



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

2023-24-25-26

FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

No. 706

WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2026

(The Questions and Answers Paper published on Monday to Friday of each week will contain, by number and title, all questions to which answers have been received the previous day and any new questions asked that day. Consequently, the full text of any question will be printed only twice: when notice is given; and, when answered.)

Notice given on date shown.

Publication of Questions	Answer to be lodged by
Q & A No. 691 (Including Question Nos 5070 to 5071)	25 March 2026
Q & A No. 692 (Including Question Nos 5072 to 5072)	26 March 2026
Q & A No. 693 (Including Question Nos 5073 to 5073)	27 March 2026
Q & A No. 694 (Including Question Nos 5074 to 5077)	30 March 2026
Q & A No. 695 (Including Question Nos 5078 to 5078)	31 March 2026
Q & A No. 696 (Including Question Nos 5079 to 5079)	1 April 2026
Q & A No. 697 (Including Question Nos 5080 to 5092)	2 April 2026
Q & A No. 698 (Including Question Nos 5093 to 5094)	7 April 2026
Q & A No. 699 (Including Question Nos 5095 to 5096)	8 April 2026
Q & A No. 700 (Including Question Nos 5097 to 5100)	9 April 2026
Q & A No. 701 (Including Question Nos 5103 to 5104)	10 April 2026
Q & A No. 702 (Including Question Nos 5105 to 5160)	13 April 2026
Q & A No. 703 (Including Question Nos 5161 to 5174)	14 April 2026
Q & A No. 704 (Including Question Nos 5175 to 5175)	15 April 2026
Q & A No. 705 (Questions—Nil)	-
Q & A No. 706 (Including Question Nos 5176 to 5179)	17 April 2026

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(Paper No. 691)

* 5070 TRANSPORT—LIFT AT BROOKVALE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE—The Hon. Natalie Ward to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Transport, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy—

- (1) Since installation, on how many occasions has Lift 1 on the eastern side of the Brookvale Pedestrian Bridge been out of service, broken down, or otherwise closed to the public, listed by month and year?
 - (a) For each occasion listed above, how many hours, days, weeks, or months was the lift out of service, broken down, or closed to the public?
- (2) What has been the total cost to date incurred by the Government for the maintenance and repair of Lift 1, including but not limited to:
 - (a) routine maintenance?
 - (b) unplanned repairs?
 - (c) the cost of acquiring and replacing parts?
- (3) Has the Government, Transport for NSW, or Connect Sydney identified the underlying issues that are causing Lift 1 to repeatedly break down or be closed to the public?
 - (a) If so, what are those issues?
 - (i) What measures have been, or will be undertaken to address them?

Answer—

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Roads.

* 5071 AGRICULTURE—NSW FOOD AUTHORITY—Ms Abigail Boyd to ask the Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Western New South Wales—

- (1) In the NSW Food Authority annual report for Financial Year 2024-2025, can you please explain the 64 per cent increase in audit failure rate over three years?
 - (a) Are failures concentrated in particular sectors, for example, meat, plant products, dairy, or imports?
 - (i) If so, can you please explain and break down by year as well as by sector?
 - (b) How many businesses are repeat offenders?
- (2) Does a failed audit automatically trigger a follow-up inspection, or is it discretionary?
- (3) How many days following a failed audit does re-inspection occur?
- (4) What proportion were administrative versus critical food safety breaches?
- (5) How many of the 196 audit failures in Financial Year 2022-2023 required follow-up inspections?
 - (a) How many were escalated to penalty notices?
 - (b) How many were escalated to prosecution?
- (6) How many of the 210 audit failures in Financial Year 2023-2024 required follow-up inspections?
 - (a) How many were escalated to penalty notices?
 - (b) How many were escalated to prosecution?
- (7) How many of the 233 audit failures in Financial Year 2024-2025 required follow-up inspections?
 - (a) How many were escalated to penalty notices?

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- (b) How many were escalated to prosecution?
- (8) In each financial year for 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, how many businesses failed an audit more than once in the same year?
- (9) In each financial year for 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, of all businesses that failed an audit, how many:
- (a) had failed in a previous year?
 - (b) received multiple improvement notices?
 - (c) escalated to prosecution?
 - (d) had their licence suspended or cancelled?
- (10) Compliance and enforcement statistics (enforcement actions) on page 43 of the NSW Food Authority annual report for Financial Year 2024-2025 indicates a 53 per cent rise in foodborne illness investigations in two years. Are these outbreaks linked to specific industries?
- (a) If so, which industries are they linked to?
 - (b) How many of the foodborne illness investigations were traced to repeat operators?
 - (c) What proportion of the foodborne illness involved imported food versus domestic production?
 - (d) How many of the 439 labelling investigations were proactive versus complaint-driven?
- (11) In each financial year for 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, how many complaints:
- (a) resulted in a site inspection?
 - (b) resulted in a formal investigation?
 - (c) resulted in enforcement action?
 - (d) were closed with no further action?
 - (e) were referred to local councils?
 - (f) related to repeat operators?
- (12) In each financial year for 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, and currently, what is the average time taken to respond to complaints?
- (13) There were zero prosecutions finalised in Financial Year 2022-2023, 46 in Financial Year 2023-2024 and four in Financial Year 2024-2025. What accounts for the fluctuation in the number of prosecutions finalised across the three years?
- (a) In each financial year, how many matters were referred for prosecution but not pursued?
 - (b) During the three financial years, has there been any change in enforcement policy or legal resourcing?
 - (c) Can you please explain why there were zero licence cancellations and zero emergency orders across all three financial years?
- (14) There were three product seizures in Financial Year 2022-2023, ten in Financial Year 2023-2024 and eight in Financial Year 2024-2025. For each seizure event across the three financial years, can you please answer the following questions?
- (a) What was the nature of the offence?
 - (b) Was the business licensed at the time?
 - (c) Was the business a repeat offender?
- (15) In each financial year for 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, how many seizures involved:
- (a) unlicensed activity?
 - (b) non-compliant meat stamps?

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- (c) unidentified or unbranded meat?
 - (d) raw milk breaches?
 - (e) unstamped eggs?
- (16) In each financial year for 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025, can you please answer the following questions?
- (a) Did any seized product enter the retail, wholesale or food service supply chain before detection?
 - (i) If so, can you please provide details for each instance?
 - (b) Were species identification tests conducted where unidentified meat was seized?
 - (c) Did any seizure event lead to prosecution or licence cancellation?
 - (d) How many total product seizures were conducted across all commodities?
 - (e) Of the seizures listed such as meat products, dairy, eggs, how many involved:
 - (i) repeat offenders?
 - (ii) businesses previously subject to enforcement action?
 - (iii) businesses with prior improvement notices or warning letters?
 - (f) How many of the identified meat processors and abattoirs had previously been found non-compliant with:
 - (i) standard 3.2.1 (Food Safety Programs)?
 - (ii) the Food Regulation 2015?
 - (iii) licensing requirements?
 - (g) For each seizure listed, what was the date of the last regulatory inspection prior to the seizure?
 - (h) Were any of the seized businesses operating under a current food safety program approval at the time of the offence?
 - (i) Following the seizures listed, can you please answer the following questions?
 - (i) How many prosecutions have been commenced?
 - (ii) How many penalty infringement notices have been issued?
 - (iii) What is the total value of fines imposed to date?
 - (j) For each case involving "unlicensed activity", how long had the businesses been operating before detection?
 - (k) Were any licences suspended or cancelled as a result of these breaches?
- (17) In relation to the seizure of 1.5 pallets of unbranded carcass and unidentified meat outlined on page 44 of the annual report for 2024-25, can you please answer the following questions?
- (a) Was the source of the meat traced?
 - (b) Were consumers exposed to risk?
 - (c) Were recalls required?
 - (d) What happened to the operator?
- (18) Does the NSW Food Authority publish the names of all offending operators, for example, unlicensed abattoirs, meat processors, knackerries, animal food processing plants and other businesses?
- (a) If so, where is this recorded?
 - (b) If not, why?

(19) In each financial year between 2014-2015 and 2024-2025, how many unlicensed operators did the NSW Food Authority become aware of?

(a) Can you please break this down by the different types of businesses?

Answer—

I am advised:

- The NSW Food Authority operates to a Compliance & Enforcement Policy, which is available on the DPIRD website [Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#).
- Industry specific audit failure rates can change from previous years due to targeted audit compliance programs being implemented within certain sectors, in response to complaint intelligence and review of historical sector compliance levels. In cases where increased non-compliance is identified, enforcement actions and additional audits and inspections are conducted to ensure that food safety standards are maintained at required levels.
- Audits conducted by the NSW Food Authority are a comprehensive assessment of all food safety and legislative controls licensed businesses are required to comply with to ensure safe and suitable food.
- Where audit failures are recorded the NSW Food Authority implements a graduated enforcement response in line with the Compliance & Enforcement Policy. Additional inspections will be conducted as required to ensure that effective and immediate corrective actions have been implemented by the licensed business.
- An additional audit will be assigned to be conducted as a follow up to assess compliance with issues identified during the initial audit.
- The NSW Food Authority operates to a Compliance & Enforcement Policy which requires enforcement actions to be implemented on a graduated basis, depending on the severity of the identified breach and the risk to public health. In cases where product seizures are recorded, additional enforcement actions will be assessed through this policy to determine the appropriate penalty.

25 MARCH 2026

(Paper No. 706)

5176 HEALTH—EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT NURSES—The Hon. Sarah Mitchell to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast—

(1) How many emergency department nurses were recruited in the following local health districts (LHDs) in 2023:

- (a) Central Coast?
- (b) Far West?
- (c) Hunter New England?
- (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
- (e) Mid North Coast?
- (f) Murrumbidgee?
- (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
- (h) Northern NSW?
- (i) Southern NSW?
- (j) Western NSW?

(2) How many emergency department nurses were recruited in the following LHDs in 2024:

- (a) Central Coast?
- (b) Far West?

- (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?
 - (i) Southern NSW?
 - (j) Western NSW?
- (3) How many emergency department nurses were recruited in the following LHDs in 2025:
- (a) Central Coast?
 - (b) Far West?
 - (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?
 - (i) Southern NSW?
 - (j) Western NSW?
- (4) How many emergency department nurses were recruited in the following LHDs in 2026 to date:
- (a) Central Coast?
 - (b) Far West?
 - (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?
 - (i) Southern NSW?
 - (j) Western NSW?
- (5) How many emergency department nurses have departed the in the following LHDs in 2023:
- (a) Central Coast?
 - (b) Far West?
 - (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?

- (i) Southern NSW?
- (j) Western NSW?
- (6) How many emergency department nurses have departed the in the following LHDs in 2024:
 - (a) Central Coast?
 - (b) Far West?
 - (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?
 - (i) Southern NSW?
 - (j) Western NSW?
- (7) How many emergency department nurses have departed the in the following LHDs in 2025:
 - (a) Central Coast?
 - (b) Far West?
 - (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?
 - (i) Southern NSW?
 - (j) Western NSW?
- (8) How many emergency department nurses have departed the in the following LHDs in 2026 to date:
 - (a) Central Coast?
 - (b) Far West?
 - (c) Hunter New England?
 - (d) Illawarra Shoalhaven?
 - (e) Mid North Coast?
 - (f) Murrumbidgee?
 - (g) Nepean Blue Mountains?
 - (h) Northern NSW?
 - (i) Southern NSW?
 - (j) Western NSW?

5177 HEALTH—BOOKED PROCEDURES ON PUBLIC HOLIDAY—The Hon. Sarah Mitchell to ask the Minister for Finance, Minister for Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, and Minister for Natural Resources representing the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast—

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- (1) What procedures will be followed for scheduled operations in public and private hospitals on the introduced public holiday for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) Day on Monday 27th April 2026?
- (a) Will hospitals consider the newly introduced public holiday on 27th April 2026 for ANZAC day a public holiday in respect to booked procedures?
- (b) Will booked procedures have to be rescheduled?
- (i) If so, what priority will those patients receive for rescheduling?
- 5178 SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE—LOCAL SMALL COMMITMENTS ALLOCATION—The Hon. Damien Tudehope to ask the Special Minister of State, Minister for Transport, Minister for the Arts, and Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy—
- (1) Has the Local Small Commitments Allocation (LSCA) Program Office received any advice from the liquidator of the Charlestown Caring Group since July 2025 regarding the 22-seat bus funded with a LSCA grant?
- (a) If so, when was the advice received from the liquidator?
- (i) What was the advice?
- (b) Has the Government received any reimbursement from the liquidator or been advised that any reimbursement will be received?
- (2) Has the liquidator provided any reports to creditors?
- (a) If so, can you please provide copies of those reports?
- 5179 ATTORNEY GENERAL—EYE MOVEMENT DESENSITISATION AND REPROCESSING THERAPY—Dr Amanda Cohn to ask the Treasurer representing the Attorney General—
- (1) Noting the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) guidelines that evidence obtained through eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing therapy (EMDR) cannot be used in any case unless approved by the DPP or deputy director, in how many cases has such evidence been approved in the past 12 months?
- (a) Is any work underway to ensure that individuals receiving EMDR can still access legal justice?

Steven Reynolds
Clerk of the Parliaments