

Question on Notice

No. 636

Asked on Tuesday, 10 June 2025

HON L ENOCH ASKED CHAIR OF THE STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND WORKS COMMITTEE (MR J MCDONALD)

QUESTION:

With reference to the State Development, Infrastructure and Works Committee's (Committee) inquiry into the Planning (Social Impact and Community Benefit) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025—

Will the Chairperson outline how conflicts of interest (perceived, actual or pecuniary) have been dealt with in respect of (a) witnesses attending public hearings of the committee, (b) Members of Parliament (State, Federal, Committee Members and Non-Committee Members) taking an active role in committee proceeding and (c) Members of Parliament involvement in a charter flight which inspected impacted land as a result of the proposed legislation?

ANSWER

- (a) There is no requirement under Standing Orders, for witnesses participating in public hearings of the committee to declare conflicts of interest (perceived, actual or pecuniary) to the committee.

All hearing programs relating to the inquiry were agreed by the committee, or by the Chair and Deputy Chair in accordance with the standing resolution of the committee. On 2 June 2025, at public hearings in Rockhampton and Biloela, several additional individuals and organisations attending the hearing, registered their interest in putting their views to the committee during the scheduled open session.

- (b) Under Standing Order 261, committee members must disclose to the committee any conflict of interest the member may have in relation to a matter before the committee. As a matter of practice, the committee includes a standing agenda item at the start of each and every private meeting to remind members of their obligations. Committee members also routinely declare any interests (perceived or otherwise) during public proceedings. These processes were followed for meetings and hearings conducted in relation to the Bill.

As referred to above, there is no requirement for non-committee members to declare any conflict of interests under Standing Order 261.

- (c) On 29 May 2025, the committee resolved to use a charter flight to complete two regional hearings in Rockhampton and Biloela and conduct site visits (including aerial inspection) within the time available.

The charter flight between the two locations included scenic inspection of large-scale wind/solar farms and sites to include as conditions permit: Clarke Creek, Moonlight Range, Moah Creek, Smokey Creek.

Also at its meeting on 29 May 2025, the committee noted correspondence from the Member for Mirani in which he requested the opportunity to be 'included in hearings and associated site visits' scheduled in Rockhampton and covering the electorate of Mirani. On 29 May 2025, the committee granted leave for the Member for Mirani to observe the hearings (although not technically necessary) and permitted him to travel with the committee between Rockhampton and Biloela.

Site visits and time spent travelling are not considered official proceedings of the committee.