



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

REPORT

Tuesday 25 May 2015

Wednesday 26 May 2015

Thursday 27 May 2015

Tuesday 2 June 2015

Wednesday 3 June 2015

The Estimates Committee examined the estimates of proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2015-2016. Questions were raised by Members on the following issues:

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPA Twinning Program• Upgrade of telecommunications in Member for Nelson's Office• Parliamentary Committees
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future economic growth of NT• INPEX project• Infrastructure expenditure associated with sale of TIO• Motor Accident Compensation Authority• GST projections• Budget savings and return to surplus• Private sector investment in the NT• Funding for Palmerston hospital• Population growth and migration trends• NT retail trade growth• Motor vehicle sales in the NT• Advertising and communications costs• Electricity Market Reform• Staffing numbers and levels• Ministerial and departmental travel costs• Membership and remuneration of Superannuation board and Utilities Commission• Government fees and charges• Departmental inquiries and audits• Ex gratia payments• Asset recycling• Misuse of payroll tax exemptions by businesses

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property tax and other duties • Royalty payments • Utilities Commission NT costs re Electricity Market Reform
Lands and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy costs • Membership and remuneration of lands and planning boards • Community Consultation re land development projects • Planning applications approved by Minister that were not supported by the reporting body • Spot rezoning reforms • Status of existing area plans • Protection of natural environment in planning schemes • Advertising of development and redevelopment proposals • Social issues arising from high density planning proposals • Draft Holtze area plan • Status of Darwin regional land use plan • Heritage listing application process
Mines and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rum Jungle rehabilitation project • Future of mining industry in the NT • CORE grants scheme • Indigenous employment in mining sector • Grants to mining companies • Departmental travel and associated costs • Approval process re Blue Metal Quarry at Darwin River • Revenue from mining rehabilitation levy and mining remediation fund • Rehabilitation of legacy mines • Backlog of petroleum exploration permits • Oil and gas exclusion zones in Katherine region • Development of best practice regulatory regime for onshore oil and gas exploration • Hydraulic fracturing in the NT • Contamination from onshore oil and gas exploration • Construction of gas pipeline
Chief Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing and resources of Auditor-General's office • Recovery of cost arrangements • Audits of overseas travel • Use of credit and purchasing cards • Audit of Central Australian Health Service • Breaches of Public Information Act • Staffing and resources of Electoral Commission • Disclosure of political donations • Foundation 51 • Redistribution of electoral boundaries • Use of interpreters • Roll maintenance and reviews

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy, advertising and communications costs • Travel costs • Customer satisfaction surveys by Ombudsman's Office • Resource implications of Police investigations • Consultancy and legal costs • Increase in expenditure of Department of Chief Minister • Increase in staffing • Inquiry into departmental travel • CLP election commitments • Pre-election community contracts • Departmental travel costs • Regional sittings of Parliament • Rebuilding following Cyclones Lam and Nathan • Aboriginal land tenure issues • Ministerial travel • Darwin Port Corporation • Staffing levels at the Port of Darwin • Privatisation of Port of Darwin • Darwin Port Corporation consultancy costs
<p>Economic Development and Major Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing and resourcing of the Coordinator General's office. • Kilgarri Development • Land development projects on the Tiwi Islands • Proposed gas pipeline • Palmerston hospital
<p>Indigenous Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing and resources of Office of Aboriginal Affairs • National Partnership Agreements • Indigenous economic development • Community Champions program • First Circles program • Coordination of Government services to Indigenous communities • Policy development regarding remote contracts • Aboriginal Affairs grants management program
<p>Primary Industry and Fisheries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLP election commitments • Consultancy costs • Staffing numbers and classifications • Number of research and field staff • Departmental and Ministerial travel • Developing the North projects • Indigenous ranger programs • Departmental credit card purchases • Membership and remuneration of boards • Diversification on pastoral leases • Biosecurity issues • Mango root stock trials in central Australia • Intensive agriculture production systems • Horticulture developments of native plants • Research and cost-benefit analysis of hay and stock

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<p>fodder crop production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural development on Tiwi Islands • Food industry development • Poppy industry • Horticulture development projects in Central Australia • Live export trade and animal welfare • Ord stage three • Banana Freckle eradication program • Banana sentinel program • Research into Panama disease resistant bananas • Budget for biosecurity programs and initiatives • Animal welfare prosecutions • Animal management in remote communities • Wild dog control • Aquaculture projects • Blue Mud Bay negotiations • Upgrade works at Shady Camp • Fisheries management • Artificial reefs • Fishing restrictions
<p>Land Resource Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrology mapping • Rangelands monitoring unit and Pastoral lands board • Increases in staffing • Feral animal management strategy • Cane toad control and eradication programs • Donkey control programs • Marine mega fauna program • Grants for weed control management • Invasive weeds management • Gamba grass control program • Addressing inappropriate land management practices • Staff dedicated to water resources • Water resource allocation • Water Advisory Committees • Strategic Indigenous water reserve • Alice Springs water allocation plan • Sustainability of NT aquifers
<p>Public Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territory Generation and Jacana Energy EBA • NTPS Employee Survey • Transition to Retirement policy • Indigenous Employment policy • Mentoring programs within the public sector • Future leaders program • Stress in the workplace • Bullying and workplace harassment
<p>Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Tape Abolition Squad – staffing and initiatives • CLP election commitments • Staffing levels, resignations and redundancies • Departmental travel

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit card transactions • Advertising and communications costs • Consultancy costs • Financial audits and investigations completed • Legal services provided by private legal firms • Ex-gratia payments made • US military investment • Industry development programs • NT workforce attraction program • Decline in retail trade and motor vehicle sales in the NT • Construction in the NT post INPEX • Staffing of NT WorkSafe • Numbers of NT WorkSafe inspectors • Number of NT WorkSafe investigations 2014-15 • Education programs for high risk industries • Workplace health and safety compliance • Membership and remuneration of workplace health and safety advisory council
Asian Engagement and Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Support Scheme • Stakeholder satisfaction surveys • Dismissal of Asian Engagement Commissioner • Outcomes of trade missions • Investment opportunities in the NT
Employment and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous apprenticeships and trainees • Regional industry and funding of registered training organisations • Adult apprenticeship and trainee completion rates • Funding to Charles Darwin University • VET training in regional centres • Quick response grants
Racing, Gaming and Licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol management plans • Number of licensed premises in the NT • Take-away licenses • Sunday trading • Number of poker machines in the NT • Problem gambling programs
Corporate and Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile coverage and broadband in remote communities • Replacement of asset management system with shareware system • ICT oversight policy • Corporate capacity in Alice Springs • Procurement tender numbers • Property leases • Forecast increase in transactions • Budget decrease in data centre services • ICT backup facilities • Refresh of critical mainframe infrastructure
Multicultural Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014-15 Multicultural Affairs sponsorship program • Staffing

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
Young Territorians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Activity Centre • Funding for youth services • Participation rates for National Youth Week
Attorney-General and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing increases • Funding for legal services • Funding for Parliamentary Counsel • Increase in Domestic Violence cases • Outsourcing of legal services • Incidences of overcharging for legal services • Victims of Crime funding • Funding for lower courts and tribunals • Purpose built Youth Court • New supreme court Alice Springs • Community Justice • Fines Recovery Unit • Public Interest Disclosures • Investigation into former Police Commissioner • Consultancy costs • Publicising role of Information and Public Disclosures Commission • Domestic Violence Directorate • Crime statistics
Children and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection staffing and recruitment difficulties • Parental responsibility for children • Number and management of child protection caseloads • Number of investigations and substantiations • Impact of misleading media reporting • Family Intervention Framework • Development of mandatory reporting guide • Review of Care and Protection of Children Act • Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder • Completion of investigations arising from notifications • Departmental travel • Costs for outsourced legal services • Funding of Safe Houses • Recommendations from coronial inquiries • Foster Care • Residential care service providers • Capacity to deal with increase in number of complaints to Office of the Children's Commissioner • Interagency cooperation regarding protection of children
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palmerston Regional Hospital • Implications of Federal funding on NT services • Pensioner concessions • Alcohol mandatory treatment system • Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder • Methamphetamines • National disability insurance scheme

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing dedicated to disability service provision • Disability service delivery in the bush • Mental health budget • Suicide Prevention Coordination Committee • Upgrade of emergency department Gove hospital • Increase in complaints to Health and Community Services Commission • Staffing levels • Complaints from prisoners
<p>Local Government and Community Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deloitte report on sustainability of local government • Budget allocation for remote infrastructure coordination • Budget for local government • Cyclone Lam reconstruction • Homelands and outstations funding • National Partnership Agreements • Provision of municipal services • Departmental advertising costs • Costs of tenders and consultancies • Membership and remuneration of boards and committees • Costs of legal services • Indigenous Essential Services • Status of Ali Curung water treatment plant • Land tenure arrangements • Capital works funding for homelands • Homelands Extra Program • Review of service delivery to homelands and outstations • Homelands and outstations no longer funded in budget • Abandoned outstations • Homelands repairs and maintenance program • Town camp issues in Elliot • Insurance provisions for housing in Homelands • Indigenous jobs matching program in regional councils • Special purpose grants provided to regional councils • Local government boundaries • Responsibility for cemeteries
<p>Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uptake on remote home loan scheme • Affordable housing strategy • Funding cuts to National Partnership Agreement on remote housing • Public housing wait times • Staffing • Departmental and ministerial travel • New social housing dwellings • Programs to address homelessness and disadvantaged groups • Redevelopment of Kurringal flats • Remote indigenous housing rent collections

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban and remote public housing numbers • Public housing vacancy numbers and turnaround times • Number of evictions from public housing
Parks and Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casuarina Coastal Reserve Management Plan • Strategies to address erosion • Residential development of Lee Point • Proximity of Free Beach to residential development • Number of mining, oil and gas exploration permits in parks and reserves • Ministerial travel paid for by agency • Parks and wildlife asbestos removal program
Statehood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministerial responsibilities and Government position on Statehood • Timetable for achieving Statehood • Current activities to progress Statehood
Police, Fire and Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown of staffing including temporary contracts, vacancy rates and costs • Repairs and maintenance budget • Renewal Management Board recommendations • Chaplaincy Services • Departmental and Ministerial travel • Election commitment re Nightcliff Police Station • Hospitality expenditure • Corporate credit cards • Fees, charges and revenue raised • Financial audit investigations conducted in 14/15 • Temporary Beat Locations • Cost of legal services provided to agency • Safe street audits • Trial of Segways • Number of alcohol related 000 calls • Timeframe for answering and responding to 000 calls • Current investigations associated with pensioner concession travel scheme • MOU between the NT Police Service and the Australian Federal Police • Firefighters EBA • Recruitment of emergency services volunteers
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Reductions in teaching staff • Departmental and Ministerial travel • Teachers EBA • Strategy to increase school autonomy • Global school budgets • School attendance data • Impact of Yellow Shirts on attendance numbers • Loss of middle school/senior year subjects • Progress on changes to the Education Act • School fees

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Grammar School project • Indigenous education strategy and expenditure on roll-out of direct instruction program • FASD recommendations for Department of Education • Nhulunbuy boarding school • Consultation with Yothu Yindi Foundation • Boarding school retention rates • Commonwealth funding for early years education
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancies • Staffing • Corporate credit cards • Maritime industry review • Taxi licence numbers • Taxi industry consultation re possible commencement of Uber service in Darwin • Bus ticketing system • Privatisation of bus service • Costs of reviews associated with open speed limit trial • Vehicle inspection online booking system • Roper Highway construction works • Vessel movements Darwin harbour • Transfer of Harbourmaster to Department of Transport • Update of Harbourmaster activity in the reporting period
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revoted projects and costs • Tiger Brennan duplication project • Cost of head works Palmerston Regional Hospital • Expenditure on Program Support • Tendering process to assist small and medium sized operators • Increase in corporate and governance budget • Works undertaken by overseas or interstate contractors • Indigenous training and employment opportunities • Value of outsourced works 2014-15 • Departmental travel • Asset maintenance
Sport and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress on CLP election commitments • Advertising and communications costs • Consultancies undertaken • Staffing • Departmental and Ministerial travel • Departmental credit cards • Remuneration of advisory board members • Hospitality expenditure • Scholarship arrangements • Grants programs • Learn to Swim voucher • Uptake of sports vouchers • Indigenous sports programs • Support for Barunga Festival sporting activities

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in sports programs • Funding of Richardson Park • Michael Long Centre • 'Active Remote Communities' grants • Alice Springs Masters Games • Arafura Games
Arts and Museums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuts to Arts funding • Upgrade of Chan Contemporary Arts Space • Media and communications costs • Staffing • Budget allocation for scientific and cultural collections • Curatorial staffing • Museums repairs and maintenance budget • Cost to repair museum air-conditioning • Findings of Auditor-General's report • Historical heritage and preservation of sites program • Review of Arts grants program • Budget for Museums and Art Gallery NT Board • Collaborative public library funding agreement • Arts and Screens Sector funding
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online approval and licence application system • Addressing incidences of marine pollution • Importance of mangroves to health of Darwin Harbour • Guidelines for developers re notices of intent • Requirements for Environmental Impact Statements • Darwin Harbour storm water strategy • Importance of Pollution Hotline • Container deposit legislation • Container return rates • Progress on CLP election commitments • Staff with water management qualifications • Environment grants • Review of Environmental Assessment Act • Development of Port Melville and EPA concerns with notice of intent • EIS bilateral agreement • Marine pollution remediation • Western Desert loader issues at Bing Bong Port • EPA's role re sulphur dioxide emissions at McArthur River mine site • Red Bank mine • Review of Waste Management Pollution Act • Noise pollution • EPA compliance activities • Compliance training and support provided to EPA investigators • Pollution issues around Buffalo Creek • Monitoring of remote sewerage ponds • Management of asbestos

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental management issues re AACO waste water discharge • EPA communication and engagement strategies directed at remote communities



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CHAIR