

Question on Notice

No. 762

Asked on Tuesday, 24 May 2011

MR NICHOLLS asked the Minister for Education and Industrial Relations (MR C R DICK)–

QUESTION:

Will the Minister list all financial transactions involving unions or their agents made by all departments and agencies to date and for each of the past three years (reported by union to which payment was made, and for each year, and identifying the value and purpose of each transaction and whether in each case full payment, including interest, has been provided or received)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for his question.

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, business and industry organisations

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.

I am advised that during the period from 12 June 2010 to 24 May 2011, Queensland Government departments have expended approximately \$8.97 million to employer organisations (including the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland, Australian Industry Group, Master Builders Association, Local Government Association of Queensland, AgForce and the Queensland Farmers' Federation) for matters including but not limited to workplace health and safety training courses, other training courses, road network planning, field days covering topics such as farming/grazing best practices and safe livestock handling practices, the employment of a school liaison officer to promote agriculture and primary industries in schools, grant funding for infant immunisation services, and to increase the capacity of local governments to respond to corporate planning, risk assessment and disaster mitigation.

I am advised that during the period from the 12 June 2010 to 24 May 2011, Queensland Government departments have expended approximately \$658,000 to trade unions (including the Queensland Council of Unions; Queensland Nurses'

Union; Queensland Police Union; United Firefighters Union; Queensland Teachers Union and the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union) for matters including but not limited to the provision of advertising in union journals to assist with the employment and retention of personnel such as nurses, training for school teachers, the delivery of vocational education and training strategies, and the provision of a support officer to assist with employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

For details of financial transactions prior to 12 June 2010, I refer the Member to the responses to Questions on Notice Nos. 325 and 1132 provided in 2008 and 2010 respectively.

As the Member would be aware, 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.