

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: There have been developments in relation to government landholdings in the Ivanhoe Estate at Macquarie Park and the surrounding area. In simple terms, as a result of the Government adopting the Property Asset Utilisation Task Force Report, one significant component of the lands at Macquarie Park was removed and the task force's work was concluded in relation to the overall land-holdings there. In relation to Ivanhoe Estate, Minister Goward and I are currently in the course of developing a longer-term estate strategy for all of our estates. It is a significant task, and I will report to the House in due course when that work is concluded.

STATE RECORDS AUTHORITY PROJECTS

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: I direct my question to the Minister for Finance and Services. Will the Minister inform the House about the State Records Authority of New South Wales Sentenced Beyond the Seas digitisation project and the recent exhibition of First Fleet convict records at New South Wales Parliament House on Australia Day?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: That is an excellent question from a member who is interested in my role as the Minister. On Australia Day this year the Parliament of New South Wales hosted an exhibition curated by the State Records Authority of New South Wales of original First Fleet convict records held in conjunction with the Parliament's Twenty Five: Stories from Australia's First Parliament exhibition. I congratulate the President and the Speaker on hosting that exhibition.

The PRESIDENT: Order! If the Government Whip and the Leader of the Opposition wish to continue their conversation they should do so in the members' lounge.

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: The exhibition marked the arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove 225 years ago on 26 January 1788. It took pride of place in the Premier's corridor at Parliament House and was a highlight of the State Records Authority's project entitled Sentenced Beyond the Seas. The display of selected original details of convicts listed on the transportation ship manifests, also known as indents, dating back to December 1786, was viewed by about 2,000 people who visited Parliament House on Australia Day. It was the first time the original First Fleet convict indents have been displayed since 1988. The Sentenced Beyond the Seas project involved saving digital colour copies of the original records of convict arrivals from 1788 to 1801 and was a first for the State Records Authority. More than 850 digital images have been made available on the authority's website along with the Early Convict Index of more than 12,000 names that appear in these significant historical records.

The Hon. Trevor Khan: Were there any Obeids?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: No, there were no Obeids. Members should not interrupt; this is a very important issue and we do not want to sully it—or did I mean to say "Scully"? As members know, transportation was the act of sending convicted criminals from Britain across the seas to serve their sentences in the Colony of New South Wales. The project took its name from those convicts of 1788 who were sentenced to be transported, as they said back then, to "parts beyond the seas".

Sentenced Beyond the Seas has benefitted from the cooperation of institutions in Australia and across the world. The project brings together records held by the State Records Authority of New South Wales, the National Library of Australia and the State Library of New South Wales and the National Archives of the United Kingdom. The exhibition has attracted favourable publicity and a positive response from the public. The project was featured in interviews on the ABC with project coordinator Janette Pelosi, and it was mentioned in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Wollongong Advertiser* and was the subject of a feature article on the *Australian Geographic* website. Articles promoting Sentenced Beyond the Seas have also appeared in *Inside History Magazine*, as well as *Descent*, the journal of the Society of Australian Genealogists, and *Australian Family Tree Connections*—[*Time expired.*]

The Hon. MATTHEW MASON-COX: I wish to ask a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer to this important question?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I thank the President for his indulgence in allowing me to continue to inform the House about this important exhibition. Expert talks have been presented by State Records Authority staff to the Botany Bay Family History Society and the Society of Australian Genealogists, and the project has involved and rewarded the community. We should be grateful to everyone involved in making the exhibition

possible. It features Australia's earliest convict records from the Colony of New South Wales. The exhibition highlighted records of world significance that were inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World International Register in 2007.

Without doubt the documents preserved forever in *Sentenced Beyond the Seas* form part of the archival heritage of this State. I thank the President and his staff for allowing the State Records Authority to join the Parliament House Twenty Five: Stories from Australia's First Parliament exhibition and I congratulate the authority on its wonderful initiative. Perhaps this can become an annual event in our Australia Day celebrations. Importantly, I also acknowledge the outstanding work of the board and the staff of the State Records Authority of New South Wales. I commend them for the role they played in making the *Sentenced Beyond the Seas* digitisation project such a worthwhile gift to the people of New South Wales to mark the 225th anniversary of the foundation of our State.

MUNDARLO BRIDGE PROPOSAL

The Hon. ROBERT BORSAK: I direct my question to the Minister for Finance and Services, representing the Minister for the Environment. What investigations into the impact on landholders has the Office of Environment and Heritage done regarding its proposal to raise the height of the Mundarlo Bridge downstream of Gundagai by about one metre to deliver more water to wetlands along the river? How much compensation will the department be liable for if cropping land is flooded and other land becomes isolated or difficult to access in what one farmer describes as political water inundating the land?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: I thank the honourable member for that question. I will refer it to the Minister and obtain a detailed response.

POLITICAL LOBBYING

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I direct my question to the Minister for Finance and Services. What steps has the Minister taken to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between his deputy chief of staff and her responsibilities in his office given that her husband's lobbyist firm—

The Hon. Catherine Cusack: You have been sitting next to Walt, haven't you?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Catherine Cusack will resume her seat.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: —represents a number of insurance companies—for example, Suncorp and Allianz—

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Hon. Peter Phelps will come to order. The Hon. Greg Donnelly will continue his question.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: —which will gain significant financial benefit from his changes to CTP green slips and workers compensation regulations?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: My office has in place all the appropriate safeguards and codes of conduct required.

The Hon. GREG DONNELLY: I have a supplementary question. Will the Minister elucidate his answer in respect of the specific steps he has taken to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between his deputy chief of staff and her responsibilities in his office?

The Hon. GREG PEARCE: It seems that the Opposition wants to talk about couples. Let us have a look at some couples, shall we? Kristina Keneally—

The Hon. Lynda Voltz: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. The question specifically asked the Minister to elucidate the guidelines put in place in his office.

The Hon. John Ajaka: To the point of order: It is impossible to work out whether what the Minister was saying was relevant because he had only just commenced his answer.