back. Mr Gellibrand, I might ask you some questions on the Fish Market. Are we any closer to a completion date? I know the roof is on. That's always a good sign when you are building something, when the roof goes on.

TOM GELLIBRAND: We are happy to say that progress is going well on the Fish Market and we will have the building complete this year.

The CHAIR: Anything narrower than that?

TOM GELLIBRAND: In terms of a specific date, not at this stage.

The CHAIR: Latter half of the year?

TOM GELLIBRAND: Definitely second half of the year. We are working closely with Place Management NSW, who will be the building owner, as well as Sydney Fish Market. They will obviously have to be involved in testing, commissioning and familiarisation with the new building as well.

The CHAIR: Have all the disputes around release of documents been resolved?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I think the NCAT proceedings might still be on foot for a couple of things. But there were 40-odd boxes of documents released. There is only a relatively small number of those that were in dispute, and they related to commercial matters, I believe.

The CHAIR: I know I put questions to you at last estimates around numbers of variations and total costs of those variations and you came back citing the NCAT proceedings. I'm just wondering whether, perhaps on notice, you can come back and see whether you can answer any of those questions with any more clarity.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I'm aware that there are 154 documents that are before NCAT in terms of assessing whether or not they can be released. The reason they are being considered by NCAT is because the claim is that they are commercial in confidence and legal professional privilege has been put over the documents, as well as that some of them include personal information.

The CHAIR: Can you take on notice those specific questions I asked about total number of variations across the life of the project and what that total cost of variations is?

TOM GELLIBRAND: I should be able to take that question on notice, but I should try and get clarity. Is it variations that the Sydney Fish Market has sought?

The CHAIR: I want a broad total of how many. I imagine there would be variations on behalf of the developer as well as Sydney Fish Market. If you are able to delineate between what the developer has asked to be varied and what the Fish Market has, I'm happy. But, if you can't, I'm just happy with a total figure if possible.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I'll definitely take that on notice.

The CHAIR: It sounds like you were asked questions on the defibrillator grants.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: No, we haven't.

The CHAIR: The Minister announced at the end of January the new reiteration of the defibrillator grant scheme. Are we still going to do that by postcode arrangement? I know there was some criticism of certain postcodes missing out versus others.

ADAM BERRY: Thank you for the question. I understand that there is still a postcode requirement. However, there has been a change made to the program eligibility and there is also the ability for applicants to demonstrate financial hardship in other ways, regardless of postcode location.

The CHAIR: Are we taking a look at what postcodes were eligible last iteration and trying to mix it up and look at postcodes that still might fit under that bracket of having low socio-economic performance, for want of a better term, and then maybe targeting them? I'll give you the example of my local area. Towradgi, down on the South Coast, was eligible, but one street over you were classed as Corrimal and you weren't. Both would have very similar socio-economic indicators.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I'll have to confirm—the question being, have the postcodes changed this year from last year?

The CHAIR: Are we still targeting low socio-economic areas, but are we now looking at, "Okay, we hit these postcodes, but now see whether we can hit these ones over here."

TOM GELLIBRAND: I'll take it on notice whether they have changed. To go to your example, the postcode outside would be able to demonstrate potential financial hardship and therefore eligibility another way.

The CHAIR: Sorry, Ms Fishburn, I have to go back to another Crown Lands question. It's to do with a parcel of land being returned to the Aboriginal community at Port Stephens around Tilligerry Creek. Have you got any notes?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'm just having a look for you. I don't believe I do.

The CHAIR: I might put some of the questions to you and you can take them on notice and come back to me.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Yes, sorry, it's not in my list.

The CHAIR: That's fine. This is a transfer of a 10.69-hectare plot which has potential to impact existing public access to that creek. I've had representations from people that would use this area for recreational activities—fishing, boating, kayaking et cetera—and they are concerned about whether this land transfer will restrict their access or alter their current access points to that waterway. Are you able to come back and give any advice as to whether it would?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll take that on notice. I don't think I'd be able to get you that information today. I would need to look into that and come back.

The CHAIR: What will be the impact on existing facilities such as boat ramps, pontoons, walking trails—all this is public infrastructure? Will the transfer of land have any effect on that public infrastructure in terms of maintenance upgrades or accessibility?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I'll have to look at the nature of the land claim, what is under claim and how that potentially would impact, and also whether an ALA is being negotiated in relation to that as well because that could materially change the answer, so I have to come back to you.

The CHAIR: If the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council chose to develop that land, how would that then impact that usability and maintenance of the existing public assets in the vicinity? That might be tied up in that ALA.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That might be tied up. It also may be a little bit of a hypothetical. I'd have to look at what the underlying land zoning is as well.

The CHAIR: Finally, whether there was any consultation undertaken with the local community outside of the local Aboriginal community, the broader community that use these facilities for recreation—whether they were consulted on this land transfer at all.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Land claims aren't really a matter of consultation. They're a matter of what was the underlying use at the time.

The CHAIR: Consultation is probably the wrong word. Were they notified that this land claim was on foot and that there may be future impacts of that?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Sure. Obviously we need to engage with local government at the first instance in relation to these matters and I can assure you that definitely would have been done. Anything beyond that I'll need to get some information for you.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I might pick up on some of the issues Mr Banasiak already raised with you, Mr Gellibrand, with respect to the Fish Market. There have been some reports in terms of the financial viability of the Sydney Fish Market. Has Infrastructure NSW done any of their own assessment in terms of the financial viability of the Sydney Fish Market going forward?

TOM GELLIBRAND: No.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Are there any contingency plans in place if the Sydney Fish Market were to become insolvent?

TOM GELLIBRAND: Certainly we don't have any. Just to clarify, we're responsible for delivering the project, the building itself. Once that gets to the point that we refer to as "practical completion", we hand it over to the Sydney Fish Market to operate and place management will take responsibility as the owner of the asset. So it's not really a matter that we would ever deal with in terms of future tenants. We've got to make sure the building is fit for purpose and meets the tenants' requirements, but their use of the building moving forward is not something that we're responsible for or concerned with.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to the Fish Market, is the budget still at \$836 million?

TOM GELLIBRAND: The actual budget for the building itself is \$750 million. Then on top of that there was an allocation of \$86 million and that was for early works, so removing all of the piles, the demolition of the original Hanson concrete batching plant, the stabilisation of the seawall, all the preparatory works to enable the main works contracts to be undertaken by Multiplex. It's \$750 million for the new building but there was also \$86 million for—I think it was 86; it might be 76—all those early works.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And that's still on track, is it, in terms of that \$750 million for the building?

TOM GELLIBRAND: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I think that might be it for me on the Fish Market redevelopment. I'm happy for you to offer more if you wish.

TOM GELLIBRAND: I was about to say that we will try to be as helpful as possible. There's additional expenditure that we're also undertaking in that area. There is another \$79.2 million that is part of that overall funding envelope from Government and we're using that to complete the foreshore walk, which will take you essentially from Woolloomooloo all the way through to Rozelle ultimately because there is a missing link that will be in the front of the existing Fish Market site. We will put money into that. Then we're also developing a 1.1 hectare park, which sits underneath the Anzac Bridge and we'll be funding that park as well. Hopefully—well, we're on the cusp of getting planning approval for it and we'll be going to market for getting that developed in the near future.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Does that take into it any activation of the old Glebe Island Bridge?

TOM GELLIBRAND: No.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That will still be in its current state of being locked out effectively?

TOM GELLIBRAND: Or locked open.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Or locked open. Turning back to the Local Sport Defibrillator Program, it was stated, I believe, in the media release that there were nearly 200 successful applicants. How many were there exactly?

ADAM BERRY: I'd have to take that on notice, Mr Farlow. I don't have the numbers in front of me.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If you could, that would be good. You mentioned before, in terms of those applicants who could apply if they were able to demonstrate financial hardship if they were outside of one of the eligible postcodes—could you indicate how many of the 200 or thereabouts met that criteria?

ADAM BERRY: I will take that one on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How is this financial hardship measured or assessed?

ADAM BERRY: I would also like to take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How many applications also were received in the last round of the defibrillator program?

ADAM BERRY: I don't have the details of that individual grant program in front of me.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: On notice? I might put the rest on notice there as well. While we're in sport, we'll continue in sport just to continue on the theme. The Dunc Gray Velodrome—how many indoor velodromes are there in New South Wales?

ADAM BERRY: Dunc Gray Velodrome would be the only indoor velodrome in New South Wales.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's the only one. Why has the Office of Sport withdrawn funding for the Dunc Gray Velodrome from 31 March 2025?

ADAM BERRY: The Office of Sport has actually been operating Dunc Gray Velodrome under a management agreement from Bankstown city council. The office and the Government isn't actually the owner of the velodrome. We've been operating it on an interim basis while its future was considered. We actually extended that agreement to the end of March, so the end of next month, and a decision was taken that, beyond that period, we wouldn't continue to operate it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'm informed that the NSW Institute of Sport is due to drop their high-performance track cycling program from 2025. Is that a result of the inability to be able to use that velodrome?

ADAM BERRY: That is actually programs delivered by—the NSW Institute of Sport program decisions are made by them. They'd have to be directed to them taken on notice. We don't operate that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you received any assurances from Canterbury-Bankstown council that they'll meet the full cost maintenance of Dunc Gray Velodrome going forward?

ADAM BERRY: We haven't sought any assurances. Canterbury-Bankstown council is the owner of the facility.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Given the NSW Institute of Sport track cycling program is coming to an end, is there any other support that's being provided by the Office of Sport to track cycling athletes based in New South Wales?

ADAM BERRY: Not specifically to track cycling athletes other than we would support cycling through our organisational support program, like we do all State organisations.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yesterday there was the new learn-to-swim program and I believe in the media release it was stated that people born overseas and those living in the most disadvantaged areas of New South Wales are at the highest risk of drowning. How is it then that disadvantaged areas like Moree and an area like Bayside Council, which has 48.1 per cent of people born overseas in the 2021 census and is coastal, didn't qualify for the program?

ADAM BERRY: I don't know that it's a case they didn't qualify. We sought expressions of interest from learn-to-swim providers to provide it across the State. It was very much a market-led process. The best, most successful proponents or the best proposals were awarded funds—obviously finite funds. But all of the best proponents that could provide the best value and the most at-risk communities were successful.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How many proposals were received?

ADAM BERRY: I would have to take that on notice. It was very well responded to by the market.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What was the criteria for assessing those proposals?

ADAM BERRY: I would have to take the full criteria on notice. It was quite detailed.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Is there any support being provided to those in remote communities unable to access the learn-to-swim program that would have otherwise had access to the First Lap voucher program?

ADAM BERRY: I think you'll find a large number of the respondents are providing services—the successful proponents—in remote and regional parts of New South Wales. The largest provider by far in terms of this new program is Royal Life Saving and they do operate around a large part of the State. There are a number of regional communities and remote communities that will be getting the program.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Ms Mather, finally, is Penrith Stadium still on track to be opened in 2026?

KERRIE MATHER: That's probably a question better directed to Tom because he's delivering it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Apologies. Mr Gellibrand—or Ms Mather, if you have any views to add to this—given the old stadium hasn't been demolished yet, are you still confident that 21 months is sufficient time to demolish Penrith Stadium and construct a new facility on the premises?

TOM GELLIBRAND: We're confident, and we are working closely with Venues on this. I can understand why you probably asked the questions independently. Yes, we are confident. We've got the head contractor on board. They've mobilised. They're well and truly into design. They have a lot of experience, having delivered the Sydney Football Stadium as well. It's a tier 1 contractor. They have great relationships with Penrith Council as well as Penrith Panthers and Venues, and everyone's working side by side to make it happen.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Neither of you or your organisations, Infrastructure NSW or Venues NSW, has cautioned that the stadium has the potential not to be complete by the end of 2026?

TOM GELLIBRAND: No.

KERRIE MATHER: No.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I will turn back to the Office of Sport. A motor vehicle racing grounds licence was issued to the Sydney International Speedway on 22 February 2024. Is that correct?

ADAM BERRY: I would have to confirm the date, but I understand about 12 months ago, yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Is that licence still in operation?

ADAM BERRY: I believe it is. I believe it's also due for renewal at around this time.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So it's still in operation at the moment and it's due for renewal around this stage. Are you aware that the licence was accompanied by specific conditions?

ADAM BERRY: I am.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Are you aware that one of those conditions, condition 15, states, "The licence does not permit Troy Boldy to carry out a management role in connection with any meetings for motor vehicle racing held at the ground or associated functions"?

ADAM BERRY: I'm aware that it has some very prescriptive requirements. I'm not across the individual requirements.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Are you aware that on 30 January 2025, Mr Troy Boldy sent an email dismissing track curator Marty Perovich and voiding a contract while admitting to pay \$113,000 over the previous 12 months?

ADAM BERRY: No, I'm not aware of that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If this were shown to be the case and that condition 15 were in place, would this be seen as action tantamount to managing the speedway and potentially void the licence conditions under condition 15?

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order: I understand the question but it's potentially inviting the witness to express a legal opinion about whether or not there has been a breach of the contract. I know it is not intended to be a trick question, but in all fairness it's a legal question about whether these circumstances, as described, are in breach of the contract. I don't think that's reasonable.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That's fine. I won't pursue the question. Have there been any warnings issued by the Office of Sport with respect to any breaches of the motor vehicle racing grounds licence by Sydney International Speedway over the past 12 months?

ADAM BERRY: I'm not aware that we have, but I'll confirm that for the Committee.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If you can take that on notice, that would be appreciated. So you're stating that the motor vehicle racing ground licence at present you believe to still be in operation but be up for renewal, but it hasn't been renewed. Is that correct?

ADAM BERRY: It hasn't been renewed at this stage. If there was information provided to the Office of Sport as part of our consideration into the renewals, we would be happy to take that information.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Has an application been received to renew that licence as of yet?

ADAM BERRY: I can't answer the details about whether or not the application has been lodged at this point in time, sorry.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to the Local Sport Grant Program, have there been any changes to the funding for sporting organisations in the 2024-25 Local Sport Grant Program?

ADAM BERRY: The program is actually being reviewed at the moment. We haven't actually reviewed that Local Sport Grant Program in a number of years. We are about to undertake a review of the criteria just as part of the due process and due governance, and our expectation is that later on in the year we will go out with the latest round with the same funding amount that has been available in previous years.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Typically, that funding round would be open around about now. From that answer, are you suggesting that the funding might be in the next financial year?

ADAM BERRY: It's our intention to complete the review and call for the next round before the end of the financial year, but the point of the review is to see if we can improve the program at all, and so from a due diligence perspective we need to make sure we can complete the review before we issue it. But the intent is to have that done by the end of the financial year.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to that, you've outlined that your view is that that will be a consistent funding amount and that it will stay at \$50,000 in each electorate?

ADAM BERRY: The exact number at each electorate I would have to take on notice. I understand there's not a current intent to change it.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Penrith Whitewater Stadium—does this fall under you, Ms Mather?

ADAM BERRY: No, that is the Office of Sport. We operate the facility.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Apologies again. With respect to the Penrith Whitewater Stadium, what are you doing to ensure that athletes like Jess Fox competing in the International Canoe Federation Canoe Slalom World Championships this October won't be battling blue-green algae blooms?

ADAM BERRY: Having said that we operate the facility, the management of water quality—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Mr Walker will be able to—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I notice Mr Walker leaning across there. Does that fall under your remit?

LEON WALKER: It's actually under Minister Scully's portfolio.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: He has a lot.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: We'll just clear it up for you. Leon, just answer, because we're keeping the water clean.

LEON WALKER: We have actually done quite a lot—"we" being the Office of Strategic Lands. We have had meetings with Paddle Australia and noted their concerns. We've appointed—I will get the term wrong—a water expert to independently advise on the water quality issues. We've done a lot of work to understand what's causing the water quality issues. A lot of the issue is coming from nutrient-rich water coming off the adjacent residential area into the lakes system, so we're putting in place engineering solutions to prevent that stormwater surge going into the main lakes used for the aquatic sports. We've also invested in a natural water treatment solution that is used preventatively to prevent the algae from becoming an issue in the first place.

We've also trialled a new sonic buoy technology that also suppresses the algal blooms. That has been tested. It has been proven to be working quite effectively. It's used internationally successfully. So over and above the unit that we've been using for the trial, we've ordered a series of those buoys that will be deployed through the lakes system to prevent the algal blooms going forward. We're also in negotiations with the Penrith Lakes Development Corporation to be able to divert the flow of water from the initial detention basin into the filtration water system. That was always designed to be the initial point at which water enters that whole Penrith Lakes system but hasn't been affected to this point. We're very hopeful that that will be the most effective treatment by moving the water away from those sport lakes in the first place.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Fantastic, thank you. I guess this question probably goes to the Office of Sport. Are there any contingencies if the algae blooms again, for October in particular?

ADAM BERRY: I will come to the question on contingencies. We've actually just delivered an Oceania championships very successfully—a major international competition—at the site through one of the higher risk times of year, in terms of weather conditions, with warm waters and warm air temperatures. Combined with the mitigations that Mr Walker's just spoken to, October is actually a slightly lower risk period of time. In terms of contingencies, we are working with the organisers, which is the International Canoe Federation, on what contingency plans may be in place. But it is largely focused on preventative measures in the first place because, ultimately, should we have a situation where we have blue-green algae, there are legitimate health considerations that we have to make.

LEON WALKER: My son is going in the lake tomorrow. I wouldn't be putting him in there if I thought there was a problem.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The best of luck to him for tomorrow. What's he competing in?

LEON WALKER: It is a triathlon.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to the Sydney Academy of Sport and Recreation, what's the status of the assessment report for the synthetic athletics track?

ADAM BERRY: We've completed, with the help of a specialist sports consultant, two pieces of work. We've done a fair bit of work understanding the actual mechanism that caused the failure of the track, which is a failure that happened in late 2003. Following on from that, understanding the mechanism of failure enabled us to

work with the consultant to design a more flood-resilient option—essentially, floodwaters regularly inundate the athletics track—and we've currently put that before government to consider. We've looked at a number of options. We are feeding that into the State budget process.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to what you stated and also what is stated on the Office of Sport website that you're "investigating options to repair and reopen the track, including the costs, risks, benefits and feasibility of each option", what are the different options that the Office of Sport has consulted with stakeholders on?

ADAM BERRY: I can't go into the details of those options. As I said, they form part of the budget process and it is essentially Cabinet-in-confidence information.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: When are the track repairs expected to be completed?

ADAM BERRY: That's very much subject to which option is pursued and the time at which the funding is provided to the Office of Sport.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Manly Warringah Little Athletics wrote to the CEO of the Office of Sport on 12 June 2024—or your predecessor, who's now acting up, I suggest, at Destination NSW—requesting an onsite meeting be facilitated with icare and posing alternatives. Has any onsite meeting taken place, either with the former CEO or yourself?

ADAM BERRY: There has been a number of onsite meetings with the athletics stakeholders, attended by both Karen and I, actually. The most recent of those was around a week before Christmas. At that time we conducted a workshop where we engaged with the athletics users and our sports consultant on their wants and aspirations for the reinstated track. There were a number of technical considerations into the athletics facility: the timing system, the drainage, shade structure and that type of thing. That was the most recent of—I'd have to take on notice the number, but at least three stakeholder forums that we had to provide updates on the progress of the situation. Obviously it's very disruptive to the athletics community. We also provide them with email updates every three to four weeks or as some new information comes to light in the process.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That probably brings us to the end of our sports questions. Ms Mather, did you have any involvement at all in assessing venues for their suitability for attracting an NFL game to Sydney?

KERRIE MATHER: I was involved in a bid. I was involved in the pitch.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to that bid and those venues—we did find a question for you in the end—it was a disappointing result for New South Wales to lose out to Victoria in that regard, particularly when you consider it being held at the MCG, which is not necessarily a great venue for watching any kind of rectangular sport. What were some of the challenges for New South Wales in that bid compared to Victoria?

KERRIE MATHER: You're quite right: It was disappointing. Our submission was competitive and compelling. New South Wales is the home of rectangular venues, so we believe we had a great offering. The response that we received from the NFL was that our bid was exceptional and that Sydney's obviously an iconic city. They acknowledge the world-class sporting infrastructure and spectator experience in Sydney, but they cited the commercial potential of Victoria.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So effectively Victoria paid more money.

KERRIE MATHER: That was as much as I got in the email. The bid was led by Destination NSW. They might be able to provide more insight. But that was the intel that I had.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: When did the New South Wales Government first engage with the NFL regarding hosting the game in Sydney?

KERRIE MATHER: I'm trying to remember. There's been an ongoing dialogue, because there are pre-existing relationships there. It's been a while, on and off. That dialogue will continue. They also noted that they're looking to expand their footprint internationally and would expect that Sydney would feature in that in the future. So we're hopeful that we'll get another opportunity to welcome them back again.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Similarly, I think in the same week, the NBA also outlined that they would be playing games in Melbourne. Were you or Venues NSW involved in a bid from New South Wales or Sydney for that?

KERRIE MATHER: No, we weren't.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That was exclusively for Melbourne, was it? Or you just didn't have any involvement and Destination NSW might be able to speak more to it?

KERRIE MATHER: We just didn't have any involvement in that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That might be all for our sport questions. We can probably dismiss the Office of Sport and also Venues NSW.

The CHAIR: Sure. That's Mr Berry and Ms Mather.

(Adam Berry and Kerrie Mather withdrew.)

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, we spoke previously about social cohesion in New South Wales and the work that your department is doing and the Minister is doing. How many times has the Faith Affairs Council met since the start of 2025?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: That's interesting. They've had one formal meeting on 6 February at Parliament House that the Minister attended. They've had a number of engagements with briefings on changes to—or the Government considering some changes to legislation where they've had involvement.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Were all members present for that meeting on 6 February?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I can take the specifics on notice. If you give me until the end of today, I will have an answer for you, because I looked at the attendance list yesterday.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If you can, that would be great. Are the minutes published and accessible to the general public?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: They're not publicly published, but I can see no reason, if the minutes were sought, why they couldn't be provided.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was the police Minister present for that meeting on 6 February?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: No, but Assistant Commissioner Mark Walton, who is the head of Strike Force Pearl, did attend and brief the group.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Has the Faith Affairs Council been briefed by New South Wales police after each of the recent antisemitic or Islamophobic attacks?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: The Faith Affairs Council have been briefed, as I said, by the assistant commissioner in February. They were briefed immediately after Wakeley, when there was engagement with the police. In terms of after each of the antisemitic attacks, I don't believe the Faith Affairs Council had been briefed by the police.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Regarding the decision by the National Cabinet and the Premier to establish a national antisemitism database, do you know when this database is expected to be up and running?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: That's probably a matter for the Commonwealth Government in terms of the establishment of the national antisemitism database. What I would say is that the messaging that I have heard from colleagues at New South Wales police is very clearly: If any member of the community believes that they have witnessed a crime, immediately notify the police. I know also that the CSG group is closely monitoring this. I know also that the Jewish Board of Deputies keep their own information on this as well. This is also something that I think the antisemitic envoy, Jillian Segal, is looking at as well and working with the Prime Minister on.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What's the role of Multicultural NSW in terms of the development of this database? Do you have any role at all?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It would be channelling the people into the most appropriate—part of my concern at the moment is that, to accurately track the impact of what's happening, community needs to be aware in terms of what, effectively, is the single source of truth that government is relying on to inform it in terms of the extent of the issue. As I just said then, there are three or four different ways that people are reporting, and some people even today aren't reporting. What we need to stop doing is creating different channels where there is potentially information that is being shared with one group and not another. I commend the intention of what this is, but I think it's really important that that then becomes a single source of truth to actually track the impacts of antisemitism. That will be separate then to the information the police have, which is about reporting a crime, and whether that crime is a hate crime fuelled by antisemitic behaviours.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: To your commendation of the intention, were Multicultural NSW, yourself or the Faith Affairs Council consulted at all before the New South Wales Government agreed to the Commonwealth database and its establishment?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: No, but that doesn't raise any concern in my mind.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'm not asking if it raises concern; I'm just asking whether there was any consultation beforehand or not.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Not that I'm aware of, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Ms Fishburn will probably tell me that this relates to Minister Scully as well. On 22 December 2024 Minister Kamper issued a joint media release, along with the Premier and Minister Scully, announcing measures to enhance safety at places of worship, which included the Places of Worship 2024 State Environmental Planning Policy amendment. With respect to this, are you aware of how many organisations within the multicultural space have taken up the opportunity to use this new planning pathway?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: You're correct: It is a planning pathway that Minister Scully introduced. I can go into more details if you wish, but it is basically an amendment to the code SEPP. It does make this development an exempt development. As it is an exempt development, it doesn't touch the planning system, and we wouldn't have any data on it. Joseph may have some, just apocryphally, but obviously when it doesn't go into the Planning Portal we don't count it.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes. The intention of what it's doing is about removing barriers for religious institutions and ancillary structures, as defined by the SEPP, to not have to go through bureaucratic or planning processes to be able to improve their safety and surveillance of those assets. I think that's profoundly a good thing. I'm sure the provisions of the SEPP have considered the appropriateness of it in terms of ramifications on adjoining amenity, but I can't speak to that.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Yes, that's absolutely correct.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But you can't speak to how many organisations have taken it up?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: It takes things out of the DA system, so when it's an exempt development we obviously don't have a record of it. I just want to say that on record because I got the staff to write this SEPP at four minutes to midnight basically in the last week before we went on leave. The staff were so determined to get this done as something that would be really important and meaningful to religious communities throughout New South Wales. They turned it around in four days. You know the planning system—that's not something that normally occurs. I want to thank my staff, who worked so hard on that.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: We also express our gratitude, and the feedback from the community has been very positive about the work. Kiersten and I spoke a day or so before that. I commend the planning department. Mr Farlow, what I would say, as a guiding principle, is that the interest in our safer places grant has exceeded last year's interest with over 300 applications received. Clearly the message is out there that the Government is actively trying to support communities in this space, and removing red tape to be able to get these projects through quicker.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Before you alluded to the Faith Affairs Council being briefed about the Government's legislative suite that they brought in following instances of antisemitism and racial hatred. When was the Faith Affairs Council consulted on those bills?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I'd need to take the specifics of that on notice, but I know that they have been consulted around the essence of the three new pieces of legislation.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Were they consulted on all the bills?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: One was the proximity of protests to places of worship, the second was the introduction of 93ZA—I'd need to take the specifics on notice—and I'm not aware if they were briefed on the sentencing requirements, or whether that was a part of it. I'm happy to take that on notice and give you a thorough and comprehensive answer.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was that briefing conducted by the Attorney General?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It was conducted by colleagues in the Department of Communities and Justice. Whether there were staff from the AGO on that forum, I don't know.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But not the Attorney General himself?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It was at the direction of the Attorney General, in consultation with the experts from the Department of Communities and Justice that were providing the recommendations and advice to Cabinet and to Government.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: When did those consultations occur?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I would need to come back to you on that—the same as your earlier question.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: When you come back to me, can you also provide how long members of the Faith Affairs Council were given to provide their commentary on the bill subsequent to being briefed on the matter?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Certainly.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What were the views of the Faith Affairs Council with respect to those bills?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: They were divergent.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That's diplomatic. You wouldn't classify them as supportive of those bills?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I think, as a general principle, faith communities are supportive of legislation that is balanced and informed and that is looking to protect anyone from experiencing racial hatred. I think it would be fair to say that there are some complexities and divergent views around the interpretation of what includes race, and whether that gives sufficient coverage to all the different groups that exist.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, were you, Multicultural NSW or the Faith Affairs Council consulted by the Premier before he alluded publicly via media that he was seeking to make an amendment to 93Z?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I'll need to take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Festivals and events grants.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: That is a change of pace.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, will there be another round of the Stronger Together Festival and Event Grants Program in the 2024-25 financial year?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Mr Farlow, that sounds like an excellent idea. I think we run two grant programs every year. Correct me if I'm wrong, but we are running the first one. We will then be opening up, probably in the next month or so, the grants from July or August until January or February next year. We normally go from the first half of the year, which we open in the back half of the year prior, and then the second half of the year, which we open in the few months preceding that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How much will be allocated to that program?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: That is an excellent question because that is contingent on our budget for 2025-26.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I am sure you would like me to ask you this question: Will the New South Wales Government commit to continuing the program in its entirety for the 2025-26 financial year?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: You know the answer to this question, which is that that is a decision entirely for Government.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Indeed. One of those great events is Ramadan night markets. Due to its immense popularity, the twenty-fourth markets ended up costing Canterbury council \$3 million, which is more than \$1 million over budget. Council considers this to be unsustainable. Is this of concern to Multicultural NSW?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: The assertion in your question is 50 per cent correct. Ramadan nights will happen this financial year. There are discussions at the moment—I don't think a formal announcement has been made—already between my office and Canterbury-Bankstown Council, with draft agreements being prepared for this year's Ramadan night markets.

The Hon. WES FANG: You can tell how kind he is. I would have said you were 50 per cent wrong.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I don't actually think I had it half wrong, which he suggested I had in that question. It was just about whether it was of concern. Council has stated that they wish to seek to approach the New South Wales Government to seek additional funding for the event. Has this occurred?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes, they have. But we don't have parameters in this financial year to give them additional funding. My understanding is, in discussions with their executive leadership, that they are very grateful for the support that Multicultural NSW will provide in this 2024-2025 calendar year.

The Hon. WES FANG: When you say "parameters", what do you mean?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: The specifics of the funding that the agency will partner with them on.

The Hon. WES FANG: You mean dollars. Right?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Correct.

The Hon. WES FANG: Just checking.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I can't tell you what they are yet because that hasn't been publicly announced.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Watch this space. Is that it?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I think there's some exciting news to come, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you very much. One of the changes that the council did outline in its 22 October 2024 meeting was reducing the numbers of days, firstly, from seven nights a week to four and changing the cost for stallholders from paying businesses \$6,000 to rent out a space for the whole month to now paying council \$600 a night. Are those changes something that you've discussed with Canterbury-Bankstown Council? Will they form part of any of the funding agreements?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Not really. It is really matter for them. I think, in fairness to the council, when they started putting on the Ramadan nights festival, they never envisaged that it would become the festival that it is today, where it—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: This big and popular, yes.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It brings in tourists from right across the country. Particularly, it's a great exposure for a lot of—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Wes has even come in from Wagga for it.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: That's very good, Mr Fang. I look forward to seeing you there. You can come and see the Multicultural store. We will give you some information that's there on the night.

The Hon. WES FANG: Great. Sounds good.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: But, Mr Farlow, I don't think they ever envisaged that it would get as big as it has. These decisions are largely operational decisions for the councillors and the council themselves. We don't necessarily have a view. We're just pleased they've been able to come up with a format that they think works and that they believe is palatable, by and large, to their community.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, this is, I guess, one of the challenges, isn't it: You have successful events in the multicultural space, they grow, they exceed even the extent of the funding that can be provided under the Multicultural NSW grants program, they become citywide events. Is there a need for, perhaps, a different sort of funding stream for some of these very large events—and I think of Ramadan nights for instance or maybe even the Tet Festival or the like—where they become very big cultural events for all of Sydney, not just one council area?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I think, regardless of whatever side of government you're on at the time, your intention is to provide seed funding to support these events, to help them. Ideally, you'd like to see them become self-sufficient, where they either get commercial partnership or sponsorship or opportunities to do these things. I think the challenges—and I can't remember if Mr Walker or Mr McLachlan said before around the cost escalation to valuations. We've seen cost escalations in almost every facet of our—things like traffic management, things like food and beverage, things like safety and security. All of these costs have escalated considerably. So the government funding can't necessarily keep pace with the cost escalations that are out there. Hopefully, councils can make modifications to these festivals and put them on in a more sustainable way or, potentially, attract corporate sponsorship and partnership.

A really good example is the Fusion festival down in Wagga, where they get Riverina Water to partner with them because of the size of that festival. It's an inclusive festival that Riverina Water has historically used as an opportunity to build brand and awareness and understanding to a different subset of the community they wouldn't normally talk to. I think that is a wonderful example where commercial and other entities can come in and partner with councils to deliver these festivals. Am I proud that we continue to give funding? Absolutely.

Nearly one in three people in New South Wales is exposed to a Multicultural NSW event every year. Ramadan nights is a critical part of that. We're very proud of the festival.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you, Mr La Posta. Translation services—we've had a bit of discussion on this so far. Have you ever checked Multicultural NSW's rating on Google?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I have not.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Let me inform you. Unfortunately, it's not too great. What do you think it'd be on a—

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Are any of our ratings great on Google, Mr Farlow? If we looked at our own personal—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I don't know. I dare not look at mine, but anyway, Mr La Posta, what do you think it might be out of a scale of one to five stars?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I'd need to be guided by you, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It is 1.9, unfortunately.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Opportunity for improvement.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Indeed. I'm going to read some quotes directly from Multicultural NSW's Google reviews.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Can you table this, Mr Farlow?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'm happy to do that. This is a—

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Through you, Chair. Don't let him just randomly read out quotes that none of us have seen. Can Mr Farlow please table the document, Chair.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I can extract—

The Hon. WES FANG: Have you got Google?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I'm not getting on Google.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Once I've read it, I will happily table it. One review three weeks ago, from Perle Vinai—one star—is: "It's a total rip off. I paid almost \$300 for a single page document translated just to get my NSW driver license. The know we do not have another option but to contract with their service; hence service is way too overpriced. Shame on this government org!" Another one, which was one week ago—I don't have the individual's name—says: "No one can solve problems and they try to push tasks to each other." Also a one-star rating. Do these customer experiences with Multicultural NSW's translation services concern you?

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Point of order: I take that it's been read from the computer or the tablet or the phone or whatever the case may be. But there needs to be a validation that these are actual, genuine comments from human beings and not robots or bots or whatever the case.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Disgruntled staff.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Artificial intelligence or whatever.

The Hon. WES FANG: Do you have a few of those, Mr La Posta? Do you want to tell us about it?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: We have outstanding engagement scores—80 per cent. Some of the best in the public service. Thank you for asking, Mr Fang.

The Hon. WES FANG: I just want to check. What's your people—

The CHAIR: Order! Mr Fang, Mr La Posta.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I just think the question is out of order. Bowling up something like that—no notice, no proof and the establishment of its bona fides and its actually being a human being making that comment, a bona fide, actual, real, living human being post it—I think it is out of order to ask the question.

The Hon. WES FANG: To the point of order: Clearly, the reviews are online. The bona fides, as Mr Donnelly indicates—that's not for us to determine. Ultimately, Mr Farlow is putting the question to Mr La Posta. Mr La Posta can answer the question any way he sees fit. If he wants to blame disgruntled staff or he feels that perhaps his services are overpriced and he's going to reduce them, that's—Mr La Posta can answer the

question any which way he likes. But, certainly, it's within the right of the Hon. Scott Farlow to put the question to Mr La Posta.

The CHAIR: What a great point of order to rule on at quarter to five in the afternoon. I appreciate what you are saying, Mr Donnelly. I don't know how Mr Farlow or anyone, for that matter, would be able to verify whether it was done by human, AI or just someone randomly wanting to stir up trouble. But I do suspect that Mr La Posta would be able to handle this question with the grace and poise that he handles all questions put to him.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: Or take it on notice.

The CHAIR: Or take it on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, without going through each and every one of the reviews, the tenor is not good on there. I'm looking at them at the moment. Mr Donnelly may be able to assist me in verifying that each of these people are real people. But let's take it that they are. You can probably verify through maybe who you provided services to on Google reviews, but are some of these comments and these criticisms from users of your service of concern to you?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Of course. Feedback is a gift. So I'm not going to walk away from—if there is people that are disgruntled or dissatisfied with the level of service or the price of service, I'm happy to look at it. Three hundred dollars feels high, to be honest. Also, a lot of the translations, if they are talking about those specifics—and I don't know the exact date, because you haven't tabled the document that we're referring to, so we're almost having a hypothetical conversation—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: To be fair, I am happy to email you. But you can look at it on Google.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: But the point that I am making is that is really a point of service for Service NSW because they would have commissioned that document through Service NSW. It would have just been our translator that would have provided the translations for the Service NSW document. Happy to look at that. If there is a theme or a pattern to any of those, happy to work with colleagues across whatever the part of government is and take the specifics on notice.

Can I also just say, Mr Farlow, as a genuine tenor, unfortunately, the majority of—and we are all accountable to this—posts that we put up online are positive posts about, fundamentally, your communities that attract a lot of negative criticism just because we have "multicultural" in our name. So I think the genuine tenor of the discussion around immigration and migration and multiculturalism is all of our collective responsibility, because the number of times that our social media teams are exposed to probably unfair and harsh comments that are completely unrelated to our purview is problematic. So, if you were to look at that in terms of a—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, to be fair—and I would invite you to look at these Google reviews. Perle Vinai, Kia Mehr, Eri Kohgo, Denni—I have to say, most of these comments look like they are coming from users of the service. They often have specific—

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If I can just put the question. They often have specific comments about the service, largely regarding translation services. Don't you think that is of concern?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: We don't have a shopfront for translation services. All of our translation services are done through Service NSW, but I'm happy to take the question on notice and come back to you with a more substantial answer.

The Hon. WES FANG: Does Service NSW put a margin on top of the fee that you charge?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: In terms of the exact business modelling on that, Mr Fang, I'm happy to look at that as well.

The Hon. WES FANG: Is that potentially something that's occurring?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: It's largely a cost recovery model. You're not looking to profit off someone trying to get a birth certificate, a wedding certificate, a death certificate or any of those things. It's largely a cost recovery model. Depending on the complexities of the language and also the length of the document, we'll guide the costs associated with it. It might be very straightforward for some certificates because they're easily transferable and those sorts of things. It might be more complicated for other documents because of the length of the document. But I'm happy to take the premise of the question on notice.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: Point of order: Without wanting to have pressed my case—because there was an exchange there and clearly Mr La Posta had some things to say—I do think that we should be very careful, following on from the point of order from Mr Donnelly. Mr Farlow, I don't think it's enough to go through and suggest that something is verifiable or reputable because of the first name that someone has decided to post on a Google review. I just want to make sure that within—separate to Mr La Posta's excellent answers and to the genuine tone of your questions, I do think we need to be careful here about the type of thing that we're admitting, potentially, as evidence and how we're presenting it. A first-name reference—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: To the point of order: I will say that Mr La Posta and I have a lot of exchanges, and I have a lot of respect for Mr La Posta and have had for a very long time.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINÉ: I can see that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But this is obviously criticism that has come from users of the service, I would suggest. I think it is an unfair characterisation to say it is because it has "multicultural" in the title of it, and I would just invite Mr La Posta to have a look at some of the feedback. I do take his point that feedback is a gift. In this regard, it's something that can be looked at with the best tenor of ensuring that we have the best customer service for the people of New South Wales.

The Hon. WES FANG: To the point of order: To the submission that ultimately in the same way, Dr Kaine, you suggest that it's unverifiable and therefore we should ignore it, I would say that these are contributions that are made that provide a tenor, as we've indicated previously, and a level of feedback that we are rightfully allowed to put to Mr La Posta around whether he believes that these services fees are too high. I think it's entirely relevant and entirely appropriate to put the question, and Mr Farlow did so in an appropriate way.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Can I just provide two quick updates? No margins on the service. The second thing: The service rating we use, which isn't necessarily one-star reviews on Google, albeit I've taken it on notice, is that 97 per cent customer satisfaction rating through Service NSW when we ask for feedback on the service through the formal channels.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you, Mr La Posta.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Also, \$80 for a licence and \$105 for an urgent licence. So I'm not sure where the \$300 comes from, and that probably echoes Mr Donnelly's point before around giving too much credibility to ad hoc posts online.

The CHAIR: I don't think it's a case of me ruling one way or the other on the point of order, but I think it does raise an interesting point—which, maybe, the Procedure Committee or the chairs of Committee might want to consider in the future—if submissions are given by members, as to how evidence can be presented or tabled or what sort of evidence can be presented or tabled and what would be considered reasonable for a witness to be able to answer. That might be something if people are so motivated they might want to look into. But at the moment, there is nothing that precludes those sorts of questions. Mr Farlow, you have the call.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr La Posta, on 10 October 2024 the Minister announced \$7½ million for the new Multilingual NSW Academy. How many people are enrolled in the academy?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Bear with me. Sorry, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That's all right.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I'm happy to take the specifics on notice, but I know I did ask for that to be a part of the briefing.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: That's fine. You can take that on notice. While you're taking that on notice and any other specifics, are you able to take on notice as well the languages that are available for the academy?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Sure.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And if there are any plans to expand the number of languages that are offered by the academy.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes. As per my answer to Mr Banasiak before, it's not just about bringing new interpreters into the academy. It's also about upskilling the qualifications of existing interpreters so that they can broaden the breadth of work that they can do as well.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you. I'll put these questions on notice, but you may be able to assist me as to whether they're best to put on notice to you or to Small Business. With respect to Service NSW's Business Bureau's free in-language support, is that something that is being supplied by Multicultural NSW?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Can I take that on notice? I would be surprised if it's not.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'll put the questions on notice to the Minister, and they can be directed by whoever.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Easy. Sure.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With regard to the Remove Hate From The Debate and the NSW Settlement Strategy, at the last budget estimates we discussed the Remove Hate From The Debate program.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: At that stage, you advised that Multicultural NSW was awaiting the Commonwealth's input and that the aim was to have this completed by October 2024. Has this now been completed?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes—has it been hard-launched? I'm being advised. There has been a summit that was held in regional New South Wales at the end of last year that, through the COMPACT Program, was market tested—so the COMPACT Program that has now engaged 80,000 young people throughout New South Wales. The premise, the tips, the tools and all of those things was market tested with that group in late December and will go live soon, incorporating their feedback, as part of the public campaign.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you. In an answer to questions on notice last year, the Committee was advised that \$800,000 has been committed to the renewal of this program. Is Multicultural NSW looking to seek an increase on the commitment in the next budget?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: I can take the specifics of that on notice, as to whether it's part of our programmatic budget bid.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Has an evaluation been completed on the quantitative metrics of things like social media reach and the qualitative metrics for the development of critical thinking skills?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: There are evaluations that are happening concurrently around the COMPACT Program and also this campaign, but I'll need to take the specifics of that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Who conducted that evaluation?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Again, I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you very much. In last budget estimates, we asked how many objectives in the NSW Settlement Strategy had completion dates between April and June that had been completed on time. The answer to the question taken on notice was that:

Multicultural NSW completed all of its designated actions due by June 2024, with the exception of some initiatives which are now continuing due to securing longer-term funding.

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: As that answer would invite, what are those initiatives which are continuing?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: Thank you for the question. We expected interest in the strategy, noting your good line of questioning at the back of late last year. The NSW Settlement Strategy was launched in February 2023, with revision 1 published in February 2024. The strategy will be updated regularly to ensure it is responsive to both the needs of refugees in New South Wales as well as changes in New South Wales and Commonwealth policy. Multicultural NSW is currently in the process of once again updating the strategy. It's a living document, in a sense, because of the levers and the policy changes and so forth that sit around this, and also machinery-of-government changes and other things that have happened, where responsibilities have moved within the New South Wales Government, following the completion of the strategy's process evaluation in the latter part of last year.

Once the process evaluation was completed, we worked with departments and agencies to use the findings of that process evaluation to inform their individual reporting requirements, based on their respective actions. We are just working with one final department to provide their information we are concurrently reviewing, and once this is done, revision 2 of the strategy will then be released. As evidenced in the process evaluation, significant progress has been made on the 89 strategic actions. Updates on the status of individual actions will be

included in the revision 2 update. Over 80 per cent of the actions are currently underway. Important to note is that many of the actions in the strategy can be considered ongoing actions, rather than time-limited. Therefore, it would be hard for me to say that they have been completed, in a sense. Additionally, some actions have received additional funding, meaning they are continuing beyond their original date. The action plan will be updated in the upcoming revision to more accurately reflect the nature of these actions and the progress. I can talk to you more about monitoring and evaluation, but I don't think that really relates to your question.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was any additional funding required in order to continue these operations?

JOSEPH LA POSTA: There are some challenges at the moment with Commonwealth legislation around refugee and refugee-like cohorts. There are revisions underway in the Commonwealth at the moment in terms of how they classify the supports they provide to temporary visa holders and asylum seeker holders. That has a ramification on the strategy because the strategy isn't just limited to refugees as defined by the humanitarian program; it also looks at those that have refugee-like experiences as well. I'm not trying to shirk the question, but it's not a binary black-or-white question.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I think that's all I have for you this afternoon. There is a slight early mark if you wish, or you can stick in to the end. It's up to you.

The CHAIR: Feel free to go, Mr La Posta, if you wish.

(Joseph La Posta withdrew.)

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: I advise Mr Fang that I got the information on my number of staff in Wagga. I have 19 staff in Wagga, predominantly Crown Lands. You asked in the right business area. I'm sure they would enjoy a visit.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'm sure he will be down there after he is finished in Port Macquarie and Drummoyne.

The Hon. WES FANG: Port Macquarie, predominantly.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr Walker, I mentioned to the Minister 301 Samantha Riley Drive in Kellyville and any development constraints that exist on that site. Do you have any further information with respect to that?

LEON WALKER: Yes, let me find it again. I think you asked about this last time we met.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Maybe. I'm sure there were different questions I asked about that site, but yes.

LEON WALKER: I'm sure there were, but it was about the site. Only a portion of the site is developable and it requires subdivision. It is one title at the moment, I understand, so it needs to be subdivided from the bulk of the site.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you done any assessments in terms of the flood maps that are overlaid across that area?

LEON WALKER: I will take it on notice. I do recall from the last time that only a portion of the site is subject to inundation. My recollection is that it does remain a developable portion of land.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Could you outline for us what you think that developable portion of the land is with respect to the flooding issues that surround the site and if any of that site has been identified previously as trunk drainage land by Sydney Water?

LEON WALKER: I can do that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: At the moment, is that site being led by Homes NSW?

LEON WALKER: Yes. According to my notes, that's correct.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I wouldn't expect you necessarily to know, but are you involved in the process of finding a private sector partner in terms of the development at all?

LEON WALKER: That would be Homes NSW.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Homes NSW is fully responsible for that.

LEON WALKER: That would be a good question for Mr Jackson.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It would be. With respect to the land audit and the sites that have been identified by the land audit, how much money has been spent by your department with respect to legal fees to transfer properties from the land audit to new departments to have housing built on them?

LEON WALKER: It's probably zero because we won't be spending money on transfers. The legal transfers happen between the applicable agencies.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Property and Development NSW isn't involved; it's the original owner of the land that would be?

LEON WALKER: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Your role is just in the identification rather than any of the transactions?

LEON WALKER: That's right. To the extent that Property and Development NSW is the landowner, we will be incurring costs for those particular sites.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to some of the precincts and revitalisations that are being undertaken by Property and Development NSW and the Dubbo Workplace Hub development, the original plan was for construction to start in mid-2023 and be completed by late 2024. I believe that completion date has now been revised to 2026. Is that correct?

LEON WALKER: Let me just confirm. That sounds right. I am pleased to say that we are hoping, as soon as this month, to have the development approval granted by the council. They have already approved the refurbishment and some improvements to the heritage building that adjoins the main building. Yes, we are very hopeful that within the next two to three weeks we should be able to confirm that we're starting on that project.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The original budget for that project was \$48 million. What does it stand at today?

LEON WALKER: The budget hasn't changed. The budget remains unchanged.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: The budget is still \$48 million?

LEON WALKER: Sorry, no. The budget is \$58.6 million.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What has driven that change from the original \$48 million?

LEON WALKER: The initial cost assessment for that project was done pre-COVID. As has been discussed at a number of these forums over the last few years, costs escalated quite materially. You might recall when asking questions on this project previously that we did previously tender this project and the costs came in far and away in excess of the available budget. The scheme has been re-scoped and so that is what is going through the development approval process at the moment, and also the budget reset. That is the \$58.6 million.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Does that development approval include both the development application for Brisbane Street and also Carrington Avenue?

LEON WALKER: Yes, we have Brisbane Street and we are hoping for Carrington Avenue shortly.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But you are expecting both? The Carrington one is to be approved this month and you have already got the approval on Brisbane Street. It's indicated that, as part of it, the local tradespeople and businesses will be prioritised for contracts. Is that something the Government is still pursuing? What steps are you taking to ensure that that is part of this redevelopment?

LEON WALKER: I'll have to take on notice what our specific requirements are in the contract. But we do always make a point of making sure there are minimum requirements in respect of local spend and engagement of Aboriginal businesses, suppliers and labour. We usually have gender requirements as well. I'll take that on notice and confirm with you.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'll move a little closer to where we are, to the Macquarie Street East Precinct redevelopment. This is a 30-year vision. What are the firm timelines now for the delivery of each stage for Macquarie Street East?

LEON WALKER: You can probably see it from walking past it, but the removal of the north annex and the records wing has essentially been complete. We are in the process of starting works for a meanwhile use, which is for commercial office use of the RGB. The works to the courtyard or the plaza at the back of that building are essentially complete and we are working closely with the—is it the Museums of History?

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Yes, that's correct.

LEON WALKER: We are working with the adjoining owner in respect to access to and through that precinct and security requirements. The only other live or active project in that precinct is the work we are doing in partnership with the State Library of NSW in respect to the forecourt.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Shakespeare Place.

LEON WALKER: Shakespeare Place, yes. There is a development application in with the City of Sydney at the moment which, again, we are hopeful of getting a positive response on in the next weeks or months.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: With respect to the other forecourt you were talking about, is that still retaining the title of Queen Elizabeth II Place?

LEON WALKER: We are seeking funding for the embellishment of that space. There's no funding at the moment to improve it beyond its current state or condition. I would have to take it on notice in terms of the work the team has done in terms of formalising the name and the acknowledgement of Her Majesty, because that's obviously controlled by the royal family. I can take that on notice and come back to you.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Has any communication been had with Buckingham Palace as to the use of the name or the design of the place?

LEON WALKER: Yes, but I'll take it on notice and confirm.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: What's the total budget now in terms of the Macquarie Street East Precinct?

LEON WALKER: Can I take that on notice, please?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Yes. Also could you take on notice the exact funding, which I think you've already done but there is no additional, specifically for the development of Queen Elizabeth II Place.

LEON WALKER: You might recall, when that was announced, the former Premier and the Prime Minister—it was a joint announcement and so part of the work that we're doing is corresponding with the Commonwealth to see if they can contribute to the project.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: While the Commonwealth were part of the announcement, they haven't made any funding contribution?

LEON WALKER: No, not at this point.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Are you doing any work with respect to the traffic and transport considerations into the realignment of Sir John Young Crescent and Hospital Road?

LEON WALKER: No. That might be a question for—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Transport?

LEON WALKER: Can we just take it on notice? I just need to find the right person to respond to you on that one. It's not our work.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I appreciate that. To go to Coffs Harbour—and we've had some discussion already about the jetty and the precinct—the Government has committed to a 20-year shared community vision. What are the firm timelines for this project?

LEON WALKER: As we discussed earlier, the entire focus at the moment is finalising the planning proposal that can be considered by a State-assessed process. That needs to be approved by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. We're just in the process—Property and Development NSW—of finalising the expert reports that need to be lodged to support that application.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I don't know if you're responsible for this, Mr Walker. I might have missed my opportunity, perhaps. But, with respect to the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act review—

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: That is Mr Walker.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Can you confirm the scope of the review and what specific issues the Government is seeking to address within the review?

LEON WALKER: A discussion paper with the themes for consideration was published and was subject to public consultation up to 3 May last year. Following that the department is focused on developing

recommendations for the Government to consider later this year. It's covering negotiation efforts, shortened periods for consideration, support for landowners, respect and sensitivity, dealing with clear communication, fairness of the valuation process, the provision of comprehensive compensation information, time for decision-making and relocations, and additional support services.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have any recommendations been submitted to the New South Wales Government for consideration?

LEON WALKER: Not formally at this point.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Not yet.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: When are you expecting that a draft report will be released for public consultation?

LEON WALKER: I can't say, because that is a matter for the Government to determine.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So you don't have any indicative time frame—like by 2025?

LEON WALKER: My project team is working to have the work completed shortly. As to when the Government determines it, I can't dictate that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Back to the land audit, I know that we've gone through whether the land audit is ever complete really. But, as of today, how many total sites have been identified by the land audit as suitable for housing development?

LEON WALKER: Fifty-six.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How many sites have been assessed by the department?

LEON WALKER: As at 28 January—so not today—it was 9,089.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I think we can probably leave it there. I think everything else we can put on notice.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: Chair, can I just round out with a little bit of information from one of the questions that you asked?

The CHAIR: Yes.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: We don't have all of it, but just so we've given you what we've got—it's in relation to the Tilligerry Creek Oyster Farm Road. As you identified, there was a recent determination with 10.69 hectares of claimable land. Consultation with stakeholders was completed. The area granted does not adjoin the waterway and does not limit access to the water. Access to the water can still be obtained via Oyster Farm Road and via Daniel Crescent. I know you've asked a few more questions there, but I think that covers off the thrust of your query.

The CHAIR: Thank you for that. I am looking to the Government if there are any questions.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: No, Chair.

The CHAIR: If there is nothing else that you wanted to clear the decks on in terms of things on notice, we can call it a day.

KIERSTEN FISHBURN: No, I just wanted to thank the Committee for their courtesy to my staff and my colleagues. It is always appreciated. We do enjoy the opportunity to show some of the excellent work that is occurring in both my department and across government, so thank you.

The CHAIR: That concludes today's hearing. The secretariat will be in touch, Ms Fishburn, in terms of other questions on notice. Thank you for your time.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.