

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

C1) Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right. Earlier today we had budget estimates for the Department of Justice and the State Solicitor's Office, and they both confirmed that neither of them paid for the Attorney General's flight back to Sydney to redo his evidence in court. Was it the Department of the Premier and Cabinet that funded that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I could not answer that question; I would not have it here. I am happy to take it on notice, honourable member.

Answer: The flight was paid from within the allocated Ministerial Office budget, provided to each Minister as well as the Leader of the Opposition, which forms part of the overall Departmental budget.

Minister's Initials



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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

C3) Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How much have these matters for unfair dismissal cases brought by electorate officers cost?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not have that information here, honourable member.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: All right; but it is able to be obtained by the department?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can ask.

Answer: Costs associated with defending one proceeding commenced by a former electorate officer before the Public Service Appeal Board (PSAB 31 of 2020) have been incurred. Those proceedings have not concluded and in those circumstances it would not be appropriate to disclose the total costs incurred.

Minister's Initials



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

C4) Department of the Premier and Cabinet

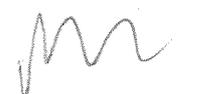
The CHAIR: I have just got a quick one before I go back to Hon Dr Steve Thomas. Just with regard to electorate offices—one in particular, for Hon Neil Thomson; it might be for the director general, this one—what is the status of his office? It has now been over 12 months.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will take it on notice. We do not have any detail on the status.

Answer: Following the election of Hon Neil Thomson MLC in May 2021, he was offered an office in Boulder (which was used by the previous member and is located in close proximity to Kalgoorlie), until a suitable office in his preferred location of Kalgoorlie was identified.

Mr Thomson preferred to stay based in Broome, until an office in Kalgoorlie could be found. The Department of Finance is currently negotiating with a landlord in Kalgoorlie to secure a lease.

Minister's Initials



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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

C5) Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Thank you, chair. I might just follow that one up. Minister, can you give us an indication of how many new offices have been created since the election in March 2021 and how many of those are government offices?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I can, I will. I am going to have to take that on notice. I do not have a list here.

Answer: Eight new offices have been leased since 2021 State election.

1. Member for Victoria Park – the Department could not agree on lease terms with previous office landlord;
2. Member for Hillarys – no disability access and poor community access, with the previous office on the first floor with access by stairs only;
3. Member for Albany – no disability access and poor property condition;
4. Member for Landsdale – previous Electorate Office was outside of the new electoral boundaries, following the redistribution at the 2021 State Election;
5. Hon Jackie Jarvis MLC – the Department could not agree on lease terms with previous office landlord;
6. Hon Steve Martin MLC – Member requested office relocation;
7. Hon Shelley Payne MLC – no disability access and poor property condition; and
8. Hon Brad Pettitt MLC – the Department terminated the previous lease due to high costs.

Minister's Initials



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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

C6) Department of the Premier and Cabinet

The CHAIR: I just have one question before we wrap up, unless there is anything else. Can I just confirm, in regard to our electorate offices, that we cannot have labelling of political parties on those offices?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is what I have been told for 21 years.

The CHAIR: Yes, that is absolutely what I have been told, and I am hearing some contradictory advice lately, but has that shifted?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The director general is not aware, but we will take that on notice.

Answer: There have not been changes. In accordance with the Parliamentary Electorate Office Handbook – *"Signs will not include any reference to a Member's political party"*.

Minister's Initials



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