

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Higgins to the Chief Minister:

Questions received from the public for Estimates Committee

1. Please provide all original questions in their unedited form, from members of the public in response to the Government's announcement inviting the public to submit questions to the Estimates Committee on 7 June 2017 to cob 21 June 2017.

ANSWER

How much funding is being allocated to community consultation with sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse* Northern Territorians in relation to the NT Department of Health Core Clinical Systems Renewal Program to ensure that appropriate and accurate data is collected on the NT population that is sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse?

What percentage of the funding for **suicide prevention** in the 2017 budget is being allocated to suicide prevention in **remote** communities for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

What percentage of the funding for **suicide prevention** in the 2017 budget is being allocated to suicide prevention in **urban or regional** communities for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse?

What percentage of the funding for **mental health services and support** in the 2017 budget is being allocated to mental health services and support in **remote** communities for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

What percentage of the funding for **mental health services and support** in the 2017 budget is being allocated to mental health services and support in **urban or regional** communities for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

How much funding from the 2017 budget will be allocated to train front line staff working in **suicide prevention** service delivery on inclusive practices for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

How much funding from the 2017 budget will be allocated to train front line staff working in **mental health support** service delivery on inclusive practices for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

How much funding from the 2017 budget will be allocated to train front line staff working in **suicide prevention and mental health support** service delivery on inclusive practices for sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

How much funding from the 2017 budget is being allocated to evaluate whether services, programs or projects for **suicide prevention** are reducing the risk of suicide sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

How much funding from the 2017 budget is being allocated to evaluate whether services, programs or projects for **mental health support** are inclusive of sex/gender diverse and sexually diverse Northern Territorians?

Could you please forward me the Budget so I can view and comment. Any other supporting documents would be greatly received. Preferably in Office spreadsheet would be ideal.

If there are any territory incentives such as for apprenticeships will they be exclusive to long term Territorians ? Last time they chose an apprentice from Melbourne to advertise it in the radio .. he said he applied from Melbourne and was accepted and came to Darwin to start it .. meanwhile I knew many many young Territorians who did not even get a look in .. whatever is set up for Territorians it should be for long term Territorians...

Also the same for infrastructure tenders .and many government tenders , such as work uniforms etc . they always given to interstate companies ..

Also if the NT government has already cut its own staff meaning they are adding to the thousands already finding it hard to find jobs .. what are the jobs the budget is apparently suppose to create .. besides builders and construction workers ?

My question is in relation to the proposed changes to the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme (as per fact sheet).I understand the scheme needs to be reviewed due to abuse from some recipients and vendors but why oh why do you punish everyone. This generous scheme was introduced to financially support and attract retirees to stay in the NT. But due to a few rotten eggs you now want to punish all (minority rules again). From the barely distributed fact sheet, you are proposing \$700 over 2 years using a debit card. Currently people on the scheme receive \$500 every 2 years for travel and then electricity, water, motor vehicle registration and licensing concessions. Under your proposal some people will lose up to \$1200. These are our most vulnerable people who have given their entire life to making the NT what it is and you want to put them into financial hardship. WHY?!? For what benefit? Do you get something out of watching our most vulnerable people suffer. Instead target those that abuse the scheme but stop taking the easy option and punishing all. People are leaving the NT in droves. My parents have lived in the NT for over 50 years. Are you trying to force people to leave?!? Do you care?

SHAME GUNNER GOVERNMENT. SHAME ON YOU!!!

Thanks for sharing this opportunity with me and thanks once again for your commitments, inputs and supports for having positive mind to assist the NT by seeking everyone contributions, their views, opinions towards our development, first of all only organized people know well how commitments, and honesty can build a nation if we can all identify the most valuable structures and the necessary key elements business the Territorian really wanted to achieve.

(1) does Government have any cut for the climate change? as we cannot live in an environment without security , how does this climate change effected local businesses locally and internationally? Do our budget cover those businesses for a new business transaction that provide development to NT community?

Power and water,

Power: I have identified that we should rather considered the clean energy than investing billions of dollars in coals and Gas mining which is destroying the natural beauty of the NT, creating pollution, intoxicated waters, chronic diseases, drought farming lands, cyclone, bush fires,

Water: We are multicultural nation and we do have various experiences from individual countries to generate clean water by using many natural resources which 100% saver rather intoxicating ourselves by using failure toxic chemical which are not save for humans body, we have different pyres of potato's mechanism to purify water for commercial or domestic use and why can create opportunity for those with solid minds to contribute positive image for our development? We need a budget that support creativeness and assist community to grow.

(2) is my expectations to address the Government how seriously durable solutions for the indigenous and Torres Straight Islanders people are most important for their long sufferings, pains, denial of their heritage, limited healths opportunity, limited support for the rangers to protect their sacred sites and most valuable places, schools, languages and cultures

What companied and industries does the Custodians really wanted to restore in the NT? nationally what relationship does the Government have with the native in order to bring development to the NT? the budget should work on key issues that support positive legislations and policies which can drive emerging Territorian to run sustainable businesses and become self sufficient,

How the Government supported those indigenous low income earners to develop their potential talents and skills converted into a business model to generate income for their families and how does the budget protect those businesses to develop? How the budget provide assistance to refugees and migrants communities to operate their businesses? in what conditions and how does the budget support innovative skills in refugees and migrants communities?

One head doesn't build a nation and in my opinion to expand job opportunities in a standard level by which everyone is accepted and welcome on board with new channels of diverse business models, build a trust and network with positive minded in the community, building a community with of a unique voice always depends on the structure, vision and expectations for what really matter, Australia is sovereign country and our security can be depends on how we organized ourselves and create opportunity that assist the needs of NT residents and how we managing our resources in cultural/traditional standard manner to avoid the impact of climate change?

Positive innovative mind build community, and community build trust, understanding that support business, we need budget which provide equity, sustainability, supports, opportunities, accountability, true leadership which doesn't create division among community groups.

Hope my noble institutions and contributions will be regarded with good faith and wish all Territorian good lucks of decision making towards the budget which would help us develop as a nation.

I would like to contribute suggestion for your budget to generate business in urban and remote communities.

Can you please consider making effort to improve communication with One Mile Dam and a business project.

Why is the NT Government spending \$39.5 million of taxpayer dollars on Barneson Boulevard, the four-lane road to nowhere which will cut through the middle of the Frog Hollow art precinct, completely destroying the amenity of this much-loved area, when the Northern Territory's population continues to decline and demographers at Charles Darwin University's Northern Institute have recommended (see article attached) that money should NOT be spent on major projects which only serve to perpetuate a transient population but rather on projects which improve our lifestyle and the amenity of our beautiful tropical city?

After over 30 years of operation at the Ranger project in Kakadu, mining has now ceased and rehabilitation commenced. Although the miner plans to continue processing stockpiles for a few more years, there is a hard deadline to be packed up by 2026.

Has NT Government budgeted for a dedicated cross-portfolio working group to address issues related to the Ranger rehabilitation?

2. At a recent meeting of the Alligator Rivers Region Advisory Committee, a member of DPIR was asked about the department's responsibilities for day-to-day monitoring and regulation of the Ranger uranium mine in Kakadu.

As the project rapidly moves from production to rehabilitation, the project risks, and commensurate departmental responsibilities, are rapidly changing. DPIR were asked as to their capacity to take up new (shallow water) monitoring of the Magela sands. The departmental officer responded that they could only do so by suspending one of their deep monitoring bores, noting that they're current capacity is stretched to meet their existing program.

What additional budget allocation is required to satisfy the minister as to the departments capacity to meet their growing responsibilities for day-to-day monitoring and regulation of the unprecedented project that is Ranger uranium rehabilitation?

3. Departments are being shuffled at both a federal level (with the Supervising Scientist branch moving from the Science division to the Wildlife, Heritage and Marine Division of Environment and Energy) and a Territory level (as we see a regulatory reform agenda appear poised to move regulatory responsibilities from Resources to Environment).

Will these rearrangements affect NT Government's appropriate monitoring and regulation in any way?

4. Noting the pressing schedule for the cessation of major rehabilitation works, **can you please table the most recent mine closure plan for public review?**

Why is it that grant money generated by the taxpayers of the Northern Territory and donated to Northern Territory bodies can be spent without any form of scrutineering with southern or overseas companies when there are NT based, owned and operated companies that are perfectly capable of doing the job and circulating the money in the NT.

Case in point the tennis centre

It is an insult to the intelligence of the voter to simply say no one in Darwin or the Greater NT is capable.

Has there been a valuation of the tourism industry surrounding the Mataraka region hot springs? Is there an analysis available on the value of that spring water and how it is rated by tourists annually?

What percentage of NT Government revenue comes from gas royalties?

Has the NT Government costed the subsidies that would be supplied to onshore gas companies to build gasfields in greenfield sites?

Has there been a formal quantitative analysis on the price impacts to Northern Territory domestic and industrial gas users of plugging into the East Coast Gas market through the Jemena Northern Gas Pipeline?

Has the NT Government undertaken an appraisal of the financial value of groundwater and surface water in the Beetaloo Basin area?

I commend the Power and Water Corporation on its Northern Territory Solar Energy Transformation Program (Solar SETuP). Has a cost benefit analysis been conducted on installing storage batteries to enable these communities to become totally solar powered, with diesel generators used only as back up?

What subsidies have been provided to onshore gas companies and their associates?

Has a compensation fund been created to compensate landholders for loss of production, income, or damages caused by the onshore gas industry?

Can you please Estimate how much money would have been saved if you had used the internet and phone to find out about Singapore, instead of having a JUNKET at TAX PAYER EXPENCE?

Can You Please Estimate how much work could be generated if you built HEALTH CLINICS/CYCLONE SHELTERS (instead of wasting money on an art gallery) in areas that have populations in need of this service, such as DUNDEE?

Can you please Estimate how happy the people would be if Gerry Wood had not condemned Territorians to 4 year terms of RANCID GOVERNMENT?

Can you Estimate how much it would contribute to the economy to bring piped water supply to Dundee instead of GIVING OUR WATER TO INPEX?

Can you Estimate how happy the people would be if you actually made the Dundee Beach boat ramp as SAFE AND USABLE IN ALL WEATHER; how many tries are you GUNNA make to get it right?

Can you please Estimate how much better off the Territory would be if the Northern Territory Parliament was dissolved and power handed back to the Commonwealth Government?

I am a pharmacist in the NT and note that in the 2017-18 budget the following is listed as expenditure for 'Healthy Territorians':

“\$3 million over four years to trial a new partnership between the Territory government and non-government organisations to provide support services to up to 200 people with mental illness who live in public housing in Darwin and Palmerston”

People with a mental illness often face significant issues surrounding their utilisation of medications to manage their conditions. People may face reduced access to their medicines due to financial hardship and prioritise other needs over their medicines, this ultimately leads to reduced management of their mental illness. People with undermanaged mental illness can also then find it harder to function in the wider community including securing stable work and managing social and professional relationships. This often becomes a cycle that is hard to break free off.

Many of these medicines are not high cost and pharmacy businesses are often able to make agreements with consumers and health services to offset or remove the financial barrier that the cost of medicines creates.

My question is; To what extent are pharmacists and pharmacy businesses being consulted in this partnership trial and what proportion of this expenditure is being allocated to the provision of medicines to help these people best manage their condition.

How much is budgeted for the NT Pensioner and Carer Concession Scheme (Pencon), Operational budget only, for the 2017/18 year and what is the breakdown between 'pensioners' and 'carer's'?

For the period from 1 September 2016 and ending 31 March 2017 what was the expenditure for the Pencon scheme and the breakdown between pensioners and carer's?

For the period from 1 September 2016 and ending 31 March 2017 specifically for the amount provided for carer's what was the expenditure for carer's who meet the current eligibility requirements (a) and those who remain in the scheme and were eligible under the previous requirements (b)? When was the decision made to change the criteria to the Pencon scheme by removing eligibility for holders of the federal governments 'carer's allowance'? Changing the criteria from (b) to (a).

The current carer's eligibility requirements is the holder must receive the federal government 'carer's payment'.

The previous carer's eligibility requirements is the holder must receive either the federal governments 'carer's payment or carer's allowance'.

What is envisioned for the Arafura Games investment?

How many sports will be invited to participate in the Arafura Games ?

What will be the basis of cost apportionment in the Arafura Games ??

What are the principles for cost bearing to be applied and how does that reciprocate attendance at other peer regional competitions to the Arafura Games?

If badminton was to be included in 2019 Arafura Games then what are the venue options being considered? What is included in the cost projections for the venue hire for the Arafura games badminton programme?

What is the expected athlete draw for badminton (Nations, Numbers) on the projected venue and over how many days for the Arafura games?

What investment in hosting officials and volunteer support is forecast for the 2019 Arafura Games badminton programme?

What are the expected outer years of following budgets likely to deliver with respect to a suitable permanent badminton playing venue to host the Arafura Games as well as local and Nationally significant competitions?

What funding has been spent on tobacco control given the Northern Territory has just been awarded the AMA / ACOSH Dirty Ashtray for the second year?

Is the Palmerston Hospital progressing to plan and on budget?

What is the planned budgetary savings on the abolition of the Health Boards?

The Budget outlined a \$200k allocation for the newly appointed Buy Local Advocate. Can you please outline how these funds will cover the costs of running and maintaining the position and office.

Please disclose how costs such as the following will be covered; Wages, superannuation, statutory costs, overheads, rents, admin support, vehicle, travel.

Please outline the base wage that has been allocated for this position

What percentage of the total proposed NT budget is allocated to the direct care, support, compensation and assistance to victims of crime?

What percentage of the total proposed budget is allocated to the direct care support, rehabilitation or diversion of perpetrators of crime, including youth perpetrators?

In 2016/17 what was the total value of proceeds of crime confiscated by the NT Government. Did any of this money get directed to victims of crime in the NT. Where did government spend this money?

\$7.9 million is allocated in Budget 2017 for the First Home Buyer (FHB) Home Renovations Grant. The Home Renovations Grant has influenced FHB toward purchasing existing properties and away from the new home building market. This is evidenced by ABS statistics on home lending and renovations activity. First Home Buyers use this Grant for minor renovations and improvements, which delivers only short term, minimal benefit to small contractors and sole traders.

\$30 million is allocated for the Immediate Works Grants, a program already concluded in early 2017. The nature of the works appears to be commercial in nature, and the majority of approved projects are yet to commence.

The budget appears to provide minimal if any incentive for private investment in new residential construction, an industry that supports many Territorians. New home construction benefits Builders, Suppliers, Trades, and related Professions. The residential building industry is a major employer in the Northern Territory and stimulating this industry needs to be a budget priority.

How does this budget support or encourage private investment into the new homes market, and in turn, support local jobs and the residential building industry?

First Home Buyer stamp duty exemptions and First Home Buyer Grants are limited in many states now to only new homes. This is appropriate, as the FHOG was introduced to offset the impact of GST on new homes. Given existing homes are not subject to GST, should the FHOG and FHB be solely available to new homes?

The Prisoner Paid Employment Program has existed now for around 10 years under several names. Its inception came out of the Martin/Henderson Government and was initially aimed at repatriating “transitional lifers” and long term prisoners back into the community. The Henderson Government championed it as “A New Era in Corrections” And the Mills/Giles Government (through Elferink) gave it the name “Sentenced to a Job”. Regardless of what name the program is given, Prisoners have been going out of Northern Territory prisons to attend Paid Employment for around 10 years now. HOW HAVE RECIDIVISM RATES CHANGED OVER THIS TIME? I would like an answer that reflects actual data and statistics. What impact has any Prisoner Paid Employment Program had on crime?

The number of persons, especially aboriginal persons, that have and continue (year by year) to be apprehended pursuant to the paperless arrests regime (Part VII, Div 4AA of the PAA); further the costs associated with high numbers locked up under this regime including impact on police resources.

Secondly (related) are the numbers of persons, especially aboriginal persons being apprehended (rather than taken to sobering up shelters or alternative safe places) pursuant to s.128 PAA protective custody laws; further the costs associated with these apprehensions including impact on police resources.

Third question about the proposed renovations to Don Dale as opposed to redirection of funds to cover the Government’s promised construction of a new facility- what funds are being (if any set aside) for this new facility if so much is going into repairs and renovations of Berrimah Jail? Are they reneging on the promised new facility to reinforce the continued use of the Berrimah prison to house children?

Fourth, what moneys are being allocated towards youth diversion programs in the NT as opposed to bootcamps. It is noted that the current budget has proposed significant ongoing funding towards bootcamps what evidence base is there currently and has there been ongoing evaluation as to their continued utility of bootcamps in terms of demonstrated reduction in recidivism rates and success in diverting youth?

In relation to the Aboriginal Justice Agreement election commitment, how many consultations, in which communities, and over what period of time consultations occur?

In relation to the Aboriginal Justice Agreement, how many Reference Committee meetings have been resourced, and how will participation in the Reference Committee from people in remote areas be resourced, to guide the department in the development of the agreement?

How many additional rooms has the NT Government identified as needed to end over-crowding and severe overcrowding in remote communities? Using the Canadian National Occupancy Standard used by the ABS to determine overcrowding and severe overcrowding (severely over-crowded houses are those that require four or more additional bedrooms)

In relation to HomeBuildNT: how many new homes will be built and in which communities?

In relation to Room to Breath: how many new rooms will be created and in which communities?

What criteria will the NT Govt determine where HomeBuildNT and Room to Breath funding is spent?

Throughcare services for adults and children exiting prison and detention are critical to reducing recidivism, what funding has been allocated to Throughcare services in urban and remote regions of the Territory?

Throughcare services for adults and children exiting mental health and alcohol and other drug treatment facilities are critical to reintegrating people into their community and supporting them to remain in their community, what funding has been allocated to throughcare services in urban and remote regions of the Territory for adults and children exiting mental health and alcohol and other drug treatment services?

What moneys have been allocated to repatriation of people to remote communities after exiting detention or prison?

There is additional funding to expand the COMMIT program- there has not been an evaluation report released as to the effectiveness or otherwise of this program, why are we investing more?

There is no funding allocation for adult diversionary options, rehabilitation programs or supports that could address recidivism rates.

What funding has been allocated and for what positions, for the new DFV court in Alice Springs?

Does the \$0.8m for youth substance misuse include specific service delivery for Volatile Substance Abuse? If so, how much is this allocation and in what towns and communities is it to be delivered?

What funding has been allocated, and in what towns and communities, to tenancy support for people living in private residences?

Could Territory Generation please provide the hourly load data set for a full year period from the power stations at Borrooloola and Robinson River? It would be helpful to have the the half hourly load data for a full year if available. The data should be shown in kW on an hourly (or 30 min) basis.

What was the total amount the former Chief Minister spent (airfares, accommodation, meals etc.) on travelling between Alice Springs and Darwin (and other destinations) during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 period?

Why spend so much money on Bringing back the Banned Drinking Register when we saw little or no change at all when it was introduced last time ... I was working at Landmark ASP when it was first introduced and we had a drinking register at our establishment due to the fact that we also sold beer and spirits ... half of the time it didn't work we were always being rung by Darwin to be informed to "not to worry today" as the system was down and the other half of the time they were "up-dating" at the time of the day when we were trying to do sales in the afternoon... It only kept the honest people that were already honest and did the right thing honest and the drunks well they worked the system accordingly ... nothing changed ...

Why do we have sooooo many “Grog” outlets in Alice Springs ... do we really need so many in our town so many people ask this ??? Why do we need them at every shopping centre ... I think it isn't necessary at all when I was growing up a pub was a pub and a drive thru grog shop was something grown ups went to ... now kids see it at there local supermarket ... it is not good I like a drink like anyone else but if I want to buy my alcohol I think I could happily go buy it at the local grog shop I do not need to have it at my supermarket ...

Alcohol continues to cost the Territory over \$4, 000 per adult per year from the harms experienced within the community. This compares with just over \$900 per adult throughout the rest of Australia.

It has been noted in other jurisdictions that we will not police our way out of this ongoing health and social issue. Treatment has been suggested to have a 7 to 1 return on investment compared to policing with a 2 to 1 return on investment.

In this budget there is an estimated \$17.2 committed for the development of the alcohol framework and Banned Drinkers Register. Is this included in the alcohol and other drugs budget in health funding?

The budget estimate for 2016-17 from health for community treatment and extended care for alcohol and other drugs was 38.3 million. The PEFO estimate was 39.8 million with the budget for 2017-18 showing a reduction to 37.3 million.

With the decrease in budget there is also an increase in output expectations from government and non-government services. The 2016-17 outputs for client assessment and episodes of treatment is 7874 in 2016-17 and for the 2017-18 it is 10 441. This is almost a 50% increase on the 2016-17 outputs with a 3% reduction in the budget to provide these services.

Specifically in the NGO sector episodes of care are increased from the 2016-17 estimate of 6456 to the 2017-18 estimate of 7272 this is a 13% increase in expectation of the service provision.

Is funding to the alcohol and other drug sector going to remain static, increase or decrease and by how much with the increased expectation of deliverables?

Are alcohol and other drug services being offered 5-year funding agreements consistent with the Government's pledge?

If not, how are services with a one contract expected to compete to retain staff when other services can offer a 5-year employment contracts?

We understand the rationale for merging agencies but the budget papers no longer include outcomes & performance indicators of key sections such as Sport and Recreation. Parks and Wildlife merged with Department Tourism and Culture, yet they still have their own section in Budget Paper 3, whereas Sport and Recreation appears not to. Are there outcomes & performance indicators for Sport and Recreation?

Page 198 BP3, investing in children, 11.5M in grants including the Sports Voucher Scheme, can families and schools use sports vouchers for school swimming and water safety programs (during school hours) – especially if they are not utilised?

What were the sports voucher scheme and learn to swim voucher scheme statistics for 16/17 – how many vouchers redeemed, what happens to unexpended provision? How are families being consulted/surveyed for improvements to this scheme?

What is being done to help remote communities with swimming pools maintain and keep their pools open and staffed with qualified staff?

Children's swimming and water safety abilities in the NT are a real concern. Less than 4% of NT Primary School students are meeting the National Benchmark and the NT has the highest drowning rate per capita in Australia. Every State and Territory in Australia, except NT, are either conducting well established programs through DoE (Tas, NSW, WA, ACT, SA, QLD) or reviewing current funding and programs and investing in children and schools for swimming and water safety (The **Victorian** Government's latest budget has allocated a total of \$17.1 million over four years) . In 2015 NT Parliament was presented with a petition from NT families requesting a funded swimming & water safety program for primary school students in years 4,5 and 6, to enable them to reach the National benchmark. Progress on this issue has stalled since the change of Government and children need Government to help them in this area. Will this be addressed through the 2017 budget?

How much will the NTG spend in FY 17/18 to promote the oil and gas industries, including advertising, networking events, provision of baseline data, incentives, and administration of exploration and extraction licences?

How much will the NTG spend in FY 17/18 to promote the renewable energy industries (solar, tidal, wind, biothermal), including advertising, networking events, provision of baseline data, incentives, and administration of Renewable Energy developments?

How much will be committed in FY 17/18 toward implementing a whole of NTG Climate Change policy, including implementation of the 50% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 Renewable Energy Target?

In FY 17/18 what amount of royalties does the NTG expect to earn from the Northern Gas Pipeline development as a result of increased gas exports?

In FY 17/18 what resources has the NTG committed to support the development of the Northern Gas Pipeline?

In FY 17/18 how much security is Jemena expected to pay to protect the pipeline from environmental and social damage generated by the Northern Gas Pipeline?

How much will the NTG commit in FY 17/18 toward Research and Development to advance the development and uptake of renewable energy industries in the NT?

In FY 17/18 how much money will the NTG allocate toward an energy efficiency program the NT targeting householders, small businesses and industry?

In FY 17/18 how much will be allocated to support remote communities to shift from dependence on diesel power generation to solar generation?

In FY 17/18 how much will the NTG allocate toward increasing public transport use, bicycle-friendly towns and greening (including solar) government buildings?

In FY 17/18 how much will the NTG allocate toward educating Territorians about the benefits of installing rooftop solar and how this works in the NT?

Please provide the total expenditure and itemised details of travel, including but not limited to, travel-related costs such as itinerary, accommodation, travel allowance, entertainment, hospitality, car rental, meals and incidentals for all chief executives in each agency from July 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 for international, intrastate and interstate travel.

Please provide a list of all international cities or towns visited by chief executives from July 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 and please list the number of times the chief executive has visited that location over the last five years.

In the case of international travel, please provide the purpose, itinerary, persons and costs involved in each trip and the written report into what taxpayers gained from the trip. If no report given to department minister exists, please explain why.

Please provide the total expenditure and itemised details of travel, including but not limited to, travel-related costs such as itinerary, accommodation, travel allowance, entertainment, hospitality, car rental, meals and incidentals for public servants in each agency from July 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 for international, intrastate and interstate travel.

In the case of international travel, please provide the purpose, itinerary, persons and costs involved in each trip and the written report into what taxpayers gained from the trip. If no report given to department chief executive exists, please explain why.

Please provide a list of all international cities or towns visited by public servants from July 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 and please list the number of times the public servant has visited that location over the last five years.

Is the Government going to announce its own renewable energy strategy or implement other reports like the Finkel review ?

What contribution have key agencies made to the formation of whatever the Government's strategy will be?

What steps are you (specifically the generators of power) taking into the future to move to renewable energy?

What steps are you taking to ensure that we don't end up with 2 fossil fuel carbon-emitting power stations operating in sunny "Solar City" Alice Springs??!!!

What guarantees will you give be my power bill won't go through the roof??

And lastly, this is a good idea, but how do we know our questions will be answered?!

How many international countries has Tourism Minister Lauren Moss visited since becoming a Minister?

What dates were the visits?

What were the purposes of the visits?

Has she filed reports into each trip?

From March 5 to March 23 2017 Mr Alastair Shields attended the International Tourismus Borse (Germany) and UK KDP meetings.

What was his travel itinerary?

What dates was Mr Shields in Germany from?

What dates was Mr Shields in the UK from?

What meetings did Mr Shields attend and the dates he attended them?

Was a report filed on what value the taxpayers received for this travel? If not, why not?

Mr Robert Crack also attended the the Internationale Tourismus Borse (Germany).

What was his role?

Mr George Christakis also attended the Internationale Tourismus Borse (Germany).

What was his role?

Why did it only cost \$5 for Mr Bryan Harty to attend the State of the World's Plants Symposium from 11-12 May 2016 in England?

Emma Darby and Patrick Gregory both attended the International Network of Emerging Library Innovators (INELI Oceania meeting 10-14 July 2016) What was the significance of this event that two staff members were required?

Why did it only cost \$338 for Ms Darby to attend?

Why did it only cost \$279 for Mr Gregory to attend?

Madam Speaker, the front of Parliament House was recently painted. Why weren't the other three sides, and in particular the western wall which is so prone to salt intrusion, painted? Who made the decision? Is there a forward works plan for maintenance on the Territory's premier public building and, if so, would you table it?

Madam Speaker, can you detail all travel undertaken by you and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly on (a) Assembly business (b) Presiding Officers and Clerks business (c) ANZACATT business (d) CPA business and (d) other official business? Can you detail the monetary source of the travel and, in particular, whether the travel was covered by Northern Territory Government or Commonwealth Parliamentary Association travel from the UK, or other accounts not linked to the NT Government accounting system? Can you detail the quantum of the travel, including travel, TA and other expenses and the purpose of each trip? Can you provide approvals for the travel and full details of any Northern Territory parliamentary accounts that are not linked to the NT Government system?

Can you provide the current balance of the Northern Territory Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's bank account and also provide a break-down of where funds from that account have been spent during the financial year and how much has been deposited and what purpose that money was received for?

Madam Speaker, your department has stated in recently released answers to written questions that the DLA did not pay any money for hospitality, functions and event spending from September 2016 to March 2017. How could this be? How was the Speakers Christmas party paid for and did it include funds from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association?

What is the current balance of the NT Commonwealth Parliamentary Association bank account? Has any of that money been used by either you or the Clerk to travel overseas? If so, how much? Is this what that money received from the CPA HQ is intended to be used for?

Madam Speaker, where is the raw data from the *State of the Service* survey in respect of the Legislative Assembly? Why wasn't it included in the Commissioner for Public Employment's report on the NT public sector for the first time in living memory? Why wasn't that raw data published notwithstanding that you claimed in the *Employment Report 2015-16* that it wasn't comparing like with like?

Madam Speaker, what has been the turnover of staff at the Legislative Assembly in the past 10 years? Please break it down by reason of separation and service longevity of those who have departed.

Madam Speaker, would you table the profit and loss statement from the 2016 Build Up Ball? What was the income and how much was distributed to charity? How are the charities selected and what has been the distribution since the inception of the ball?

Madam Speaker, who holds the contract for electricity supply at Parliament House? What is the annual cost of electricity? Does Parliament House have solar capacity? Has the solar option been examined and, if so, how much would it cost to implement and what would be the expected life of panels and savings, if any, for Parliament House?

Madam Speaker, how much money was raised by renting the facilities at Parliament House for functions (including all board rooms, etc) for the financial year?

Madam Speaker, who made the decision to not put to public tender, the contract for new CCTV cameras for Parliament House? How did the final price come in at \$1,000 below the threshold to go to public tenders? Coincidence? Who decided to use the provider chosen?

My daughter has stage 4 endometriosis, 1 in 10 women suffer this hideous disease. Why do women have to travel interstate for gold standard excision surgery? In October 2016 my daughter made enquires to have a gynaecologist insert the mirena, a simple procedure yet the wait list for an appointment with a private gynae was six months and was a 12 month waitlist for public. What is the government doing to reduce that timeframe?

How many dermatologist doctors are there? Private or public and what is the waitlist?

Can you please advise how Rosebery Primary School is managing its increase in enrollements and what its doing to manage class numbers. What are its future infrastructure plans to cater for a growing school.

Acting Treasurer - shareholding Minister of NTG owned utilities

Has the NT Government done any modelling of the impacts on power prices and associated costs of living as a result of the predicted trebling of gas prices resulting from the construction of the northern gas pipeline?

Territory Generation

Has Territory Generation considered the impacts on power prices and associated costs of living as a result of the predicted trebling of gas prices resulting from the construction of the northern gas pipeline? Would Territory Generation be passing this cost onto customers or taxpayers?

How many jobs are going to be lost as a result of the closure of Ron Goodin power station? What are the transition plans for workers who

Environment Minister/Chief Minister

What is the NT Government doing to reduce carbon emissions across its own activities?

Does the NT Government have an overall climate policy beyond the much anticipated Roadmap to Renewables?

Mines Minister - Ken Vowles

What is the NT Government's position on the 'sweetheart' coal deal made just before the CLP left office? <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/sweetheart-coal-deal-locked-in-before-nt-poll/news-story/82da87f5228eb048b3ef756e52a5008d>

Chief Minister/ Mines Minister

What conversations have been had between the NT Government and the Federal Government about the proposed Chandler salt mine and permanent toxic and hazardous waste storage facility?

Is the Chief Minister concerned about the possibility of the Tellus facility becoming a trojan horse for a nuclear waste repository?

Has the NT Government considered the potential costs of security for the Chandler facility after its initial proposed 29 year life?

As it is clearly obvious that the internal audit function is not functioning correctly has any allowance been made to set up an internal audit bureau that reports directly to a parliamentary committee but independent from The Auditor General?

What was the expenditure on traffic control , cones signs lollypop girls in the last financial year.?

Why is there no requirement to hire local employees for this job?

How much did the traffic control etc on the Howard springs intersection job cost?

In the last four years have any of the roadwork contracts finished within the original time and cost ?

How much the NT police have spent on legal fees for investigations and judicial matters involving police officers and civilian employees over the past five years.

How many workers compensation matters have been lodged over the past 12 months compared to the last five years.

What have been the workers compensation payouts over the past five years and what are the associated legal and investigation costs paid to any external party.

It is good that when the NTG procure services and goods that we utilise local providers before going outside of the territory. Supporting local business, big tick.

So why is the NTG employing permanent employees that live in other states? Why are these positions not being given to local people that have the skills?

I see this as these employees get paid by the NTG but live outside of the NT and their wages are supporting the economy in whichever state they live in, housing(rent and mortgage's), amenities, everyday living cost.

I am aware of positions that could be filled by either existing NTG employees or local talent. Why are existing employees living in the NT not being upskilled to meet these position requirements and or offered these positions so that the money stays in the NT economy.

You would be surprised not only to know how many are working for the NTG and live interstate but also what the role of these positions are? They are NOT all specialised skill sets. Goes back to upskilling and providing opportunity to local Territorians.

Regarding Palmerston council, the Minister has chosen not to allow the council to get a significant loan for \$13.5m to build a car parking structure.

Given all the changes in the greater darwin surrounds which is drawing cars to other areas not in the Palmerston CBD, and given the challenges faced by local business with the introduction of the disasterous paid parking, would the Minister consider cancelling any chance of a loan for such a significant amount for the city to prevent future councils having to take drastic measures to afford the repayments.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
NORTHERN TERRITORY - Is the Northern Territory Government funding for these services conditional on these services facilitating controlled use of alcohol and other substances or abstinence from same for residents with severe Substance Use Disorders under the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders edition 5 (DSM5)

Firstly, what does the "eyesore structure" at the McMillan/Rothdale Road inter section to the airport represent?

Secondly, how much did it cost to construct?

How much money has the Minister received in the form of Travel Allowance in financial year 2016 and how much money was paid from a Ministerial allowance for his travel?

Why did the Minister (McCarthy) charge \$7,350 for a road trip between Jabiru, Darwin and Tennant Creek from November 15, 2016 to December 7, 2016?

Is this money on top of the claimed travel allowance over the same period and if so, why?

Another trip on October 16, 2016 to November 7, 2016 from Tennant Creek to Darwin to Tennant Creek is listed as air travel at \$6,890. Did the Minister fly a charter flight from Tennant Creek to Darwin and back?

How much did taxpayers pay for charter flights for the Minister since August 27, 2016?

Have the cost of the flights been on top of his \$350 a night travel allowance?

Questions for Power and Water and T-Gen Minister

Can the Minister detail the Government's initiatives implemented since September 2016 to achieve greater use of renewable energy in the Territory?

Can the Minister provide outcomes for those initiatives?

What is Power and Water's position on the role renewable energy has as a primary source of energy in the Northern Territory.

What initiatives has Power and Water undertaken in the Renewables space since September 2016?

Can Power and Water provide evidence that it is on track to achieve the Government's 50 per cent target?

What is T Gen's position on the role renewable energy has as a primary source of energy in the Northern Territory.

What initiatives has T Gen undertaken in the Renewables space since September 2016?

Please provide evidence that T Gen is on track to achieve the Government's 50 per cent target?

Additional questions for Speaker Kezia Purick

A motorcycle club from Humpty Doo had a wedding and an AGM in 2015 on Speaker's Green that were apparently comped - why didn't they pay for those events?

Which group specifically was this? The Hell's Angels?

How many other free event space has the Speaker gifted friends and community groups?

Has the Speaker been approached by any DLA staff about bullying concerns raised against Clerk Michael Tatham? How many staff have left the department over bullying allegations?

Has the Speaker taken any action over bullying complaints against Mr Tatham?

Currently 4-5% of the NT workforce employed across all areas of mining, this industry equates for 3% of total NT income. How will the NEGI improve these employment statistics across the NT and what will be the financial benefit of increasing the gas production in the NT?

Considering that key international gas markets are not consuming gas as predicted due to a global glut, how is the NEGI a viable project with or without opening up the NT to onshore gas?

Explain the tariff and time frame that Power and Water customers will be paying for the transportation of gas through the NEGI?

How many juveniles arrested by NT Police in the last 12 months were in the care of the Department at the time of the offence? What percentage of total juveniles arrested for this same period were in the care of the Department?

My first opening three questions are related to the NT Government's decision to limit the budget estimates hearing from 60 hours to 30 hours, notwithstanding excuses/explanations made that the remaining 30 hours will be made up in November for examining departmental annual reports, as I would consider that where it is practicable to do so, both the budget estimates and the examining departmental annual reports each be given 60 hours, with ample auxiliary resources considering how thin the opposition numbers are to effectively provide sufficient scrutiny on behalf of Territorians.

- Firstly “does the NT Government consider how the combination of ‘very few opposition and independents to scrutinise the 2017/2018 budget estimates than is usual’, and ‘with only half the usual time allotted’, this considerably erodes the NT public’s confidence that the exercise of budget estimates will be thorough enough to be considered a valid exercise”?
- And secondly “does the NT Government consider the very short period of notification which the NT public has been given to act on behalf of the boycotting opposition MLA’s, as an ad-hoc measure for providing some form of validation in the form of substantive scrutiny & questioning, however they will do so with a complete lack of appropriate training and resources to effectively scrutinise and respond, and it does not allot an adequate time frame to read over the budget estimates, and they have no experience in forming appropriate questions and formal responses ... how this is not going to form a validation by default for the NT Government that traditional Westminster principles of transparency have been upheld?”

- Thirdly “does the NT Government agree with this statement: *‘ALP principles advocate the use civil disobedience in the form of an organised and peaceful protest, boycott or strike to ‘right a wrong’? and therefore by default would fully support the Independent’s & CLP’s right to boycott on behalf of all Territorians, who should be able to expect to have all their elected members be given ample time to properly scrutinise the NTG budget estimates, which affects all Territorians greatly, and you would sorely respect the RIGHT to withdraw ones labour should one be faced with an autocratic ruler which makes unilateral decisions to the detriment of the many’?*”

As a general statement, I as a Territorian feel this exercise in limiting the usual time for budget estimates gives the general impression of a government abusing its majority numbers, attempting to avoid proper due processes and transparency, and raises suspicion, whether founded or unfounded, of a government potentially trying to cover up something or at least not wanting to draw attention to some economic inadequacies!

My next set of questions go to the impact the ALP NT Governments moratorium on the onshore Natural Gas extraction industry has had on local based service and support businesses and their skilled workforces, which were negatively impacted by the moratorium both directly and indirectly through the total loss of business activity in that sector for an as yet indeterminate period:

- Has the NT Government considered that by implementing a moratorium on the top tier operators activity, that there would inevitably be a considerable commercial impact to locally based service and support businesses which specialise in that industry and mostly rely on the operators ongoing activity to remain commercially viable?
- Has the NT Government considered that by implementing a moratorium on the top tier operators activity, that there would inevitably be some commercial impact to locally based service and support businesses which have some generic exposure to that industry and partially rely on the operators ongoing activity for commercial prosperity or viability?

- Has the NT Government considered that by implementing a moratorium on the top tier operators activity, that there would inevitably be loss of career and livelihoods to all levels of jobs (management, admin, skilled and unskilled workers) with considerable personal impact to locally based employees which specialise in that industry and solely rely on the operators ongoing activity and their employer to remain in employment?
- Has the NT Government considered that by implementing a moratorium on the top tier operators activity, that there would inevitably be some indirect loss of jobs and livelihoods to all levels of jobs (transport, hardware, retail/supplies, equipment rental, generic industrial capabilities, etc.) with considerable personal impact to locally based employees which have some generic exposure to that industry and mostly rely on the operators ongoing activity and their employer to remain in employment?
- Does the NT Government recognise that whenever a locally based industrial business with highly specialised capabilities closes its doors, that this diminishes the attractiveness of the overall industrial capabilities that the NT has to offer, which NT Government - Department for Business, NT-ICN, Chamber of Commerce go to great lengths to talk-up to interstate and overseas investors to attract new projects to the Territory?
- Does the NT Government recognise that due to the ALP NT Government decision to impose a moratorium, that the impact of the above five questions/points are the root cause of the sudden interruptions to some local NT based businesses and many Territorians jobs, both direct and indirect, and has created personal financial hardships?
- There was an opportunity for the NT Government to have implemented some form of retainer/subsidy to maintain key essential business capabilities and a skilled workforce in place to be ready in a post-moratorium era, however the NT Government didn't explore or approach any local businesses or skilled workers. As it is usually expected that any decent government would encourage, nurture and protect local businesses and a strategic skilled workforce and grow local jobs, why wasn't there anything planned by the incoming government to address

this and further budgeted in 2016/2017 to protect and retain these local capabilities and jobs?

- When some 300 workers lost their construction jobs due to a private commercial contractual dispute on the Inpex project, the ALP NT Government was very quick to offer some financial hardship assistance and employment re-placement support to these workers (of unknown success), however in the case of the local based businesses and their workers who were negatively affected by the ALP NT Governments own policy decision to impose a moratorium, there was no similar kind of response to help and support, reskill, find new employment of similar effort, not even any acknowledgement that they had caused local jobs to evaporate through their own policy direction. Does the NT Government now concede that there was some collateral damage caused by the moratorium and that this disruption has caused some considerable personal hardships?
- Does the NT Government have any new provisions in the budget estimates 2017/2018 to identify those Territorians who were affected negatively by the moratorium and to compensate them for personal loss of income and to assist to put those affected back to a similar career and financial footing that they would otherwise have been had the moratorium not been implemented?

Assuming sometime in the near future, that there will be a lifting of the moratorium with whatever revised regulatory framework necessary in place:

- Restarting a high tech industry from scratch, which has just lost considerable specialised capabilities (which was build up over many decades) will have significant viability challenges, especially in attracting new investors who would be naturally uncomfortable with the arbitrary way moratoriums are imposed by ALP governments and without compensation for commercial losses. Does the NT Government see a need to make any provisions in the budget estimates to subsidise the rebuilding of local capabilities which the moratorium contributed significantly to the divestment of?

- Due to skilled workers leaving the Territory to seek skilled employment elsewhere, there will be an acute shortage of niche industry skills lost during the moratorium, for this issue locally based businesses and their workers will have high need of expensive and specialised training, some of which can only be done interstate. Does the NT Government see a need to make provisions in the budget estimates to subsidise the reskilling of a specialised local workforce which the moratorium contributed to dismantling?
- Some indigenous youth in communities were given entry level experience and certification to engage in skilled civil work which was done voluntarily by the top tier onshore operators, but these opportunities were lost directly as a result of the moratorium.
 - What measures are there in the budget estimates to identify and provide these Territory youth with an income of comparable value to that they would have earned had the moratorium not been implemented?
 - What measures are there in the budget estimates to ensure these Territory youth are able to successfully reengage with the industry in a post-moratorium era?
- In a post moratorium era, there may be new regulatory compliances which local, interstate and overseas businesses will not be familiar with, what measures has the NT Government provided in the budget estimates for providing training & ongoing support for industry to understand the new compliance requirements for each level of the industry, from top tier operators down to the local SME's?

On a much more sensitive note, we read all too often the tragic stories of serving and retired military, emergency responders, police and medical personnel suffering from mental health issues, and we also read of similar issues including substance abuse and self-harm in remote communities where opportunities are often very limited, and more recently we read about similar issues with the work/life balances of FiFo workers.

I would like all members of ALP NT Government to take the time to genuinely pause and reflect on what I have asked in the questions above, and take an empathetic moment to reflect on the real personal impact that the ALP NT Government moratorium policy has had to the affected local NT skilled workers who worked in the service sector of the onshore Natural Gas industry, and consider the affect the sudden impact the moratorium had on their careers and livelihoods, especially where their skills are very niche and not easily transportable to other industries, and how through some highly emotive opinions expressed in social media or organised lobby protests by certain activists groups, these skilled workers can be left feeling ostracised, withdrawn and even a sense of unfounded career shame, which can potentially lead to anxiety or depression.

I would strongly urge the NT Government to take this matter very seriously and to consider its central role in creating this unspoken issue of sudden personal loss of career and financial hardship, and for the NT government to consider proactively intervening to make good any harm it has caused.

It is one thing for the NT Government to decide to err on the side of caution with regards to holding a moratorium, but it should have done so with full consideration of the commercial impact to locally based businesses in that sector and the personal impacts that such an interruption will inevitably be cause to ordinary tax paying citizens of the Territory, people which they currently govern.

My final question is, “has the NT Government factored in any potential rise in revenues stemming from any direct or indirect sources from the onshore Natural Gas industry, in a post-moratorium era, for either 17/18 or the forward estimates”?

If there is any such future allowances of increased revenues stemming from the industry, the NT Government might want to consider what is fair and reasonable thing to do for those who have lost out, before they start to count what they would like to gain for themselves!

Please find attached a letter of 12 June headed 2017 Budget Estimates - Accountability on International Aspects. It raises issues in respect of:

- Relations with China - October 2016 NT Delegation and China Policy generally
- NT Overseas Representation
- Grants, Consultancies and Procurement on International Matters
- Parliamentary Monitoring of International Activity, including Travel
- Need for single High Level Approval Committee for all NT Tax payer-funded travel.

Dear Madam Speaker and NT MLAs

2017 Budget Estimates – Accountability on International Aspects

Further to my letter of 5 June (Integrity and Accountability issues), I am writing to offer my perspective on some international matters arising from the documents released by Minister Fyles on 9 June ahead of Estimates Hearings. The Government is to be commended for such an initiative towards transparency and accountability. There is no reason, however, why some of this material could not have been posted to websites by agencies earlier and updated on an ongoing (say quarterly) basis.

Relationship with China

Given the continuing suspicion and bad press dogging the Territory from the controversial 2015 decision to lease Darwin Port to Chinese-owned Landbridge, and the recent speculation around compliance with contracts, the possible re-financing of the port deal and the financing of other local Landbridge commercial ventures, the Gunner Government should comprehensively explain its policy, commitments and outlays in respect of China. This should include publicly releasing details of meetings of ministers and officials with representatives of the central government, the communist party, Shandong Province, Rhizao City, Landbridge and associated interests and consultants, and all contracts, MOUs and other commitments made.

Delegation to China, October 2016

The answer released on 9 June to Mr Higgins' written question (No. 56) to the Chief Minister, includes information about a very large delegation led by Mr Gunner to China in October 2016. This was at considerable cost to the NT Taxpayer, yet little information is provided to justify the expenditure (and the time lost from domestic priorities) and none on any outcomes by way of new trade, investment and job creation with China (information Mr Higgins actually sought).

The expenditures are quite extraordinary for a political party and government critical of travel excess and waste by its predecessor. They include:

-\$26, 878 for flights and \$10,011 for Chief Minister and his staff (includes Japan & Korea travel)

-\$62, 317 in costs for 15 Government Employees (including three CEOs) including agency and function multiple attendance. No representation from DCM is listed – Mr Gunner did not seem to see a need for high level advice on broad policy, coordination with the Commonwealth, record-taking security and protocol from that his primary agency during such a sensitive visit.

-\$66, 752 towards costs of some of 60+ individuals and business reps, paid from the Trade Support Scheme program (a big chunk of its budget)

-\$25, 797 for 3 media reps (Channel 9 & NT News)

-Hospitality, ground transport, and other costs and overheads such as payments to consultants may not be included.

More information needs to be released on this trip, including details of all meetings held and commitments made. No concrete outcomes from the travel are provided. There is a curious reference to a meeting between the Vice Governor of Shandong Province and the Chief Minister that “reinforced the synergies between China’s Maritime Silk Road and the Northern Territory’s Northern Australia Development Agenda”. The policy and commitment implications of this statement need to be clarified including its compatibility with Commonwealth policy and the implications for competition with local business. There is also a reference to “...a reciprocal economic forum is being planned in Darwin and Alice Springs for later in 2017”. More detail is required on this including justification (particularly when no business outcomes from Rhizao have been reported) and how the events would be paid for. There appears to be nothing obvious in the Budget papers.

China Policy

A document from the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation (Document 57, Question 27 – Attachment A) reveals a payment (\$205,032) to Melbourne University for foreign Country Engagement Plans. It is unclear why this task was outsourced interstate given expertise available within NTG and the Territory. None of these papers, one of which must be on China, are publicly available. The China Plan (and all others) should be publicly released so that the Gunner government’s approach can be judged, including on utility and on risk of raising unrealistic expectations and over-commitment from large delegations such as that in October 2016 and whether such travel is affordable and represents value for money.

The Territory’s position needs to be clearly stated on Chinese strategic international initiatives going under names such as ‘Silk Road’ and ‘One Belt, One Road’ and on its soft power practices and donations to political parties, institutions and community groups.

Overseas Representation

The Gunner Government’s overall international engagement policy is not clearly stated anywhere. It is therefore difficult to judge what new and legacy financial commitments are appropriate. Restoration of the Arafura Games seems to be the only new international expenditure that is documented.

Legacy commitments include overseas representation, with CLP appointments in made Jakarta and Singapore. No information seems to be available on the costs and outcomes from these appointments since the spectacular own-goal PR disaster for the Territory in sacking Terry Mills, the first appointee to Jakarta, in 2015. Cost-benefit information and Gunner Government intentions on these (and additional) overseas appointments and whether there is coordination with Tourism NT representatives and the Commonwealth international presence, needs to be released.

Grants, Consultancies and other Procurement on International Matters

Considerable expenditure is made in these areas. A perusal of the information released raises many questions about necessity, consistency and outcomes. Any reviews of such matters (note there was one in the Business Development area of DTBI in March 2017) should be tabled in the Assembly and released to the public. In terms of consultancy procurement, there should be close scrutiny of what is being done outside DTBI that could be done inside or on an interagency basis, and what is being outsourced to interstate universities and businesses when there is local expertise available (See listings in Document 57, Q27, Att. A).

Parliamentary Monitoring of International Activity, including Travel

The release of detailed information on Ministerial, official and other taxpayer-funded travel by the Gunner Government is commendable, but there is a strong case for this to occur on an ongoing basis and for a standing committee or sub-committee of the Assembly to be established to monitor all international engagement and travel, including receiving travel outcome and follow-up reports. This is because the amounts of funding are large, overseas activity may distract from and take resources away from domestic priorities, the risk of duplication of the work of Commonwealth agencies and the private sector is high - and mistakes, un-met commitments and bad behaviour overseas can do untold damage to the Territory's reputation. Reforms arising from the recommendations of the Committee on Opening the Parliament to the People may enable such committee arrangements to be established quickly.

From the travel information released (such as the China delegation) for Estimates and the controversy around the Chief Minister's more recent visit to Singapore, what is clear is that the Executive is lacking a contemporary set of principles and planning and decision-making processes to ensure all overseas travel is (absolutely) necessary, appropriate, policy and priority-based, well-coordinated to avoid duplication, and can pass the 'pub or sniff test'. A high bar would be whether travel is essential and unavoidable and minimalist in terms of the number of people travelling and cost.

A serious high-level travel approval committee comprised of a Minister, a CEO, an MLA and a member of the public to vet all tax-payer funded travel would go a long way to building confidence in this important area of NT public sector activity.

Once again, I wish all MLAs well in your important work.

Regards



Brendan Doran PSM

PO Box 131, Buderim, QLD 4556

12 June 2017