

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

**ANSWERS TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS
2021-22 BUDGET ESTIMATES**

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asked:

- 1) I refer to the electric vehicle strategy under the New Initiatives section on page 680 of the Western Australia State Budget 2021-22 Paper 2, Volume 2. I ask what will the funding allocation of \$20,000 per year over four years be spent on and what are the expected deliverables for this spend?

Answer:

The funding of \$20,000 per year over four years is to raise awareness of electric vehicles and related technology, including charging infrastructure, to support increased uptake in Western Australia in line with the *State Electric Vehicle Strategy for Western Australia*.

In 2020-21, a brochure was produced providing practical information about the features, operation and benefits of electric vehicles in the context of Western Australia to support their adoption. This brochure is available on the Western Australian Government website as a resource for fleet managers and individuals.

Part of the 2021-22 funding was provided to support an electric vehicle conference and exhibition – *iDriveWA: Towards Zero Emissions* held 4 November 2021. This event provided a hands-on experience (including test drives) for stakeholders such as fleet buyers, industry, business and community members to learn from suppliers about electric vehicles and charging technology.



- 2) I refer to the Western Australian Climate Policy under the New Initiatives section on page 680 of the Western Australia State Budget 2021-22 Paper 2, Volume 2. I ask what will the funding allocation for the Policy be spent on and what are the expected reductions in greenhouse gas emissions as a result of this spend?

Answer:

Funding is allocated to the \$3.1 million Climate Science Initiative to provide an authoritative data source and method of incorporating climate related data into planning, decision-making and risk mitigation, and the \$500,000 Regional Climate Alliance which will encourage regional local governments to reduce emissions.

Additional funding of \$1.693 million is allocated over four years to support the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation implement new initiatives in the Western Australian Climate Policy. This includes establishing requirements for State Government agencies and Government Trading Enterprises to prepare net zero transition plans, development of a Climate Risk Framework and development of sectoral emissions reduction strategies.

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3) I refer to the Western Australian Climate Policy under the New Initiatives section on page 680 of the Western Australia State Budget 2021-22 Paper 2, Volume 2. I ask:

- (a) How many additional full time employees are required to undertake the actions outlined in the Policy; and

Answer:

An additional three full time employees were allocated to support implementation of the Western Australian Climate Policy.

- (b) What other additional resourcing is allocated to the Department to undertake and report on the actions outlined in the Policy?

Answer:

See answers to questions 1 and 2 above.

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4) I refer to the Western Australian Climate Policy listed in the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's table of Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies on page 698 of the Western Australia State Budget 2021-22 Budget Paper 2 Volume 2, and I ask:

- (a) What are the expected reductions in Western Australia's greenhouse gas emissions for 2021-21 and 2022-23 as a result of this spend; and

Answer:

The \$500,000 Regional Climate Alliance pilot program is part of the Western Australian Climate Policy, and encourages regional local governments to work together to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

To date, two alliances have received funding. They are:

- South Coast Alliance Inc - including the City of Albany, and the shires of Denmark, Jerramungup and Plantagenet; and
- Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils – including the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, and the shires of Coolgardie, Dundas, Esperance, Laverton, Leonora, Menzies, Ngaanyatjarraku and Wiluna.

South Coast Alliance Inc accounts for about 83 per cent of the Great Southern population, and is undertaking projects that reduce emissions from fleet vehicles and waste, and improve bushfire preparedness and management.

The Goldfields Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils is an established partnership between local governments in the Goldfields region and will progress projects that reduce the increased risk of bushfires, mitigate the impacts of drought and improve the uptake of renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions.

The program will be evaluated following implementation of the pilot and provide further information on outcomes.

- (b) What is the funding allocation for the Western Australian Climate Policy beyond 2023?

Answer:

Funding for the Western Australian Climate Policy has only been allocated for the current budget cycle out-years.



5) I refer to note 3 of the "Significant Issues Impacting the Agency – Climate Change" section on page 681 of Western Australia State Budget 2021-22 Paper 2, Volume 2, referring to "the proposed Native Vegetation Policy for Western Australia, which recognises native vegetation's role in mitigating climate change and the need to manage its impacts to native vegetation...The policy will also drive improved strategic coordination, consistency and transparency in the Government's management and protection of native vegetation, along with an improved evidence base for policy and decision-making". I ask was any money allocated in the recent budget to map and monitor the state's native vegetation extent as indicated in the explanatory notes for the draft Native Vegetation Policy for Western Australia?

Answer:

No money was allocated in the 2021-22 budget.

The State Government undertook public consultation between 30 August 2021 and 25 October 2021 on the draft Native Vegetation Policy for Western Australia and its proposed roadmap of actions to achieve the policy's outcomes.

Submissions received during the consultation period are currently being reviewed. The Government will make a decision on the draft policy and the proposed roadmap of actions following consideration of these submissions.

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6) I refer to note 1 on page 691 of Western Australia State Budget 2021-22 Paper 2 Volume 2 highlighting a decrease in the total cost of service due to a deferral of grants and subsidies from the Clean Energy Future Fund, and I ask:

(a) Why have Clean Energy Future Fund grants been deferred;

Answer:

Grants are paid on the completion of project milestones to manage risk and ensure value for money. Funding is deferred where projected expenditure for clean energy projects has not yet been incurred.

(b) Have there been any successful funding applications in round 2 of the clean energy future fund;

Answer:

Round two applications are currently being assessed and successful funding applications will be announced by the Minister for Climate Action and the Minister for Energy in coming months.

(c) How does the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation intend to achieve the anticipated greenhouse gas emissions reductions of the Clean Energy Future Fund if grants are being deferred; and

Answer:

Emissions reductions will be achieved when the projects are completed.

(d) How many additional FTE resources are allocated to the Department to administer the Clean Energy Future Fund and other actions in the Western Australian Climate Change Policy?

Answer:

One FTE was allocated to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation when the Clean Energy Future Fund was established. See question 3(a) for additional FTE for the Western Australian Climate Policy implementation.

