



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
REPORT

Tuesday 18 June 2013
Wednesday 19 June 2013
Thursday 20 June 2013
Tuesday 25 June 2013
Wednesday 26 June 2013

The Estimates Committee examined the estimates of proposed expenditure contained in the Appropriation Bill 2013-2014. Questions were raised by Members on the following issues:

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
Speaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding for Parliamentary Committees.• Parliamentary Education Services.• Advertising for recruitment to senior positions.• Fleet vehicles and vehicle leasing.• QEnergy contract for Parliament House - electricity charges, cost savings and CO₂ emissions.• Members' fuel usage and costs and procedures for dealing with extraordinary costs.• Members' travel expenditure.• Departmental cost saving measures and efficiency dividends.• Functions – Parliamentary precinct.• Repairs and maintenance of Parliament House.
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to Renewal Management Board Final Report.• Accuracy of pre-election fiscal outlook – unfunded legacy items.• Compliance with Fiscal Integrity and Transparency Act.• Commercial sustainability of PWC.• Disclosure of minerals royalty payments.• GST allocation.• Costings and delivery of election commitments.• Balancing environmental sustainability with economic development.• Staffing vacancies in Department of Treasury and

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
Treasurer	Finance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PWC tariff increases. • Interest rate to revenue ratio and serviceability of debt. • Cuts to capital expenditure items and impact on jobs. • Costs associated with the new Darwin Correctional Precinct. • Consumer confidence – retail trade. • Taxation compliance in the Northern Territory.
Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled worker programs. • Value of Ministerial travel re economic development. • Ability for local companies to secure contracts: concern that business is going interstate and overseas. • Encouraging large projects to employ local people rather than relying on fly in fly out workers. • Development of Three Hub Economy. • Industry innovation research funding. • Impact of tax increases and revenue raising measures on business. • Impact of PWC tariff increases on businesses. • Eco Biz Program • Tourism business development. • Department of Business grants. • Jobs growth and Indigenous workforce programs. • Employment benefits from Icthis Project. • Alcohol sales, Banned Drinker's Register, Mandatory Rehabilitation and other alcohol management measures. • Gambling: online live sport betting and caps on poker machines. • Harmonised Workplace Health and Safety legislation.
Employment and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous training/employment programs and opportunities.
Defence Liaison and Defence Industry Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Defence Support Unit. • Defence Industry business and employment opportunities.
Chief Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darwin Correctional Precinct: Public Private Partnership arrangements; siting of and need for the prison. • Audit of Asset Management and Grants Management Systems. • Impact of efficiency dividend on Auditor-General's Office. • PWC: financial position, asset management system and tariff increases. • 2012 NT General Election: Suspension of Electoral Commission staff; relocation of polling booth at Yuendumu; polling incidents at Wadeye; use of interpreters; and electoral reforms. • Cross cultural training and orientation for interstate

PORTFOLIO	ISSUES
Chief Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> electoral officers that assist with Territory elections. • Trends in complaints about government agencies, police and local government. • Adequacy of resources given potential for an increasing number of complaints. • Ministerial travel expenses. • Gonski offer and cuts to Education budget. • SIHIP/NPARIH Program. • Growth Towns. • Fishing Permits. • Social impact of Government decisions. • Core social values and issues relating to alcohol. • Legislation production and parliamentary committee structure.
Police, Fire and Emergency Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritising expenditure re repairs and maintenance of assets. • Measuring reductions in crime. • Nightcliff Police Station.
Corporate and Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NT Fleet. • Review of Government Printing Office.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open speed limits. • Wi-fi access on public buses. • Taxi licences. • Motor Vehicle Registry Offices. • Darwin Port and Marine Supply Base.
Asian Engagement and Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Pillars of Asian Engagement: trade and investment opportunities with Asia.
Attorney-General and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship between Banned Drinker's Register and crime statistics. • Contract lawyers versus permanent employees. • Mandatory sentencing.
Public Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Service numbers, staff cuts and staff morale.
Correctional Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prison industry and employment programs. • Educational programs for prisoners. • Boot Camps.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of PWC tariff increases on hospitals. • Housing for remote health workers. • Impact of funding cuts for non-government organisations. • Establishment of GP Super Clinic in the Northern suburbs. • Provision of nursing services in Police watch houses. • Access to dental health care services in remote areas. • Environmental Health – monitoring water quality in Darwin harbour and cooling towers. • Improving immunisation rates. • Alcohol strategies and mandatory treatment programs. • Use of the medi-hotel as a mandatory alcohol treatment facility.

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Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioner and carer concession scheme. • Palmerston Hospital and dedicated children's wing at Royal Darwin Hospital. • Managing capacity at Royal Darwin Hospital. • Parking at Royal Darwin Hospital. • Palliative care facilities and services. • Terminations of pregnancy: statistics, conditions for terminations and associated counselling services. • Patient Assistance Travel Scheme.
Primary Industry and Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ord Scheme. • Closure of Finnis River. • Recreational fishing infrastructure. • Marine Ranger Funding. • Live cattle trade.
Mines and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental bonds.
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gonski deal. • Teacher student ratios – current and proposed. • Cuts to teaching staff and impact on subject choices. • Method for measuring attendance. • Review of Indigenous education. • Community driven schools support unit. • Retention bonus and incentives for teachers in remote locations. • Distance learning facilities. • Capacity of Essington School. • School of the Air trial in 10 outstations. • PWC tariff increases: energy efficiency measures in schools and capacity for schools to meet power and water bills. • Effectiveness of programs designed to encourage school attendance in remote communities. • Compliance with compulsory attendance at schools and fines issued to parents. • Cuts to, and impacts of, funding for Charles Darwin University.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban public housing stock and future developments. • Public housing vacancies and wait times. • Rental increases in public housing for tenants classified as over-entitled. • Affordable housing projects. • Public housing safety officers. • Remote housing and construction of houses outside of growth towns. • Home Build Loan Access Scheme.
Lands, Planning and the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land releases of serviced blocks. • Land development through PPPs • Future residential developments. • Release of industrial land in the rural area. • Strategies for policing and cleaning up illegally dumped

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Lands, Planning and the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rubbish on crown land. • Review of Residential Building Insurance package. • NT Environment Protection Authority: staffing, procedures and projects. • Salt Mine Project. • NT Planning Commission: Noonamah Hughes Development and Nightcliff Island proposals.
Tourism and Major Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relocation of NT Tourism staff. • Funding to assist tourism operators with product development. • Indigenous tourism development. • Tourism NT rebranding costs: stationery, business cards etc. • Marketing to the cruise ship industry. • Measuring effectiveness of marketing budget. • Major Events – Masters Games
Sport and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants to peak sport and recreation organisations. • Impact of PWC tariff increases on sport and recreation organisations. • Capital infrastructure plan for major venues and facilities.
Children and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indexing of NGO grants. • Cost and impact of relocating Children and Families into Department of Education and Children’s Services and back out again. • Removal of Alcohol Courts. • Income management. • Case plans for children in care and average caseloads. • Impact of staff cuts and agency vacancies on children. • Funding cuts to non-government organisations. • Take up of Child Protection Board of Inquiry recommendations. • Inter-agency coordination regarding child safety issues. • Implementation of the Signs of Safety Framework. • Domestic violence programs and strategies. • Operation of secure care centres. • Nature of complaints received by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner. • Legislative changes to the Office of the Children’s Commissioner. • Community education regarding role of Office of the Children’s Commissioner – particularly in remote communities.
Regional Development and Women’s Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstations: eligibility criteria for services. • Economic development opportunities in remote communities. • Impact of departmental name change and removal of the Indigenous Advancement portfolio. • Work of the Indigenous Affairs cabinet subcommittee. • Review of Indigenous expenditure.

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Regional Development and Women's Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing and vacancies: Aboriginal Interpreter Service and Department of Regional Development and Women's Policy. • Indigenous Essential Services: communication of PWC tariff increases; water treatment plants in remote communities. • Homelands Extra Allowance: funding pool; eligibility criteria; service standards; accountability and administrative arrangements. • Implementation of Indigenous economic development strategy and indigenous employment opportunities. • Transport networks and regional development.
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Governance Review and Working Group. • Local Government roads. • Review of Animal Welfare Act.
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth/Northern Territory Infrastructure program funding. • Regional roads maintenance program. • Tiger Brennan Extension. • Employment trends in the construction industry. • Implementation of Asset Management System. • Removal of asbestos in Northern Territory parks. • Removal of illegally dumped vehicles on road reserves. • Replacement of equipment at Alice Springs Hospital.
Multicultural Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of PWC tariff increases on non-profit multicultural groups. • Multicultural grants programs.
Senior Territorians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors Month Grants Program. • Impact of PWC tariff increases on Seniors. • Impact of changes to Pensioner Concession Scheme.
Young Territorians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Grants Programs.

Ms Lia Finocchiaro MLA
CHAIR