



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 188

## WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Selena Uibo to the Minister for Education and Training, Hon Jo-Anne Hersey MLA:

### Electricity Costs

- 1. Please provide the total amount budgeted for public school electricity costs in the Department of Education and Training agency budget in the most recent budget.**

The Department of Education and Training (the department) provides schools with an annual facility funding allocation, which is indexed each year. Schools have autonomy in how these funds are applied across essential services such as electricity, water, sewage, security, waste services, gas, cleaning, and grounds maintenance.

For 2026, the department allocated \$46.08 million in facility funding to schools. Additional funding of \$1.48 million was also provided in 2026 to support schools with increased electricity costs arising from the electricity pricing reforms. This additional funding amount was calculated based on the consumption used in 2024.

- 2. Please provide the revised cost from 1 July 2025 following changes to Community Service Obligation payments to public schools.**

Electricity retailers are progressively updating Community Service Obligation (CSO) arrangements.

Jacana and Rimfire Energy have implemented revised pricing for grid-connected schools. Estimates for the 75 grid-connected schools accessing electricity from Jacana and Rimfire Energy indicate an additional cost of \$0.83 million for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025, based on the revised pricing and prior year monthly consumption for the same period. As a result, additional funding based on these estimates were provided to schools to support with increased electricity costs arising from the electricity pricing reforms. Actual costs cannot be determined at this time as invoices have not been received for the full period.

For remaining schools under Indigenous Essential Services (managed by PowerWater) or other third-party suppliers, CSO changes have not yet been applied. Additional funding will be provided once these changes are confirmed.

**3. Please provide the expected total cost of public school electricity in each year of the forward estimates.**

CSO adjustments are still being implemented by electricity retailers and vary by school location. As such, the expected total cost of public school electricity in each year of the forward estimates cannot be provided at this time.

It is noted that each year schools are notified of their annual funding allocation in October in the year prior to the funding year, including facility funding which is used for essential services such as electricity. When allocating funding in future years, the department will ensure schools impacted by the electricity pricing reforms have sufficient funding so that they are not required to divert resources away from teaching and learning programs.