

Question on Notice
No. 325
Asked on 11 March 2008

MR NICHOLLS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT, TRADE, EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (MR MICKEL)—

QUESTION:

Will he list all financial transactions involving unions or their agents made by all departments and agencies within his portfolio to date and for each of the past three years (identifying the value and purpose of each transaction and whether in each case full payment including interest has been provided or received)?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government believes in consulting widely with all Queenslanders regarding the broad range of public policy issues that confront this State.

As part of this consultation process, and the processes of government generally, the Government maintains an open and transparent relationship with numerous community groups, non government organisations, trade unions and employer unions.

It is not practicable nor would it be reasonable to divert the resources of every government department and all of the agencies within all ministerial portfolios to identify and list in detail all of the financial transactions requested. To do so would require a vast amount of work diverting officers and funding away from the provision of essential services. However, if the Honourable Member has a specific question regarding a specific financial transaction, I would be more than happy to seek the information.

I am advised during the past three years, Queensland Government Departments have expended approximately \$21,000,000 to employer unions (such as Commerce Queensland, Australian Medical Association, Queensland Farmers' Federation, AgForce Queensland, Master Builders Association and the Local Government Association of Queensland) for matters including but not limited to workplace health and safety courses, other training courses, and placement fees for the recruitment of Doctors for Queensland Health.

The Honourable Member should note that over the past three years, I am advised Queensland Government Departments have expended approximately \$1,550,008 for trade unions (such as the Australian Workers' Union, Queensland Nurses' Union, Queensland Teachers' Union, Queensland Police Union of Employees and the Queensland Public Sector Union) to undertake activities including but not limited to the promotion of workplace health and safety issues for industry employees, recruitment of nurses for Queensland Health, and Community Jobs Plan grants benefiting long-term jobseekers and their community.

As the Honourable Member should know, all financial transactions involving all departments, agencies and public sector entities are annually and independently audited by the Auditor-General of Queensland. During the course of each of these audits, the Auditor-General makes an independent assessment of the financial management-related activities of all departments, agencies and public sector entities and provides reports direct to the Queensland Parliament on any matters arising.