



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier and Finance

THE LEGISLATURE

Hearing: 2 March 2022

Answers due by: 30 March 2022

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THE LEGISLATURE

Questions from the Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC *(on behalf of the Opposition)*

Close captioning

1. Is the project to introduce close captioning services to NSW Parliament on budget?

The capital costs for closed captioning were approximately \$20,000 under budget and the recurrent costs are within the operational budget allocation.

2. **When will the NSW Parliament introduce captioning in-line for coverage of Parliamentary broadcasts and events?**

The contract with AI Media is to provide live captioning for all Chamber and Committee broadcasts, not other events that are live streamed from Parliament House.

The launch of live captioning is dependent on replacing the existing web stream player on the public website (since the old technology is unable to handle live captioning) and approval being given by the House and committees. The new public web stream player is ready to replace the old in the next non-sitting period; otherwise, the technology work for live captioning is complete.

Consultation is underway with the procedure and committee staff of both Houses to authorise the inclusion of captioning on the Parliament's broadcasts and the captioning will be ready to go live once both Houses have agreed, and the new public web stream player is switched on.

Staff statistics

3. Can you please provide statistics on the full-time equivalent numbers of middle and upper management from 2019 to present?

Full-time Equivalent numbers for Department of Parliamentary Services

Period Ended	BAU	Project
FTE 30 June 2019	27.76	
FTE 30 June 2020	31.70	
FTE 30 June 2021	33.90	14.90
FTE 30 June 2022	37.40	15.70

Department of Parliamentary Services was awarded a large capital investment in July 2020 for Digital Transformation. This has resulted in a temporary increase of FTE in middle and upper management roles. The roles are mainly Senior Project Managers and Project Managers and are reflected separately in the 2021 and 2022 years above. It should be noted that in August 2019 DPS assumed responsibility for the support of the 98 Electorate Offices across the state, and in 2020 a DPS restructure as well as the addition of the Communications, Engagement and Education team resulted in some further resourcing.

Legislative Council Response

In 2019 there were 4 senior officers (upper management defined as above grade 11/12) in the Department of the Legislative Council and 5 permanent and one temporary middle manager. Presently there are 4 senior officers, 7 permanent and one temporary middle manager, the extra positions resulting from the expanded committee and SO 52 workload.

4. Can you provide the statistics for full-time equivalent people in front line roles, i.e. not middle or upper management, from 2019 to present?

Full-time Equivalent numbers for Department of Parliamentary Services.

Period Ended	FTE's
FTE 30 June 2019	164.69
FTE 30 June 2020	153.68
FTE 30 June 2021	173.29
FTE 28 Feb 2022	170.79

As per the commentary above, these figures reflect an increase in both business as usual (BAU) and project team staff. These figures also incorporate the increase in Electorate Office support staff moving into DPS.

Legislative Council response

In 2019 there were 30 FTE staff not in management roles in the Department of the LC. There are currently 43 FTE staff not in management roles (some of these are temporary positions). Almost all of these additional staff are in the committees section (although we still have more inquiries than committee staff.)

5. Can you provide a list of all DPS employment grades by the number of staff in each grade?

Grade	Count
Clerk Grade 1/2	3
Clerk Grade 2	1
Clerk Grade 3/4	25
Clerk Grade 5/6	23
Clerk Grade 7/8	36
Clerk Grade 9/10	44
Clerk Grade 11/12	25
Above Grade	4
SES Banded	5
SOORT	1
Kitchen Attendant	3
Catering	5
Librarian Assistant	1
Librarian Grade 2	2
Librarian Grade 3	2
Library Technician Grade 2	3
Full Time Cleaner	6
Part Time Cleaner	12
Reporter	17
Senior Reporter	2
Subeditor	10
Senior Subeditor	1
Deputy Editor	1
Total	232

*Please note that this is headcount of people.

6. **What is the overall level of non-member full-time equivalent's employed by the NSW Parliament for the 2021 financial year compared to the 2020 financial year?**

	2020	2021
Non-Member FTE (DPS & LC)	251.69	313.85

Disabilities

7. **How many members of staff who work in the NSW Parliament in senior management identify as having a disability?**

Department of Parliamentary Services

Nil reported

Legislative Council response

None in the LC senior staff

Auslan interpreters

8. **When will the NSW Parliament provide regular Auslan interpreters to events, regular coverage and press conferences held in Parliament?**
 - Press conferences held at Parliament House are a matter for the minister or member holding the press conference.
 - The Legislative Council Procedure Committee has recently received a reference to inquire into the use of AUSLAN interpreters in sittings of the House.

Special Constables Remuneration

9. **Will the President make a commitment to make representations to the Minister regarding the remuneration of Special Constables?**

The Special Constables perform a valuable and appreciated service protecting Parliament. Remuneration of the Special Constables is a matter for NSW Police, and it would not be appropriate for the Parliament to interfere in that employment relationship.

eReturns

10. **Will Members' staff be involved in the consultation process for the eReturns project?**

Legislative Council response

Members were recently offered the opportunity to participate in a consultation session for the eReturns project. No expressions of interest were received. Members are welcome to nominate their staff to represent them for the purposes of such consultations. A further opportunity for members and their staff will be offered during development of Stage Three, the most complex stage in the project. A timeframe for development of Stage 3 will be determined following the Procedure Committee's report on the Standing Orders review

Procurement

11. Is there a target for local procurement for items sourced for NSW Parliament?

Overall

The Parliament's administration prioritises local procurement in the following order:

1. NSW
2. Australia
3. Overseas

Specific details of the approach taken in our key purchasing areas is outlined below.

Parliamentary catering

With the recent series of varying environmental disasters felt across NSW, Parliament's support of its local suppliers remains a priority. Due to the damage caused by these disasters, the declining availability of locally produced goods is being felt across the sector and many industries, making value for money and competitive pricing difficult to maintain. However the catering branch continues to seek avenues to increase its support of local producers from across the state in all of our offerings; from food and beverage to locally made and sourced souvenirs in our gift shop, including indigenous made or designed goods.

The catering team has an ongoing relationship with suppliers to maintain sourcing of NSW produce to support local producers and monitor price fluctuations. Catering also receives regular updates on these price fluctuations from our suppliers.

Please see below, a breakdown of our locally sourced produce:

DAIRY:	Riverina, NSW
BEEF:	Grain fed, Predominantly Riverina NSW Pasture fed, Predominantly Riverina NSW, Gippsland VIC, Tasmania
LAMB:	Predominantly Southern and North west NSW
PORK:	Predominantly Northern Rivers Region of NSW, can also be sourced from Queensland depending on availability
WAGYU:	Predominantly Riverina NSW
SEAFOOD:	NSW, Victoria, QLD, NZ, Tasmania
POULTRY:	Central Coast, Peats Ridge, Mangrove Mountain, NSW
VEGETABLES:	NSW, QLD, Victoria. Small amounts from SA and NZ
EGGS:	Pace Farm; regional, mostly across NSW
BUTTER:	Pepe Saya; regional, mostly across NSW
WINE:	100% across regional NSW
BEER:	With the exception of Peroni, (due to popularity) all beer is from NSW
SPIRITS:	A varied split from NSW and international due to price constraints.

GIFTS:	Varied with an increased focus on indigenous and rural products.
COFFEE/TEA:	Rush Coffee Roasters, Bowral NSW MacKellar Range, Hogarth Range, NSW Maduja Tea, Murwillumbah (and surrounds) NSW

The catering procurement guidelines can be made available on request.

Capital works

Our capital works program aims to use Australian made products, in particular products sourced from New South Wales, wherever possible, recent Australian made procurements include:

- Carpet (NSW)
- Storm water pits and lids (NSW)
- Tower Block membrane engineered screed (NSW)
- Tower Block membrane pipe supports (NSW)
- Air condition units (Assembled in NSW)
- Workplace sit to stand desks (Assembled in NSW)
- Furniture for new workspaces (NSW and VIC)
- Toilets and tapware (NSW and SA)

Information technology

Although most technology is produced overseas, our technology procurement exercises aim to involve NSW-based vendors where possible, for instance as local resellers for overseas suppliers.

For the major broadcast system replacement project, DPS followed NSW Procurement's *Small and Medium Enterprise and Regional Procurement Policy*, with all vendors based in NSW. All our other Audiovisual projects (Strangers' and Members' Dining Room, IPTV, Parliament on Demand and live captioning) have been sourced from NSW-based suppliers.

For the major works to migrate to Microsoft 365 and to renew and increase capacity of Parliament networks including wi-fi, Parliament engaged DXC Australia Pty Ltd which is headquartered in Sydney and is a subsidiary of a global multinational.

Video on demand

12. **In the answer to the following question on notice from the October 2021 Budget Estimates hearing for this portfolio regarding closed captioning, “Just on notice, is that going to be hard-coded into the video or is that going to be separately available?” it was said that chapter markers in videos and Hansard-like tables of contents would be introduced on Parliament’s video on demand platform over the summer break. Currently when you select a past Legislative Council sitting day, a section at the top says “Session chapters. No Data.” Are you able to confirm when session chapters will be added to the videos of Legislative Council sitting days?**

The inclusion of chapter markers and tables of content for videos in Parliament on Demand is a manual process undertaken by the Audiovisual (AV) team. The additional features were launched prior to the resumption of sittings in February and the AV project team is compiling metrics for how much time/effort is required to add the additional metadata. After the March sittings conclude and more data is gathered, the AV project team will develop a schedule not only for adding metadata to existing videos but also for uploading videos currently unavailable in Parliament on Demand. The initial scope for this phase of the project will be for recordings to be uploaded back to August 2018, when high-quality recordings were first available in the Parliament.

The user interface for Parliament on Demand will be reworked in mid-2022 to take advantage of the additional metadata and allow members and staff to more easily find recordings in the system.

Technological improvements

13. **In the answer to supplementary question number 14 submitted for this portfolio for the October 2021 Budget Estimates, it was said that a formal request to deliver e-divisions would be made at the next meeting of the Digital Transformation Board. Was this request made to the Digital Transformation Board?**

Yes.

The LC eDivisions item was placed on the Digital Parliament Applications “products for prioritisation” list at the 6 December 2021 Digital Parliament Applications Board Meeting.

- (a) **Is there a timeline for when e-divisions can be delivered?**

None determined at this point.

The LC eDivisions item will be discussed by the Digital Parliament Applications Board among other requested items in its future prioritisation discussions.

14. **In the answer to supplementary question number 15 submitted for this portfolio for the October 2021 Budget Estimates, it was said that this financial year, works to renew and increase capacity of Parliament networks including wi-fi and connection to the internet are due to be completed. Are these upgrades on track to be completed by the end of the financial year?**

Some of the works are already completed – notably the increased capacity in the Parliament’s internet gateway which has noticeably reduced videoconferencing congestion.

The remainder of the upgrade works, including the full upgrade of wi-fi at Parliament House, are on track to be completed by the end of the financial year with one exception – delivery of replacement routers, which have now been delayed by the supplier by a total of 12 months to August 2022 because of Covid-related supply chain issues. However, these routers are a relatively small part of the upgrade and will not have a major impact on network performance.

15. **Members have found it difficult to find charging ports to use for their laptops during committee hearings and Budget Estimates hearings. Will the Parliament ensure that there are permanent charging ports available for Members to charge their laptops during committee hearings and Budget Estimates hearings?**

The broadcast system replacement project will include additional charging ports in its design for the committee rooms, but given that the Jubilee Room is not scheduled to be upgraded until the end of 2022, the AV team will provide a short-term solution for members during April 2022.