

Question on Notice
No. 223
Asked on Thursday 2 March 2006

MS NELSON-CARR asked the Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations and Minister for Sport (MR BARTON)-

QUESTION:

What is the progress of the construction program to increase the seating capacity of Dairy Farmers Stadium by 4,000, which is being funded at a cost of \$5m through a levy on hotels which have the biggest takings from poker machines?

ANSWER:

On 7 October, the Premier announced the commitment of \$5M for the expansion of capacity at Dairy Farmers Stadium.

Work began on the expansion in December and it is expected that an additional 4,000 seats will be available for the Cowboys first home match of the 2006 season against the Sea Eagles, subject to favourable weather and site conditions.

The funding for the expansion comes from poker machine levies, not tax receipts.

Following a review of the project scope, an opportunity was identified to further increase the capacity by installing an extra 1,300 seats in the Northern and Southern stands to bring the overall ground capacity to approximately 26,000.

The cost of this additional work (including upgrades to associated structure and services) is approximately \$2.4 million, which raises the project cost to approximately \$7.4 million.

The added cost to deliver the additional seating was determined to be cost effective by the Major Sports Facilities Authority and as a result these works have been included in the current contract.

The extra seats will be delivered in the timeframe of the original project, mid season. The additional cost will be funded from the existing Dairy Farmers Stadium Capital Works budget.

As well as an additional 1,300 seats for Cowboys fans the \$2.4 million in extra funding has been used to improve the stadium's electrical work including upgrading the lighting in public areas to improve patron safety, relocating two lighting towers, relocating the existing scoreboard structure and upgrading fire services.

The additional 1,300 seats will be available around the middle of the season.