

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Higgins to the Chief Minister:

Appropriation Bill – Department of the Chief Minister

Please provide copies of:

- All questions, which have been received from the public in relation to the Estimates process and consideration of the Appropriation Bill for the 2017/18 financial year; and
- The answers to those questions that were presented to the Estimates Committee.

Please provide the information requested below for Agencies and Government authorities for which you have responsibility, as at 31 March 2017.

DEPARTMENT OF THE CHIEF MINISTER

Please accept apologies if questions are not under the correct Output. Where this is the case, it would be appreciated if you could indicate the appropriate Output in your response. Thank You.

OUTPUT GROUP: ADVICE AND COORDINATION

OUTPUT: STRATEGIC POLICY COORDINATION AND ENGAGEMENT

1. Please explain what this Output includes in terms of functions.
2. How was the funding allocation for this output determined? Please explain the outcomes that can be expected.
3. With such a large debt, the government's advice to CEOs to find savings and the reduction in overall staffing in the Department of Chief Minister, why is it necessary to have two ECO5 positions at an annual minimum remuneration package each of \$307,000?

Royal Commission

1. What is the projected NT government expenditure for the Royal Commission into the Protection and Detention of Children in the

Northern Territory and how does this differ from the original budget allocation?

2. What has the increase in costs included?
3. When will the Royal Commission's findings be handed down and how does this timetable differ from when the Royal Commission was announced?
4. Why has the timeline blown out?
5. What proposals have been anticipated in line with the hearings to date and what funding proposals have been submitted to the Commonwealth Government?

Fracking

1. Please advise if a decision after receipt of the interim report from the Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry will be made. If not, why not?

Capital Cities Agenda

1. What is included in the Capital Cities agenda and what specifically does it cover?
2. Please provide copies of submissions made to the Commonwealth Government.
3. In relation to the Capital Cities agenda what submissions have been made by the Darwin City and Alice Springs Councils and how do these relate to NT Government submissions?

Building Better Region's Fund

1. What submissions have been made to the Commonwealth Government's Building Better Region's Fund and please provide copies of the submissions.

50% Renewable Energy by 2030

1. Please outline the methodology utilised in arriving at a 50% renewable energy target by 2030.

2. What impact will a 50% renewable target have on the Territory economy? What modelling or research has been done to this end? Please provide a copy.
3. Why is the Minister spending \$700,000 minimum on an additional report at a time when Territory families are tightening their belts and experiencing a massive blow out in debt and interest payments?

Strategic Partnership Agreement

A MOU was signed between SA Premier Dean Brown and NT Chief Minister Shane Stone in Alice Springs on June 15, 1995. The signing of a joint strategic agreement between the Northern Territory and South Australia governments in May 2017 replaces the five year Memorandum of Understanding signed between SA Premier Jay Weatherill and former Chief Minister Adam Giles in Canberra on April 17, 2015 – just over two years ago.

1. Why was it necessary to throw this 2015 MOU out and replace it with a Strategic Partnership Agreement that seems to be more about style rather than substance?
2. What is the cost of the new website, the new logo and the marketing material to support the stated ‘unprecedented and historic agreement’?

OUTPUT: REGIONAL COORDINATION AND ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

Indigenous Employment

1. In the Labor Party’s Northern Territory Jobs Plan, there is reference to an Indigenous Innovation Project. What specifically will this be, and how much it will cost?

Regional Coordination and Aboriginal Affairs

1. What is the cost of the Aboriginal Affairs Unit and how many staff does it comprise?
2. Is it correct that the level of the position of Executive Director Aboriginal Affairs and its importance has been downgraded from ECO3 to ECO2?
3. The Kenbi Land Claim was finalised in the term of the last government. A whole of government Working Group was established to oversee the implementation. Please advise what expenditure and staffing has been allocated to this and what is the action underway and proposed.

4. What are the specific items associated with the settlement and what is the cost of each?
5. How many outstanding Aboriginal land claims are there? What are they and what are the plans and timetables for their resolution?
6. How many staff are engaged in the process of settlement of these claims including the number of Indigenous employees?
7. How many meetings has the Aboriginal Affairs unit conducted with Land Councils and how many Indigenous staff are involved in these meetings?
8. What action has been undertaken since the Economic Development workshop held at Lake Bennet that included traditional owners and key stakeholders of the Wadeye community, the largest Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory?
9. What process was put in place to engage with Aboriginal communities including the largest communities such as Wadeye, Maningrida, Galuwinku in the Economic Development Summit process?
10. How many staff are engaged by the department in regional centres?
11. What are the specific staffing numbers, location and cost for each regional centre? Please provide a copy of each location's plans.
12. What are the numbers of Indigenous staff in each location?
13. The previous government committed additional resources and effort including CEOs as Community Champions of regional areas. How many Community Champions are there now and in what communities?
14. Is it correct that there is no longer a budget provision for this? Why is this the case?

OUTPUT GROUP: GOVERNMENT BUSINESS SUPPORT

OUTPUT: SUPPORT TO MINISTERS AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

Ministerial Expenses

1. Please provide a full breakdown of all ministerial office expenditure since 1 September 2016.
2. Is it true that Union Liaison Officers have been employed in the Office of the Chief Minister?

3. Please explain why the government considers it appropriate for taxpayers to pay for Union Liaison Officers?
4. Please provide a full breakdown of Ministerial Intrastate, Interstate and International travel, including names of all travellers (Minister, spouse, nominee, staff and persons external to Government), accommodation, travel allowance, entertainment, car rental, meals and incidentals.
5. Please provide a full breakdown of charter travel, across Intrastate, Interstate and International travel categories, including names of all travellers (Minister, spouse, nominee, staff and persons external to Government), and details of all costs against each traveller, ie the cost of the charter, accommodation, travel allowance, entertainment, car rental, meals and incidentals.

Note: Some of the information being requested in 4 and 5 above was provided in response to the Agency Administration questions received on 9 June 2017, but not all.

Trade Delegation to China

1. Why was it necessary for 13 public servants to travel to Japan, Korea and China in October and November 2016?

Germany and Netherlands Overseas Travel

1. Please explain how meetings in Europe contributed to the achievement of the ship lift facility which was the recorded purpose of the travel.

OUTPUT: GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Communications and Marketing

1. Detail the operations and outcomes of the Strategic Communications and Engagement Unit as compared with the previous Communication and Marketing Bureau. Please include:
 - a. The number of staff
 - b. Salaries and operational costs
 - c. The funding component covered by intra-sector transfers
2. What marketing and public relations functions have been transferred to agencies?

OUTPUT GROUP: CORPORATE AND GOVERNANCE

OUTPUT: CORPORATE AND GOVERNANCE

Staffing

1. How many Full Time Equivalents are currently employed within this Agency, broken down by Output and Business Unit?
2. How many Full Time Equivalents have resigned, retired, taken a redundancy package or have been made redundant, or terminated? Please break down these numbers by Output and Business Unit?
3. What has happened to these positions? Has the work been reallocated to existing staff?
4. Are there any plans to fill these positions in the near future?
5. Please advise the amount of travel allowance per trip and for what duration that has been paid to the Member for Barkly in his capacity as a Minister for travel to Darwin from 1 July 2009 to 31 March 2017.
6. Please advise whether a copy of a lease agreement from the Member for Barkly for accommodation used whilst he is on official business as a Minister in Darwin has been received.
7. If the answer to question 6 is yes, please advise what the address is, the terms of the lease agreement and when the original or copy of this agreement was provided.

Procurement

1. Please provide the reasons why the following tenders were awarded interstate and secondly why they were done by select tender?
 - a. Development of an Early Childhood Development Plan to a Victorian Company at a cost of \$126,584
 - b. Review of Aboriginal Engagement with the NT justice System to a NSW Company at a cost of \$18, 409

Travel

1. How is the practice of combining private and official travel properly assessed and administered under Section 5.1.6.1 of the NTG Travel Policy?
2. Would a different view be taken to a one off trip of this nature compared to a pattern of similar trip requests?

3. Please advise if mini-bar expenses are in fact allowed when used for the sole purpose of refreshments, not for official hospitality and not for bottled or canned water in countries where tap water is not drinkable.
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