

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

Budget Estimates Guide 2024-2025



Upper House
Committees



Portfolio Committees

Budget Estimates Guide 2024-2025

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Table of contents

Chapter 1	Budget Estimates resolution	1
	Referral by the House	1
	Budget Estimates resolution	1
	Initial and supplementary hearings	1
	Additional hearings	4
Chapter 2	Committee membership	7
	Substitute members	7
	Participating members	7
	Quorum	7
Chapter 3	Hearings	9
	Attendance of ministers, parliamentary secretaries and public servants	9
	Hearing procedures	10
	Role of the Chair	10
	Swearing in witnesses	10
	Chair's opening statement	11
	No opening statement by witnesses, including a Minister	11
	Sequencing of questions / allocation of time	11
	Tendered documents	12
	Documents in the possession of witnesses	13
	Orders for the production of documents	13
	Private (<i>in camera</i>) evidence	14
	Broadcast of proceedings	14
	Committee disorder	14
	Dissent from a ruling of the Chair	14
	Questions on notice	15
	Transcripts of evidence	16
Chapter 4	Questions to witnesses	19
	Rules governing questions	19
	Questions must be relevant	19
	Questions relating to current committee inquiries	19
	Questions to public servants	19
	Answers to questions	20

	Answers must be directly relevant	20
	Time limits for witnesses to answer questions	20
	Redirecting a witness	20
	Objections to questioning	21
Chapter 5	Role of committee members	23
	Attendance at deliberative meetings	23
	Prior to the Budget Estimates inquiry	23
	Before the hearing	23
	Supplementary questions	23
	Lodging supplementary questions	23
	Format for supplementary questions	24
Chapter 6	Role of ministerial contact officers	25
	Responsibilities before the hearing	25
	Responsibilities after the hearing	25
	Return of answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions	25
	Requests for answers to be kept confidential	26
	Transcripts of evidence	26
Appendix 1	Committee Membership	27
Appendix 2	Schedule: Hearings – by date	31
Appendix 3	Schedule: Hearings – by committee	39
Appendix 4	Budget Estimates Resolution	45

Chapter 1 Budget Estimates resolution

The agreement of the House establishing the annual inquiry into Budget Estimates is known as the Budget Estimates resolution. It sets out the key rules for how the inquiry will be conducted.

Referral by the House

- 1.1 On 20 June 2024, the Legislative Council referred the Budget Estimates for the 2024-2025 financial year to the portfolio committees for inquiry and report.¹
- 1.2 On 21 November 2023, the Legislative Council resolved that initial hearings for Budget Estimates 2024-2025 be held over 11 days from 27 August to 30 August 2024, 3 September to 6 September 2024 and 9 September to 11 September 2024 and that supplementary hearings be scheduled from 2 December to 6 December 2024.²
- 1.3 On 21 November 2024, the Legislative Council resolved that additional hearings for Budget Estimates 2024-2025 be held over 12 days from 25 February 2025 to 28 February 2025, 3 March 2025 to 7 March 2025, and 10 March 2025 to 12 March 2025.³
- 1.4 Transcripts, tabled documents, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions will be published on the [Budget Estimates webpage](#).

Budget Estimates resolution

Initial and supplementary hearings

- 1.5 The Budget Estimates resolution and schedule for the initial hearings was agreed to by the House on 20 June 2024, referring the Budget Estimates and related papers for 2024-2025 to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report. The resolution is reproduced as follows:
 - (1) That the Budget Estimates and related papers for the financial year 2024-2025 presenting the amounts to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund be referred to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report.
 - (2) That, as per the resolution of the House on 21 November 2023 adopting the 2024 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 supplementary budget estimates hearings are to be held from 2 December to 6 December 2024.
 - (3) That, further to the resolution of the House of 21 November 2023 adopting the 2024 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

Day One:	Tuesday 27 August 2024
PC 3	Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney

¹ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, pp 1291-1294.

² *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2023, p 671.

³ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2024, Item 3.

PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

Day Two: Wednesday 28 August 2024

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport

Day Three: Thursday 29 August 2024

PC 1 Treasurer

PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage

Day Four: Friday 30 August 2024

PC 5 Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC1 The Legislature

Day Five: Tuesday 3 September 2024

PC 6 Transport

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

Day Six: Wednesday 4 September 2024

PC 5 Attorney-General

PC 3 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Day Seven: Thursday 5 September 2024

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources

PC 8 Local Government

Day Eight: Friday 6 September 2024

PC 6 Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism

PC 1 Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Central Coast, Medical Research

Day Nine: Monday 9 September 2024

PC 8 Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service and Digital Government

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast

PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Ten: Tuesday 10 September 2024

PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and South Coast

PC 8 Corrections, Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building

Day Eleven: Wednesday 11 September 2024

PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety

(4) That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings:

- (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm, and

- (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by opposition, crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.
- (5) That unless the committee decides otherwise:
- (a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney
 - (ii) Premier
 - (iii) Treasurer
 - (iv) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter
 - (v) Transport
 - (vi) Attorney-General
 - (vii) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources
 - (viii) Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
 - (ix) Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service and Digital Government
 - (x) Regional Transport and Roads
 - (xi) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast
 - (xii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
 - (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales
 - (ii) Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport
 - (iii) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage
 - (iv) Planning and Public Spaces
 - (v) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
 - (vi) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
 - (vii) Local Government
 - (viii) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Central Coast, Medical Research
 - (ix) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
 - (x) Corrections, Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building
 - (xi) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety.
- (6) That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings:
- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public
 - (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure
 - (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session
 - (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee

commences questions

- (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
 - (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.
- (7) That the committees report by 27 June 2025.⁴

Additional hearings

1.6 The Budget Estimates resolution and schedule for the additional hearings was agreed to by the House on 21 November 2024 as follows:

- (1) That, further to the resolution of the House of 20 June 2024 referring Budget Estimates 2024-2025 to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report, and the resolution of the House of 12 November 2024 adopting the 2025 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

Day One: Tuesday 25 February 2025

PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney

PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

Day Two: Wednesday 26 February 2025

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport

Day Three: Thursday 27 February 2025

PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast

PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Day Four: Friday 28 February 2025

PC 5 Attorney-General

PC 8 Local Government

Day Five: Monday 3 March 2025

PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage

PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safe

Day Six: Tuesday 4 March 2025

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC 1 Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research

Day Seven: Wednesday 5 March 2025

PC 1 Treasurer

PC 8 Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice

Day Eight: Thursday 6 March 2025

⁴ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, Item 4.

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources

PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Nine: Friday 7 March 2025

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast

PC 8 Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections

Day Ten: Monday 10 March 2025

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

PC 3 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Day Eleven: Tuesday 11 March 2025

PC 6 Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism

PC 1 The Legislature

Day Twelve: Wednesday 12 March 2025

PC 6 Transport

PC 5 Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

(2) That, unless the committee decides otherwise:

(a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:

- (i) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney,
- (ii) Premier,
- (iii) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast,
- (iv) Attorney-General,
- (v) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage,
- (vi) Planning and Public Space,
- (vii) Treasurer,
- (viii) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources,
- (ix) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast,
- (x) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion,
- (xi) Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism,
- (xii) Transport, and

(b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:

- (i) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales,
- (ii) Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport,
- (iii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault,
- (iv) Local Government,
- (v) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety,
- (vi) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research,

- (vii) Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice,
- (viii) Regional Transport and Roads,
- (ix) Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections,
- (x) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education,
- (xi) The Legislature,
- (xii) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter.

(3) That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings:

- (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by Opposition and Crossbench members only, from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, and from 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, then from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm, and from 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, with 15 minutes reserved for Government questions at 10.45 am, 12.45 pm and 5.15 pm, if required, and
- (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by Opposition, Crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.

(4) That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings:

- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public,
- (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure,
- (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session,
- (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions,
- (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
- (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.⁵

⁵ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2024, Item 3.

Chapter 2 Committee membership

2.1 Each of the eight portfolio committees has seven members, comprising:

- three government members
- two opposition members
- two cross bench members.⁶

2.2 The membership of each committee is listed at **Appendix 1**.

Substitute members

2.3 Under the standing orders members may substitute for other members, whether for a particular meeting or for a whole inquiry. A substitute member has the same rights as a substantive member and may question witnesses, vote and be counted for the purposes of a quorum or division.

2.4 Nominations for substitute government or opposition members may be made by the Leader of the Government or Leader of the Opposition, or Government or Opposition Whips or Deputy Whips, as applicable. Nominations for substitute crossbench members are to be made by the substantive member or another crossbench member.⁷

2.5 Nominations for substitute members should be submitted by email to the [Budget Estimates](#) secretariat prior to the commencement of the hearing or meeting.

Participating members

2.6 Unless a committee decides otherwise, a member of the House who is not a member of the relevant committee may take part in the public or private proceedings of a committee, question witnesses and, once they have formally communicated their intention to participate in the inquiry, have access to all committee evidence and documents but may not vote, move any motion or be counted for the purpose of any quorum or division.⁸ Chapter 3 provides further information about the allocation of questioning time to participating members.

2.7 Members wishing to participate in a meeting should advise the committee by email to the [Budget Estimates](#) secretariat prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Quorum

2.8 The quorum of a portfolio committee is three members.⁹

⁶ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 10 May 2023, p 66.

⁷ Standing Order 223 Substitute members.

⁸ Standing Order 225(1) Participation by members of the House and others.

⁹ Standing Order 221(1) Quorum.

Chapter 3 Hearings

The Budget Estimates initial hearings were held over 11 days from 27 August to 30 August 2024, 3 September to 6 September 2024, and 9 September to 11 September 2024. Portfolio Committee Nos. 2, 3 and 8 held supplementary hearings between 2 to 6 December 2024. The Budget Estimates additional hearings are scheduled to be held over 12 days from 25 February 2025 to 28 February 2025, 3 March 2025 to 7 March 2025, and 10 March 2025 to 12 March 2025.

The schedule of hearings is shown by date in **Appendix 2** and by committee in **Appendix 3**.

Attendance of ministers, parliamentary secretaries and public servants

- 3.1 The Budget Estimates resolution provides that committees may ask for explanations relating to the items of proposed expenditure from ministers and parliamentary secretaries, as well as officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations.¹⁰
- 3.2 It is standard practice for ministers of both Houses to appear during the initial round of hearings, although a Council committee cannot compel current ministers to appear before it. Ministers are also often invited to attend supplementary hearings, along with departmental witnesses. There is precedent for ministers attending supplementary hearings, including Minister Moriarty in 2023-24 and Minister Hazzard in 2022-23 and 2017-18.
- 3.3 Ministers who are members of the Legislative Assembly should follow the procedures established by the committee. If a minister does not wish to comply with these procedures, they may decide to leave the hearing at any time.¹¹
- 3.4 For the initial round, committees wrote to ministers to request that they provide a list of witnesses, including department officers, they wish to nominate to appear before the committee to answer questions relating to each portfolio. The committees then considered these nominated witnesses and, in some cases, resolved to request the attendance of additional witnesses.
- 3.5 For the supplementary round, where a committee resolved to conduct a supplementary hearing, the committee wrote to the relevant minister with a list of witnesses they wish to appear to answer questions relating to the relevant portfolio.
- 3.6 Similarly, for the additional round, committees will write to each minister with a list of witnesses to appear before the committee to answer questions relating to each portfolio.
- 3.7 For any session that the minister is not required to attend, it is within the power of the committee to resolve whether to accept or decline any request from a minister or parliamentary secretary to also be in attendance during the session. Where the committee declines such a request, the minister would not be prevented from viewing proceedings from the advisers' table or the public gallery.

¹⁰ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

¹¹ NSW Legislative Council, Clerk's Advice, *Advice to General Purpose Standing Committees in relation to Budget Estimates hearings*, September 1999, reproduced in [Budget Estimates Guide 2001-2002](#), Appendix D.

- 3.8 While public servants are normally invited by the committee and appear voluntarily, there is no restriction on committees summoning public servants as witnesses.

Hearing procedures

Role of the Chair

- 3.9 The role of the committee Chair is analogous to that of the President in the House, having powers necessary to conduct the Committee's proceedings in an orderly and expeditious manner.¹² The Chair is responsible for guiding the inquiry process and presiding over meetings, including conducting votes. During hearings, the Chair is responsible for maintaining order and ruling on the admissibility of questions and points of order. The Chair also has a role in ensuring [procedural fairness](#) is provided to witnesses, including that they are treated with courtesy.¹³ The Chair is also able to ask questions of witnesses in the same way as other committee members.
- 3.10 Where the resolution appointing a committee and the standing orders are silent on a matter, the procedures of the House should be used for guidance. For example, the rules of debate under Standing Order 96 in relation to offensive words, reflecting on a resolution of the House and making personal reflections on members or officers should be used to guide committee proceedings. Where remarks are considered to be offensive, the Chair may request that the offensive remark be withdrawn.
- 3.11 The Deputy Chair acts as Chair when the Chair is absent from a meeting. In the absence of both the Chair and Deputy Chair, a member of the committee is elected by the members present to act as Chair for that meeting.¹⁴
- 3.12 The Chair, Deputy Chair or other member acting as Chair at a meeting of a committee has a deliberative vote, and in the event of an equality of votes, a casting vote.¹⁵

Swearing in witnesses

- 3.13 All witnesses from departments, statutory bodies or corporations are sworn prior to giving evidence.
- 3.14 Ministers and parliamentary secretaries do not need to be sworn because members of Parliament have previously sworn an oath to that office.
- 3.15 If a witness makes more than one appearance **before the same committee**, the witness does not need to be sworn at each subsequent hearing. Witnesses need only be reminded that they are giving evidence on their former oath or affirmation. However, if a witness appears before multiple committees, the witness will need to be sworn once before each committee.

¹² Standing Order 218(2) Chair and Deputy Chair.

¹³ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 25 October 2018, pp 3,244-3,246.

¹⁴ Standing Order 218(3) and (4) Chair and Deputy Chair.

¹⁵ Standing Order 218(7) Chair and Deputy Chair.

Chair's opening statement

- 3.16** At the start of a hearing the Chair normally makes a short statement. The Chair will then declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

No opening statement by witnesses, including a Minister

- 3.17** The Budget Estimates resolution stipulates that witnesses, including ministers, may **not** make an opening statement before the committee commences questions.¹⁶ This differs from the standard practice in other inquiries where witnesses are usually invited to make an opening statement.

Sequencing of questions / allocation of time¹⁷

- 3.18** The Budget Estimates resolution provides that, unless the committee decides otherwise:
- the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between **opposition and crossbench members**, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney
 - Premier
 - Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast
 - Attorney-General
 - Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage
 - Planning and Public Space
 - Treasurer
 - Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources
 - Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
 - Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
 - Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
 - Transport.
 - the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between **crossbench and opposition members**, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales
 - Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport
 - Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
 - Local Government

¹⁶ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

¹⁷ Note, paragraphs 3.16-3.20 are based on the Advice of the Clerk of Legislative Council to Portfolio Committee Chairs, *'Guidance Concerning Allocation of Crossbench Question Time in Budget Estimates,'* circulated 29 August 2024.

- Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety
- Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research
- Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice
- Regional Transport and Roads
- Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections
- Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
- The Legislature
- Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter.

- 3.19** This means that question time is to be allocated equally between the substantive (or substituting) opposition and crossbench members of the committee. For some portfolios, the opposition will start the sequence of questions, and for others, the crossbench will start.
- 3.20** For all portfolios other than The Legislature, the resolution specifies the structure of the hearing in terms of time, and notes 15 minute blocks in which there is time reserved for government questions (although the government may choose not to use this time).
- 3.21** Under the resolution appointing the portfolio committees, each portfolio committee has two crossbench members. In practice, where more than one crossbench party or independent is represented on the committee and present at a hearing, crossbench time is allocated equally between the two, or otherwise divided by agreement between the two crossbench members.
- 3.22** By longstanding convention, the allocation of question time to participating crossbench members should be facilitated as far as possible, and is best dealt with through negotiation and consensus by members. If, however, participating cross bench members have been unable to negotiate the use of substantive cross bench members' time, the allocation of questioning time to those participating cross bench members is left in the hands of the Chair.
- 3.23** Whilst formal notice is not required, it is encouraged and common practice for participating members to advise the Chair of their intention to participate (either verbally or in writing). Notice will assist the Chair and other members in thinking about potential allocation of time before a hearing, even though a member is not required to give notice of participation in order to be allocated question time.
- 3.24** Substantive (or substituting) cross bench members can also cede their question time to the opposition, as long as no other substantive cross bench members wishes to use that time. If not all members are in agreement, then this should be formalised by a resolution.

Tendered documents

- 3.25** Witnesses may tender documents during a hearing. The committee will decide whether to accept and publish such documents.
- 3.26** A witness seeking to tender a document should identify the document and state clearly why the document is being provided. It is not desirable for documents that are publicly available to be tendered as part of a committee inquiry. However, a witness may request that such documents be circulated to members for their information.

- 3.27** Committee members are able to table documents during Budget Estimates hearings, for example if a member wants to question the witnesses on a matter referred to in a document. If the document identifies an individual, the committee should confirm that the member has the consent of that individual to table the document.
- 3.28** Committee members seeking to table Cabinet documents from current and former governments should consider the Privileges Committee report on the Examination, publication and use of cabinet documents by Legislative Council committees.¹⁸ In determining whether to publish and use such a document, the committee will consider whether it is in the public interest to do so.¹⁹
- 3.29** Witnesses and committee members tendering or tabling documents are encouraged to provide individual copies of the document for all committee members and relevant witnesses. Where a member tables a document, they may question the witness about the document if the witness has a copy of the document and all committee members have access to the document.

Documents in the possession of witnesses

- 3.30** In previous Budget Estimates inquiries an issue has arisen as to whether a committee can compel witnesses to immediately provide material in their possession, such as briefing folders.
- 3.31** Witnesses appear voluntarily at Budget Estimates hearings, and therefore by convention, witnesses should only be requested to produce documents voluntarily during a hearing.
- 3.32** If a witness declines to produce a document during a hearing, the committee should ask the witness to state their reasons. Unless the committee determines immediately that the request should not be pressed, the committee should consider in private whether to order the production of the document.

Orders for the production of documents

- 3.33** Consistent with established practice, committees are encouraged to request documents be provided voluntarily in the first instance. However, in the event that a request is declined, a second request should be made for the documents to be provided voluntarily, often noting the powers of the committee to order the documents. If the second request is declined, a committee may seek to order the documents.
- 3.34** Guidance on the administrative arrangements for an order is to be taken from those that apply under Standing Order 52 for orders made by the House. For example, the terms of an order agreed to by a committee should specify the inquiry to which the order relates and the date by which the documents are to be returned.

¹⁸ Privileges Committee, NSW Legislative Council, *Examination, publication and use of cabinet documents by Legislative Council committees* (2022).

¹⁹ Privileges Committee, *Examination, publication and use of cabinet documents by Legislative Council committees*, pp viii-ix.

Private (*in camera*) evidence

- 3.35** The Budget Estimates resolution requires Budget Estimates hearings to be held in public. This prevents the committees from hearing evidence in private (*in camera*).²⁰

Broadcast of proceedings

- 3.36** The Budget Estimates hearings are streamed live on the Parliament's website and are open to the media, in accordance with the [Broadcast of Proceedings Resolution of the House](#).²¹
- 3.37** The Broadcast of Proceedings Resolution states that unless the committee resolves otherwise, the House authorises the filming, broadcasting and photography of members and witnesses in committee proceedings by representatives of media organisations, including from around the committee meeting table, and by any member of the public, from the position of the audience.²² Representatives or members of the public do not need to be accredited with the press gallery at Parliament.
- 3.38** A committee may adopt conditions in relation to the filming, broadcasting, rebroadcasting and photography of committee proceedings. A committee may also order that part of its proceedings not be filmed, broadcast or photographed.²³

Committee disorder

- 3.39** Under the sessional order on disorderly conduct during committee proceedings (not including a deliberative meeting), a member can be called to order three times for disorderly conduct. Such conduct could include the use of offensive words which are not withdrawn, rudeness towards a witness or disruptive behaviour like repeated interjections.
- 3.40** On the third call to order, the committee must privately deliberate to consider the member's disorderly conduct. If the disorder is not resolved informally, a member (not including the Chair) may move a motion that the member called to order be removed from the meeting for a period of time as the committee may decide, but not beyond the termination of the meeting.²⁴
- 3.41** If a member is removed from the hearing, a Special Report must be tabled in the House.

Dissent from a ruling of the Chair

- 3.42** A member may move dissent from a ruling of the Chair by moving a motion 'That the committee dissent from the ruling of the Chair'. In this case, the Chair requests that witnesses, members of the public and the media leave the room, and the committee considers the matter in private.

²⁰ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

²¹ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 19 October 2022, pp 3747-3749.

²² *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 19 October 2022, p 3749.

²³ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 19 October 2022, p 3749.

²⁴ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 15 August 2024, p 1441.

- 3.43** Once the room has been cleared, the dissenting member must state the objection in writing, in accordance with the pro-forma available from the committee clerk. The Chair will inform the committee of the member's grounds for dissent, and debate may ensue. The question on the motion will be put and the committee decides whether to uphold the dissent. If resolved in the affirmative, the ruling of the Chair is overturned. If resolved in the negative, the ruling stands.
- 3.44** Once the matter has been decided witnesses, members of the public and media will be readmitted. Where appropriate, the Chair may advise the audience of the outcome of the dissent motion.

Questions on notice

- 3.45** There are two ways in which questions may be placed on notice.
- During a hearing: if a witness is unable to answer a question, the witness may undertake to provide the written answer at a later time. It is important for the Chair to confirm if a witness has agreed to take a question on notice.
 - After a hearing: members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript. Supplementary questions can be lodged by any member of the Legislative Council.²⁵
- 3.46** On receipt of the transcript of evidence, the Budget Estimates secretariat will highlight the questions taken on notice during the hearing and email the transcript to the witnesses through the relevant minister's office, together with any supplementary questions received from committee members. It is the responsibility of the relevant minister to distribute the highlighted transcript and ensure that all answers to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions are provided by the due date. A copy of the transcript with highlighted questions taken on notice will be published on the Budget Estimates webpage once the documents have been distributed to the minister's office.
- 3.47** All answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions must be provided within 21 calendar days of the date on which questions are forwarded to the witness, or as otherwise determined by the committee.²⁶ If the due date falls on a weekend or public holiday, the answers must be provided by the next business day.
- 3.48** All answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested.²⁷ Any request for confidentiality should outline reasons, as this will assist the committee in its consideration of the issue.
- 3.49** Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be coordinated by the minister's office for the minister and departmental witnesses. They are to be provided to the secretariat as a bundle – answers to questions on notice in one PDF document and answers to supplementary questions in another PDF document.

²⁵ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

²⁶ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 10 May 2023, p 67.

²⁷ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

Transcripts of evidence

- 3.50** The uncorrected transcript of evidence will be published on the committee's website as soon as it is available. The video from the hearing will also be uploaded to the Parliament's YouTube Channel, although this may take a day or two to arrange.
- 3.51** The uncorrected transcript, with highlighted questions taken on notice, will be provided to each Minister's office to distribute to witnesses. Witnesses are thereby given the opportunity to correct transcription errors, for example, misspellings or duplicated words. However, the transcript is an official record of what was said during the hearing. Witnesses cannot change or improve the words actually said during the hearing, nor the grammar.
- 3.52** If a witness wishes to clarify or amend any evidence given during the hearing they can do so by writing to the committee. Usually, a committee will consider publishing correspondence outlining an amendment or clarification, with a footnote placed in the transcript to link to that amending/clarifying correspondence.

Chapter 4 Questions to witnesses

Rules governing questions

- 4.1 Budget Estimates is a broad-ranging inquiry and wide latitude is allowed in the asking of questions, subject to the following guidance.

Questions must be relevant

- 4.2 Questions must be relevant to the matter that has been referred to a committee for inquiry and report.²⁸ In the case of the Budget Estimates inquiry, this refers to the estimates of expenditure from the Consolidated Fund and other matters covered by the budget papers.
- 4.3 The budget papers and related documents not only contain information about the estimates of expenditure but also refer to the activities of government agencies and the implementation of policy. Information from a number of other sources can also relate to expenditure from the Consolidated Fund and therefore be relevant to the Budget Estimates inquiry, such as policy announcements by ministers or other government officials, and reports by the Audit Office.²⁹
- 4.4 In addition, an answer must be directly relevant to a question.³⁰

Questions relating to current committee inquiries

- 4.5 The Budget Estimates inquiry is usually one of several current committee inquiries. There may be a degree of overlap with other inquiries.
- 4.6 Questions asked during the Budget Estimates hearings should not attempt to debate the unreported proceedings of other current committee inquiries. However, this does not prevent members from asking questions that deal with the subject matter of other inquiries.³¹

Questions to public servants

- 4.7 Public servants should not be asked to express an opinion on the merits of a government policy. By convention, committees should direct such questions to the responsible minister. This is because public servants should not be held accountable for the actions or policy decisions of ministers.

²⁸ For further discussion see Evans H and Laing R (ed), *Odgers' Australian Senate Practice*, 14th ed, Canberra, Department of the Senate, 2016, p 482.

²⁹ Legislative Council, Clerk's Advice, *Advice regarding questioning in Budget Estimates with respect to Committee's other terms of reference and the content of questions*, June 2001, reproduced in [Budget Estimates Guide 2002-2003](#), Appendix E.

³⁰ Standing Order 229(2) Evidence.

³¹ Legislative Council, Clerk's Advice, *Advice regarding questioning in Budget Estimates with respect to Committee's other terms of reference and the content of questions*, June 2001, reproduced in [Budget Estimates Guide 2002-2003](#), Appendix E.

- 4.8** Public servants may, however, be asked to explain government policy, to describe how it has been formulated and how it differs from past policies.
- 4.9** A member can direct a question to a specific witness, including a minister. This often occurs in the morning session of hearing, given this is typically when the minister appears.
- 4.10** If a minister wishes for a departmental representative to answer a question, they can indicate this during the hearing and seek to proceed in that way. Sometimes a committee will prefer to focus on questions the minister can answer in the morning, leaving questions for departmental witnesses to the afternoon session.

Answers to questions

- 4.11** Generally speaking, a witness can answer a question as they see fit. Members should be aware of the procedural fairness resolution adopted by the House, including the requirement that witnesses be treated with courtesy.³²

Answers must be directly relevant

- 4.12** Under standing order 229(2) an answer must be directly relevant to a question. If a point of order is raised in relation to an answer not being directly relevant to a question, it is up to the Chair to make a ruling as to whether the answer being provided by the witness complies with the requirement in the standing orders.

Time limits for witnesses to answer questions

- 4.13** A committee has the power to limit the time taken by a witness to answer a question. However, any time limits should be applied flexibly, and the committee should allow the witness to apply for an extension of time if required.³³

Redirecting a witness

- 4.14** There is nothing in the standing orders or from past committee practice that authorises a member to 'redirect' a question, but it has been a practice used by members at times when questioning witnesses.
- 4.15** Members should be mindful of the requirement under the procedural fairness resolution adopted by the House to ensure witnesses are treated with courtesy.³⁴ In the past, some Chairs have upheld points of order on the basis that continual interruptions of a witness who is trying to answer a question has contravened the requirement to be courteous to witnesses.

³² Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 25 October 2018, p 3244.

³³ NSW Legislative Council, Clerk's Advice, *Advice to General Purpose Standing Committees in relation to Budget Estimates hearings*, September 1999, reproduced in [Budget Estimates Guide 2001-2002, Appendix D](#).

³⁴ Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 25 October 2018, p 3244.

Objections to questioning

- 4.16** Under the *Parliamentary Evidence Act 1901*, the Council and its committees have extensive powers to compel a witness to answer a 'lawful question'. Generally speaking, a question of fact, as opposed to an opinion, relevant to the committee's terms of reference, would be a lawful question.
- 4.17** Where witnesses object to answering a question, they should be invited to state the grounds for their objection. If a member seeks to press the question, the committee should consider whether to insist on an answer, having regard to:
- the grounds for the objection
 - the relevance of the question to the inquiry terms of reference
 - the necessity to the inquiry of the information sought.
- 4.18** If the committee decides that it requires an answer, it should inform the witness of the reasons why.
- 4.19** In the past, witnesses have raised objections to answering questions or providing documents on a number of grounds:
- the question asks for an opinion from a departmental officer on a matter of government policy
 - the question or request for papers raises issues of commercial-in-confidence
 - the question breaches the *sub judice* convention
 - the question seeks adverse reflection on another person
 - the question is not relevant to the inquiry terms of reference
 - the disclosure of information required by the question would be prejudicial to the privacy or rights of others
 - the question or request for papers raises issues relating to public interest immunity (previously known as Crown privilege)
 - the question or request for papers raises issues relating to legal professional privilege
 - the witness claims privilege against self-incrimination.

Chapter 5 Role of committee members

Attendance at deliberative meetings

Prior to the Budget Estimates inquiry

- 5.1** Each committee met to consider the Budget Estimates resolution and its approach to inviting witnesses during the lead-up to the Budget Estimates inquiry.

Before the hearing

- 5.2** A short deliberative meeting will be held at the start of each day to deal with procedural matters, including any advice of substitute and participating members. Meetings will be scheduled 15 minutes prior to the advertised commencement time for the hearing.

Supplementary questions

Lodging supplementary questions

- 5.3** The Budget Estimates resolutions provide for supplementary questions to be lodged by members with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following receipt the receipt of the hearing transcript.³⁵ Members will be reminded by email of the deadline for lodging supplementary questions for each hearing.
- 5.4** Supplementary questions will not be accepted after the deadline. Late questions may be lodged on the Questions and Answers paper in the House in the usual manner.
- 5.5** Supplementary questions must be emailed to BudgetEstimates@parliament.nsw.gov.au. The subject line should specify the committee number, the hearing date, and the portfolio, e.g.: 'PC 5 – 22 August – Attorney General'.
- 5.6** Members should proofread questions prior to lodgement. Unlike questions lodged through the House, questions will not be checked for typographical or grammatical errors before they are forwarded to the relevant minister.
- 5.7** Unless there is a clear request for confidentiality, answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions will be published on the committee's website after they have been circulated to members.³⁶ Any requests for confidentiality are to be considered by the committee.

³⁵ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

³⁶ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

Format for supplementary questions

- 5.1** Supplementary questions should follow the format of questions lodged on the Questions and Answers paper, as shown in the example below.

Money contributed by parents to public schools

- (1) (a) Does the Department of Education keep any records of the unit of money that parents contribute to public schools, such as:
 - (i) Nominal school fees?
 - (ii) Additional school fees for special purposes, for example specialist teachers for music, sport, languages?
 - (iii) Library fund contributions?
 - (iv) Fundraising monies for school asset acquisition?
- (b) If so, can details of those figures be provided?
- (c) If not, is any such information provided to the department by individual public schools that could be collected?
- (d) Has this ever been considered in the past?
- (e) If so, when and by whom?

Chapter 6 Role of ministerial contact officers

Responsibilities before the hearing

- 6.1 Each ministerial office nominates a contact officer to co-ordinate matters between the minister, parliamentary secretaries, the agency or agencies under their direction and the Budget Estimates secretariat.
- 6.2 Ministerial contact officers liaise with, and ensure the attendance of, witnesses from departments, statutory bodies or corporations.
- 6.3 Before each hearing, the ministerial contact officer is responsible for:
 - advising of any requests by witnesses in relation to the time of their appearance (for example, a witness request to leave the hearing early to attend another engagement)
 - advising of any witness who requires a holy book other than the Bible for taking the oath.
- 6.4 Requests regarding witnesses should be emailed to BudgetEstimates@parliament.nsw.gov.au.
- 6.5 If a witness proposes to tender any documents during the hearing, the ministerial contact officer should ensure that there are 10 copies of each document.

Responsibilities after the hearing

Return of answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions

- 6.6 As soon as possible after a hearing, the ministerial contact officer will be emailed a proof copy of the transcript. The questions taken on notice will be highlighted in the transcript. A list of supplementary questions submitted by members will also be attached.
- 6.7 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are due 21 calendar days from the date when the questions are sent to the ministerial contact officer, unless the committee decides on another timeframe.³⁷
- 6.8 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be coordinated by the minister's office for ministers and departmental witnesses. They are to be provided to the secretariat as a bundle – answers to questions on notice in one PDF document and answers to questions on notice in another PDF document. Both documents should be sent by email and in hard copy, to:
 - Email – BudgetEstimates@parliament.nsw.gov.au
 - Hard copy – delivered to the Budget Estimates secretariat in Room 812K, Level 8, Parliament House.

³⁷ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 10 May 2023, p 67.

- 6.9** Answers must be accompanied by a cover letter signed by the relevant minister. There is no need for the minister to sign every page of the answers. It is acceptable for the minister to provide an electronic signature.

Requests for answers to be kept confidential

- 6.10** Answers will be automatically published on the committee's website, unless there is a clear request that a particular answer be kept confidential.³⁸ If there is a request for confidentiality, it is the decision of the committee whether to agree to the request.
- 6.11** Any request for confidentiality should be noted on the cover letter enclosing the answers. Confidential material should be clearly identified and separated from material to be made public.

Transcripts of evidence

- 6.12** Ministerial contact officers should distribute proof Hansard transcripts to the minister and other witnesses who appeared at the hearings so they can make any necessary corrections. The usual rules regarding corrections to Hansard transcripts apply. Alterations should only be made if they are necessary to correct a transcription error, not to improve style or sentence construction. Substantive amendments to or clarifications of evidence may be requested in writing through a separate letter to the committee.
- 6.13** Transcript corrections, amendments and clarifications are due at the same time as the answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions. The minister's office is to coordinate them and provide all of them to the secretariat in the one bundle along with the answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions (see above). Individual witnesses should not submit any transcript corrections, amendments or clarifications direct to the secretariat.
- 6.14** Uncorrected transcripts will be published on the committee's website shortly after the hearing is held.

³⁸ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, p 1294.

Appendix 1 Committee Membership

Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier and Finance

Hon Jeremy Buckingham MLC	Legalise Cannabis Party	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Robert Borsak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Dr Sarah Kaine MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Stephen Lawrence MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Bob Nanva MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Chris Rath MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Damien Tudehope MLC	Liberal Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health

Dr Amanda Cohn MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Susan Carter MLC	Liberal Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Greg Donnelly MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC	The Greens	
Hon Wes Fang MLC	The Nationals	
Hon Emily Suvaal MLC	Australian Labor Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education

Ms Abigail Boyd MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Rachel Merton MLC	Liberal Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Tania Mihailuk MLC	Pauline Hanson's One Nation	
Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC	The Nationals	
Hon Emily Suvaal MLC	Australian Labor Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Regional NSW

Hon Mark Banasiak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Emma Hurst MLC	Animal Justice Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Greg Donnelly MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Aileen MacDonald MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC	The Nationals	
Hon Cameron Murphy MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Peter Primrose MLC	Australian Labor Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Hon Robert Borsak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	<i>Chair</i>
Ms Sue Higginson MLC	The Greens	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Scott Barrett MLC	The Nationals	
Hon Greg Donnelly MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Stephen Lawrence MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Cameron Murphy MLC	Australian Labor Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon Mark Banasiak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Wes Fang MLC	The Nationals	
Hon Dr Sarah Kaine MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Bob Nanva MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Natalie Ward MLC	Liberal Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment

Ms Sue Higginson MLC	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
Hon John Ruddick MLC	Libertarian Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Scott Farlow MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Jacqui Munro MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Peter Primrose MLC	Australian Labor Party	

Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service

Hon Emma Hurst MLC	Animal Justice Party	<i>Chair</i>
Dr Amanda Cohn MLC	The Greens	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Scott Barrett MLC	The Nationals	
Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Aileen MacDonald MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Peter Primrose MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Emily Suvaal MLC	Australian Labor Party	

Appendix 2 Schedule: Hearings – by date

Initial hearings:

Day One: Tuesday 27 August 2024 (PC 3 & 4)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney (Car)	3	Macquarie
Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales (Moriarty)	4	Jubilee

Day Two: Wednesday 28 August 2024 (PC 1 & 4)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Premier (Minns)	1	Macquarie
Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport (Kamper)	4	Jubilee

Day Three: Thursday 29 August 2024 (PC 7 & 1)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage (Sharpe)	7	Macquarie
Treasurer (Mookhey)	1	Jubilee

Day Four: Friday 30 August 2024 (PC 7, 5 & 1)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Planning and Public Spaces (Scully)	7	Macquarie
Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter (Catley)	5	Jubilee
The Legislature (Franklin)	1	Preston Stanley

Day Five: Tuesday 3 September 2024 (PC 6 & 5)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Transport (Haylen)	6	Macquarie
Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington)	5	Jubilee

Day Six: Wednesday 4 September 2024 (PC 5 & 3)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Attorney-General (Daley)	5	Macquarie
Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education (Whan)	3	Jubilee

Day Seven: Thursday 5 September 2024 (PC 1 & 8)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources (Houssos)	1	Macquarie
Local Government (Hoenig)	8	Jubilee

Day Eight: Friday 6 September 2024 (PC 6 & 1)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism (Graham)	6	Macquarie
Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research (Harris)	1	Jubilee

Day Nine: Monday 9 September 2024 (PC 8, 2 & 6)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice (Dib)	8	Macquarie
Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast (Jackson)	2	Jubilee
Regional Transport and Roads (Aitchison)	6	Preston Stanley

Day Ten: Tuesday 10 September 2024 (PC 2 & 8)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast (Park)	2	Macquarie
Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections (Chanthivong)	8	Jubilee

Day Eleven: Wednesday 11 September 2024 (PC 1 & 5)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety (Cotsis)	1	Macquarie
Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Harrison)	5	Jubilee

Supplementary hearings:**Day One: Monday 2 December 2024 (PC 2 & 3)**

Portfolio	PC	Room
Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney (Car)	3	Macquarie
Health and Regional Health	2	Preston Stanley

Day two: Thursday 5 December 2024 (PC 8)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Local Government	8	Macquarie

Additional hearings:**Day One: Tuesday 25 February 2025 (PC 3 & 4)**

Portfolio	PC	Room
Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney (Car)	3	Macquarie
Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales (Moriarty)	4	Jubilee

Day Two: Wednesday 26 February 2025 (PC 1 & 4)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Premier (Minns)	1	Macquarie
Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport (Kamper)	4	Jubilee

Day Three: Thursday 27 February 2025 (PC 3 & 5)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast (Park)	2	Macquarie
Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Harrison)	5	Jubilee

Day Four: Friday 28 February 2025 (PC 5 & 8)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Attorney-General (Daley)	5	Macquarie
Local Government (Hoenig)	8	Jubilee

Day Five: Monday 3 March 2025 (PC 7 & 1)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage (Sharpe)	7	Macquarie
Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety (Cotsis)	1	Jubilee

Day Six: Tuesday 4 March 2025 (PC 7 & 1)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Planning and Public Spaces (Scully)	7	Macquarie
Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research (Harris)	1	Jubilee

Day Seven: Wednesday 5 March 2025 (PC 1 & 8)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Treasurer (Mookhey)	1	Jubilee
Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice (Dib)	8	Macquarie

Day Eight: Thursday 6 March 2025 (PC 1 & 6)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources (Houssos)	1	Macquarie
Regional Transport and Roads (Aitchison)	6	Jubilee

Day Nine: Friday 7 March 2025 (PC 2 & 8)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast (Jackson)	2	Macquarie
Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections (Chanthivong)	8	Jubilee

Day Ten: Monday 10 March 2025 (PC 5 & 3)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington)	5	Macquarie
Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education (Whan)	3	Jubilee

Day Eleven: Tuesday 11 March 2025 (PC 6 & 1)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism (Graham)	6	Macquarie

The Legislature (Franklin)	1	Jubilee
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Day Twelve: Wednesday 12 March 2025 (PC 6 & 5)

Portfolio	PC	Room
Transport (Haylen)	6	Macquarie
Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter (Catley)	5	Jubilee

Appendix 3 Schedule: Hearings – by committee

Portfolio Committee No. 1 – Premier and Finance

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Wednesday 28 August 2024	Premier (Minns)	Macquarie
Thursday 29 August 2024	Treasurer (Mookhey)	Jubilee
Friday 30 August 2024	The Legislature (Franklin)	Preston Stanley
Thursday 5 September 2024	Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources (Houssos)	Macquarie
Friday 6 September 2024	Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research (Harris)	Jubilee
Wednesday 11 September 2024	Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety (Cotsis)	Macquarie
Additional hearings		
Wednesday 26 February 2025	Premier (Minns)	Macquarie
Monday 3 March 2025	Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety (Cotsis)	Jubilee
Tuesday 4 March 2025	Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research (Harris)	Jubilee
Wednesday 5 March 2025	Treasurer (Mookhey)	Jubilee
Thursday 6 March 2025	Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources (Houssos)	Macquarie

Tuesday 11 March 2025	The Legislature (Franklin)	Jubilee
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Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Monday 9 September 2024	Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast (Jackson)	Jubilee
Tuesday 10 September 2024	Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast (Park)	Macquarie
Supplementary hearing		
Monday 2 December 2024	Health and Regional Health	Preston Stanley
Additional hearings		
Thursday 27 February 2025	Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast (Park)	Macquarie
Friday 7 March 2025	Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast (Jackson)	Macquarie

Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Tuesday 27 August 2024	Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney (Car)	Macquarie
Wednesday 4 September 2024	Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education (Whan)	Jubilee
Supplementary hearing		

Monday 2 December 2024	Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney	Macquarie
Additional hearings		
Tuesday 25 February 2025	Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney (Car)	Macquarie
Monday 10 March 2025	Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education (Whan)	Jubilee

Portfolio Committee No. 4 – Regional NSW

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Tuesday 27 August 2024	Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales (Moriarty)	Jubilee
Wednesday 28 August 2024	Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport (Kamper)	Jubilee
Additional hearings		
Tuesday 25 February 2025	Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales (Moriarty)	Jubilee
Wednesday 26 February 2025	Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport (Kamper)	Jubilee

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Friday 30 August 2024	Police and Counter-Terrorism, the Hunter (Catley)	Jubilee

Tuesday 3 September 2024	Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington)	Jubilee
Wednesday 4 September 2024	Attorney-General (Daley)	Macquarie
Wednesday 11 September 2024	Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Harrison)	Jubilee
Additional hearings		
Thursday 27 February 2025	Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Harrison)	Jubilee
Friday 28 February 2025	Attorney-General (Daley)	Macquarie
Monday 10 March 2025	Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington)	Macquarie
Wednesday 12 March 2025	Police and Counter-Terrorism, the Hunter (Catley)	Jubilee

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Tuesday 3 September 2024	Transport (Haylen)	Macquarie
Friday 6 September 2024	Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism (Graham)	Macquarie
Monday 9 September 2024	Regional Transport and Roads (Aitchison)	Preston Stanley
Additional hearings		
Thursday 6 March 2025	Regional Transport and Roads (Aitchison)	Jubilee

Tuesday 11 March 2025	Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism (Graham)	Macquarie
Wednesday 12 March 2025	Transport (Haylen)	Macquarie

Portfolio Committee No. 7 – Planning and Environment

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Thursday 29 August 2024	Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage (Sharpe)	Macquarie
Friday 30 August 2024	Planning and Public Spaces (Scully)	Macquarie
Additional hearings		
Monday 3 March 2025	Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage (Sharpe)	Macquarie
Tuesday 4 March 2025	Planning and Public Spaces (Scully)	Macquarie

Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service

Date	Portfolio	Room
Initial hearings		
Thursday 5 September 2024	Local Government (Hoenig)	Jubilee
Monday 9 September 2024	Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice (Dib)	Macquarie
Tuesday 10 September 2024	Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections (Chanthivong)	Jubilee

Supplementary hearing		
Thursday 5 December 2024	Local Government	Macquarie
Additional hearings		
Friday 28 February 2025	Local Government (Hoenig)	Jubilee
Wednesday 5 March 2025	Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice (Dib)	Macquarie
Friday 7 March 2025	Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections (Chanthivong)	Jubilee

Appendix 4 Budget Estimates Resolution

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2024-2025

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Initial hearings

1. That the Budget Estimates and related papers for the financial year 2024-2025 presenting the amounts to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund be referred to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report.
2. That, as per the resolution of the House on 21 November 2023 adopting the 2024 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 supplementary budget estimates hearings are to be held from 2 December to 6 December 2024.
3. That, further to the resolution of the House of 21 November 2023 adopting the 2024 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

Day One: Tuesday 27 August 2024

PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney

PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

Day Two: Wednesday 28 August 2024

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport

Day Three: Thursday 29 August 2024

PC 1 Treasurer

PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage

Day Four: Friday 30 August 2024

PC 5 Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC1 The Legislature

Day Five: Tuesday 3 September 2024

PC 6 Transport

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

Day Six: Wednesday 4 September 2024

PC 5 Attorney-General

PC 3 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Day Seven: Thursday 5 September 2024

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources

PC 8 Local Government

Day Eight: Friday 6 September 2024

- PC 6 Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
- PC1 Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Central Coast, Medical Research

Day Nine: Monday 9 September 2024

- PC 8 Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service and Digital Government
- PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
- PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Ten: Tuesday 10 September 2024

- PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and South Coast
- PC8 Corrections, Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building

Day Eleven: Wednesday 11 September 2024

- PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety

4. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings:
 - (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm, and
 - (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by opposition, crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.
5. That unless the committee decides otherwise:
 - (a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney
 - (ii) Premier
 - (iii) Treasurer
 - (iv) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter
 - (v) Transport
 - (vi) Attorney-General
 - (vii) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources
 - (viii) Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
 - (ix) Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service and Digital Government,

- (x) Regional Transport and Roads
 - (xi) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast
 - (xii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
- (i) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales
 - (ii) Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport
 - (iii) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage
 - (iv) Planning and Public Spaces
 - (v) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
 - (vi) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
 - (vii) Local Government
 - (viii) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Central Coast
Medical Research
 - (ix) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
 - (x) Corrections, Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation,
Science and Technology, Building
 - (xi) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety.
6. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings:
- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public
 - (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure
 - (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session
 - (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions
 - (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
 - (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.
7. That the committees report by 27 June 2025.³⁹

³⁹ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, Item 4.

Additional hearings

1. That, further to the resolution of the House of 20 June 2024 referring Budget Estimates 2024-2025 to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report, and the resolution of the House of 12 November 2024 adopting the 2025 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

Day One: Tuesday 25 February 2025

PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney

PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

Day Two: Wednesday 26 February 2025

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport

Day Three: Thursday 27 February 2025

PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast

PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Day Four: Friday 28 February 2025

PC 5 Attorney-General

PC 8 Local Government

Day Five: Monday 3 March 2025

PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage

PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safe

Day Six: Tuesday 4 March 2025

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC 1 Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research

Day Seven: Wednesday 5 March 2025

PC 1 Treasurer

PC 8 Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice

Day Eight: Thursday 6 March 2025

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources

PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Nine: Friday 7 March 2025

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast

PC 8 Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections

Day Ten: Monday 10 March 2025

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

PC 3 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Day Eleven: Tuesday 11 March 2025

PC 6	Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
PC 1	The Legislature

Day Twelve: Wednesday 12 March 2025

PC 6	Transport
PC 5	Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

2. That, unless the committee decides otherwise:

- (a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney,
 - (ii) Premier,
 - (iii) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast,
 - (iv) Attorney-General,
 - (v) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage,
 - (vi) Planning and Public Space,
 - (vii) Treasurer,
 - (viii) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources,
 - (ix) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast,
 - (x) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion,
 - (xi) Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism,
 - (xii) Transport, and
- (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales,
 - (ii) Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport,
 - (iii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault,
 - (iv) Local Government,
 - (v) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety,
 - (vi) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research,
 - (vii) Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice,
 - (viii) Regional Transport and Roads,
 - (ix) Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections,

- (x) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education,
- (xi) The Legislature,
- (xii) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter.

3. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings:

- (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by Opposition and Crossbench members only, from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, and from 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, then from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm, and from 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, with 15 minutes reserved for Government questions at 10.45 am, 12.45 pm and 5.15 pm, if required, and
- (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by Opposition, Crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.

4. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings:

- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public
- (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure
- (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session
- (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions
- (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
- (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2024, Item 3.



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