

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into the 2023–24 Budget Estimates

Melbourne – Tuesday 13 June 2023

MEMBERS

Sarah Connolly – Chair

Nicholas McGowan – Deputy Chair

Michael Galea

Paul Hamer

Mathew Hilakari

Lauren Kathage

Bev McArthur

Danny O’Brien

Ellen Sandell

WITNESSES

Ms Jacinta Allan MP, Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery,

Mr Tim Ada, Secretary,

Mr Jeroen Weimar, Chief Executive Officer, Victoria 2026 Organising Committee,

Ms Joanne Wandel, Group Head, Commonwealth Games, Development Victoria and

Mr Brad Ostermeyer, Chief, Infrastructure Delivery, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions.

The CHAIR: I declare open this hearing of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee.

I ask that mobile telephones please be turned to silent.

On behalf of the Parliament, the committee is conducting this Inquiry into the 2023–24 Budget Estimates. The committee's aim is to scrutinise public administration and finance to improve outcomes for the Victorian community.

I advise that all evidence taken by the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. However, comments repeated outside this hearing may not be protected by this privilege.

As Chair I expect that committee members will be respectful towards witnesses, the Victorian community joining the hearing via the live stream and other committee members.

Witnesses will be provided with a proof version of the transcript to check. Verified transcripts, presentations and handouts will be placed on the committee's website.

I welcome the minister – and Deputy Premier – for the portfolio of Commonwealth Games delivery, and officers from the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. Minister, I am going to invite you to make a 5-minute presentation, and committee members will then ask questions.

Visual presentation.

Jacinta ALLAN: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, committee. I am delighted to have the opportunity to talk to you today about the tremendous progress that we are making to support Victoria, and indeed regional Victoria, to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games. On 17 March 2026 there will be 7000 athletes and officials from around 70 nations coming to regional Victoria to mark the 23rd Commonwealth Games.

Moving to the next slide, that provides a little bit more detail in terms of the size and the scale of both the event itself and also the international reach in terms of the eyeballs of the world being on regional Victoria for the duration of the games, and then of course the strong economic benefit that will come both in terms of jobs before, during and after the games – the enduring economic benefit. It is a great opportunity for regional Victoria to shine on the international stage.

As part of hosting the games in 2026 not only are we hosting one of the biggest sporting events in the world, we are also doing it in a new way and delivering a new model for delivering the Commonwealth Games, introducing for the first time a multicity model across five regional host cities, being of course Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Shepparton and Gippsland. This is an innovative approach that I am confident will bring out the best in our regional communities and showcase them to the world, but it is also going to drive significant investment not just in sporting and other infrastructure but also an opportunity to drive benefit through our creative and cultural sectors and our tourism and hospitality sectors that will have lasting and enduring benefits.

The full sports program: there are 20 sports and 26 disciplines, including, importantly, nine fully integrated para sports which are integrated as part of the program. You can see there the benefits of more than \$3 billion to the state's economy. I have mentioned jobs a few times – thousands and thousands of jobs.

As we progress to delivering the games I just wanted to touch on the next slide, which talks to the governance arrangements, if you like, in terms of running the games. The games are run by a local organising committee

called Victoria 2026. This was established at the end of last year and importantly is headquartered in Geelong, with Jeroen as the CEO of that local organising committee. Peggy O'Neal has been appointed as chair of the committee, leading a strong board that also includes representatives from the Commonwealth Games Federation and Commonwealth Games Australia, because this is a partnership between those two organisations and the state of Victoria in terms of delivering the games. We also have strong representation and partnership with our First Nations communities across regional Victoria to ensure that we are showcasing that strong, rich cultural history and providing opportunities as well.

The next slide – you can all read the sports that are listed on the slide there. It is a summary of the sporting program, which I have already mentioned, but just to call out that there will be three new sports to the Commonwealth Games 2026, being BMX bikes, coastal rowing and golf. Of course those sports are spread across the five host cities.

Community engagement and working with regional communities, working with First Nations communities and looking at how we can drive jobs and investment are at the heart of a lot of the work that is being undertaken by both the local organising committee and the office of Commonwealth Games as well. We had an opportunity to bring, you know, a lot of people together at the MCG last August as part of a partnership forum to get a debrief on the Birmingham games. It was a great opportunity to learn from what the experiences were in Birmingham and how we can build on that. We have continued to have strong community engagement, which I am sure, if the committee is interested during the course of the hearing, Jeroen could speak more broadly to.

We are also engaging with the business community. We have already announced our procurement pipeline. There are 1200 procurement opportunities, 1200 different procurement decisions, that need to be made through the games, which gives you a sense also of the size and scale of what is being delivered as part of the games. I have mentioned also our engagement with Victoria's First Peoples. The Gunaikurnai, Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung corporations are all working very closely with the local organising committee and the office of Commonwealth Games in the design and the delivery of the infrastructure and looking at how we can run and operate the games and also support the opportunity to showcase the longest continuous culture on the planet in terms of part of that international event. I am sure I will have more time to talk about the other things in a moment.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. The first 7 minutes is going to Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: Thank you, Chair. Secretary, budget paper 3, page 256: can you explain why the 2023–24 target budget of \$297.3 million is 36 per cent less than the planned expenditure of \$467.1 million in last year's budget papers? 2023–24 budget paper 3, page 256 versus 2022–23 budget paper 3, page 73, for reference. Can you explain that?

Tim ADA: Thanks for the question, Mrs McArthur. The difference in the opening-year target for 2023–24 largely accounts to the fact that most of the funding for the Commonwealth Games is held in central contingency. It has not been released in the financial year. It will be released based on further market engagement and further milestones being achieved.

Bev McARTHUR: Okay, thank you. Further, Secretary, media reports indicate that Treasurer Tim Pallas said that the government is 'expecting a substantial contribution' from local councils. How much has been asked of each council, Secretary?

Tim ADA: The conversations with the four relevant local councils have been ongoing for some time, Mrs McArthur. The specifications for the relevant infrastructure in those localities are obviously becoming more granular over time. Those conversations will become more detailed over time. I understand that the conversations in Geelong have been quite specific and the conversations in the other three locations will become more specific over the coming weeks and months, Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: The mayors of both those cities have said they are not going to ask the ratepayers to contribute, so how do you think you are going to find the money if the councils are not going to contribute the funds?

Tim ADA: The minister might want to respond to that question. We are obviously approaching the conversations with the local councils in good faith, recognising that they –

Bev McARTHUR: They have not got any money, Secretary. In fact Geelong are in debt.

Tim ADA: We are approaching the conversations with the four local councils in good faith, recognising that there will be a substantial legacy benefit in their municipalities arising from the infrastructure that is being built, and indeed they will be the owner-operators of much of the infrastructure that is being built or augmented.

Bev McARTHUR: Well, one of the legacies that is proposed is the housing for athletes on a contaminated site. Will the ratepayers be picking up the bill potentially for the decontamination of that site, Secretary?

Tim ADA: We are working through with relevant authorities, including the Department of Transport and Planning and the EPA, with regard to the planning approvals for that particular site. That process has not yet been completed. The one thing I would say, Mrs McArthur, is that that site has been underutilised for some time, and building a village on that site will go a long way to activating that site for the future.

Bev McARTHUR: It is an industrial zone, Secretary.

Tim ADA: I think the future use for that site and around that site is likely to be mixed use and residential, so this can play a catalytic role –

Bev McARTHUR: Are they going to be permanent houses, Secretary, or maybe tow-away ones?

Tim ADA: The final mix of dwellings at that particular site, as is the case for the other sites, will depend on the final planning approvals that have been provided and also the market response to the RFP that has recently been released.

Bev McARTHUR: Also, Secretary, how much money has been requested from the Commonwealth government?

Tim ADA: The government has been having conversations with the Commonwealth government since the early part of last year. The request is significant and goes to cost sharing the hosting of the games both from an infrastructure and an operating perspective.

Bev McARTHUR: I did not see any allocation in the last federal budget, Secretary. Where are you getting the money from from the feds?

Tim ADA: The conversations are ongoing, obviously, and as the planning and the specifications become sharper that will provide for a more detailed conversation with the Commonwealth.

Bev McARTHUR: It would have to be very sharp, wouldn't it, Secretary?

Tim ADA: I cannot speak to what the Commonwealth will ultimately do, obviously.

Bev McARTHUR: But if they do nothing, Secretary, what will you do?

Jacinta ALLAN: That is hypothetical.

Tim ADA: I think that is a question for the government, Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: Secretary, Regional Cities Victoria has called for 100 per cent of all games procurement to go to regional businesses. Will you commit to that target?

Tim ADA: I think I could maybe suggest the minister answer that. It is a policy question.

Jacinta ALLAN: It is a policy question for government, Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: Well, go ahead, Minister.

Jacinta ALLAN: I am delighted to.

Bev McARTHUR: You are the minister for Commonwealth Games, as opposed to that other –

Jacinta ALLAN: Of course I am – Commonwealth Games delivery – and it is a delight that I share that with Commonwealth Games legacy.

Bev McARTHUR: Minister for most things, it seems, but perhaps you did not have to ride to Government House to get your hat.

Jacinta ALLAN: Well, as I said in my presentation, there are 1200 different procurement decisions that need to be taken, in terms of –

Bev McARTHUR: Will the regional businesses get the –

Jacinta ALLAN: Hang on – and we have as part of our policy settings driving local content, because of course we only have local content policies in this government because we set them. It had not been a feature of previous governments' operations in terms of delivering infrastructure or procuring goods and services. We have very strong and deliberate local content targets. When it comes to being able to commit to that 100 per cent, as we have talked with regional communities, there are some things that simply we do not make in regional Victoria that we need to procure for the games. Let me give you an example –

Bev McARTHUR: Well, some of them will not be able to comply with your social procurement policies, will they?

Jacinta ALLAN: Let me give you an example: in my own community of Bendigo we will be going through a process to procure a cycling velodrome. That is something –

Bev McARTHUR: So, no commitments, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: No, there is an absolute commitment –

Bev McARTHUR: 100 per cent, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: to maximise. There is absolutely a commitment to maximise procurement.

Bev McARTHUR: Maximise.

Jacinta ALLAN: We are only having this conversation for two reasons, the first one being that when the opportunity came for regional Victoria to host the games we grabbed that opportunity, and the second reason being that we have got very, very strong and clear local content requirements, and there are examples where in Ballarat and Geelong local professional services firms are already working on the infrastructure delivery in those communities. So it would be terrible if you went and started a bit of a scare campaign out there. There are going to be thousands and thousands of job opportunities for regional Victorians to be partnering with regional Victorian businesses.

Bev McARTHUR: But we are not committing to 100 per cent of the jobs for regional –

The CHAIR: Apologies, Mrs McArthur, your time is up. I will go to Mr Galea.

Michael GALEA: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, Deputy Premier. Good morning, Mr Ada and Mr Weimar. Thanks for joining us. Deputy Premier, I would like to refer back to your presentation. You referred to the multicity model, and obviously as we know there is not just one host city, there are five. Could you please expand on what this model is, why it was chosen and what benefits it will bring to regional Victoria?

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes. Thank you. As I indicated both in my presentation and in the conversation with Mrs McArthur, when the opportunity came along for Victoria to be the host jurisdiction and regional Victoria to be the home of the 2026 Commonwealth Games, we grabbed that opportunity with both hands, because to be able to bring an international festival, one of the biggest sporting events on the globe – and it is not just a sporting event, it is a cultural opportunity as well to have a strong cultural festival – to one city is rare enough. We have got this opportunity now to bring it to five, and never before has it been done in this way. In some ways before even the start of the opening ceremony the Commonwealth Games in Victoria in 2026 will have already made history. This was a deliberate decision to spread the benefit of the games across the whole of the state. Certainly there are some challenges. A successful multicity games does also change the way multicity

sporting events can be run into the future, and this is something that the Commonwealth Games Federation is particularly keen to see, because it does speak to the future of how these games are run around the world.

Also, when you look at not just Melbourne but regional Victoria as well, we have a strong track record already of hosting big events. There are the big events in Melbourne: there was the 2006 Commonwealth Games, and annually there is the grand prix, the Australian Open, the Spring Racing Carnival – the list goes on and on and on. But also in regional Victoria we already host big international – both sporting and cultural – events. Down in Geelong at Kardinia Park of course every other week there is the footy, but there have also been international cricket events and then there were the Foo Fighters, which apparently went off pretty well – I was not there, but I hear it was very successful for the community of Geelong. In Bendigo we have a range of events. There is Groovin the Moo at the showgrounds. There are also the festivals that are held across the state. So we can do this. We know we can do this. That is where we have the opportunity over the period of the games to really make the most of the model and how we can sell that to the rest of the world. This is something we are doing with, can I say, a terrific partnership with regional councils and regional communities. There is huge energy, excitement and effort. Councils and communities are already putting significant effort into making sure that the games in 2026 are a roaring success.

Michael GALEA: Thank you, Deputy Premier. Coming from the south-east too, I cannot wait to get out to the Latrobe Valley for some games when they come around soon enough. I would like to also ask about some of the lessons learned from the last year of planning time that has already taken place and how you expect to see these games driving the economic benefits that you want to see for regional Victoria.

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes, certainly. Again, I think I referenced this in the presentation: the benefits, both real and the legacy benefits going forward, are going to be there before, during and after the games. It is estimated that the games will support 7500 jobs over the course of, as I said, before, during and after the events. We have talked a bit before about procurement: 1200 procurement opportunities are there. We are making sure that local businesses and social enterprises get a fair go in building and supplying to help us deliver the games. There are those direct investments, but then there are also some of the indirect benefits that come from being able to bring what we estimate will be something like 300,000 visitors from outside the host cities into those regional areas for the duration of the games. That will be a tremendous opportunity for our hospitality industry, accommodation, food and wine, and restaurants. They will also see significant boosts from this event during the games. But also we know if you go and visit our beautiful parts of regional Victoria, you go back there, because it is such a wonderful place to visit. It is wonderful to live there as well, but it is also great to visit and make sure we drive that return visitation.

In terms of spreading it across five different host cities, it does speak to some of the logistical challenges that we are going to have. You mentioned that you want to head down to some of the events in Gippsland. We have got to make sure we have got all of our transport connections supporting the running of the games. This is a big opportunity. We expect there to be something like 1.2 million tickets sold during the course of the games, and another 1.2 billion people around the world, mostly citizens of the Commonwealth, will have their eyeballs on regional Victoria while the games are running. In many ways the games are going to be a giant advertising billboard that we will be broadcasting not just across the country but across the world, and it is going to be a great opportunity to showcase regional Victoria. Particularly when you look at our international relationships and you look at where international visitors are coming from, five of the top seven countries for visitors in February 2023 were Commonwealth nations, being New Zealand, UK, India, Singapore and Malaysia. We have already got a really great foundation there to build on, to drive increased visitation and to make the most of the games.

Michael GALEA: And so with such a huge audience as well, do you see that translating into those direct benefits for those regional communities too? You sort of touched on a bit more visibility, but I guess driving that, people will be very familiar of course with Melbourne and Victoria but perhaps not with Shepparton or Bendigo. So can you talk a bit more about how that will translate into longer term benefits for those communities?

Jacinta ALLAN: Alongside the sporting events, we will be running a cultural program, which I believe Minister Shing may have spoken to the committee last week about. Also that gives us the opportunity to drive a tourism product to a new market. As I said before, if you have not visited regional Victoria before, when you visit, you certainly do want to come back.

Michael GALEA: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you. For the next 7 minutes I am going to Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: Secretary, just going back to the Ballarat village. How long have you been working with the EPA on it?

Tim ADA: I do not know exactly, Mrs McArthur, but some time – some months. And the minister may want to add to that.

Jacinta ALLAN: I can certainly answer that, Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: Well, how long?

Jacinta ALLAN: Pretty much since we identified –

Bev McARTHUR: Okay.

Jacinta ALLAN: If I could finish, it was pretty much since we identified that was the preferred site for the village. It was identified that – and you have mentioned this already – there is the industrial history of the site and there are the restrictions –

Bev McARTHUR: So what type of contamination have you identified, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: That soil investigation work is ongoing. We are working with the EPA to look at how we can –

Bev McARTHUR: And where will you take the soil, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: Again, like we do with all of our arrangements for soil, firstly it has to be classified. So let us not put the cart before the horse. The soil first needs to be classified in terms of its level of contamination or otherwise because a lot of soil can be treated as clean fill and go for different re-use. We are working with the EPA. We have been from the get-go once this site was identified.

And we also should point to the fact that this has been a vacant site in the heart of Ballarat for a really, really long time. The games has really accelerated this site being put to good, productive use.

Bev McARTHUR: So what costings for the rehabilitation have you got, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: That is factored into the overall cost for the delivery of the villages across the program.

Bev McARTHUR: Can you give us a figure, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: And given we are in a procurement process at the moment, we will provide updates as that procurement process concludes, because of course we would not want to compromise the position of the state of Victoria through that competitive procurement process.

Bev McARTHUR: Would you be putting portables on the site, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: I am glad to have the opportunity to talk to what will be happening at the Ballarat site. So we are going through a master planning process at the moment – again working with council and the local community. Each of the village sites will have a different mix of permanent and temporary facilities on each site. There will be, at all four sites, temporary facilities. That is because there will be facilities that will be needed for the games that just simply are not right for future homes – things like common catering areas and common sports medicine centres. They are going to be temporary sites.

Bev McARTHUR: So will they be portable houses on that site, Minister, that you will take away?

Jacinta ALLAN: At each of the four sites, and this is particularly relevant to Ballarat, what will happen is there will be the civil works, if you like. So at each of four sites including Ballarat, we will be laying down the road network and the utilities to connect up the site. What we then have, and this is as I mentioned before – that

former saleyard site at Ballarat has been a vacant site that has been a vexed issue for the local community for a very, very long time about how to put that site to better use. It has long been contemplated by the City of Ballarat for urban renewal. The games has brought that program forward.

What we will be doing, working with the EPA, is looking at the facilities that we can use for the homes for the athletes and the officials during the running of the games. I want to pick up on a reference you made in terms of 'tow away'. At Ballarat, depending on the final mix, there will be the permanent infrastructure that will be laid down – what will be used for the games – and we have the opportunity post the games to do two things. One is to put permanent housing on the site for Ballarat – something that has been brought forward by years and years. As I said, it has been a long-talked about site. And two, the second point, is that the temporary facilities will be designed in a way that they can be re-used in other communities as permanent housing.

Given the challenges we have got in regional Victoria for affordable housing and for availability of housing, this is in fact getting two outcomes: houses permanently on the Ballarat site and houses in other communities following the games. And this is a really strong outcome for Ballarat.

Bev McARTHUR: We will see about that.

Jacinta ALLAN: Well, we have brought forward this site by years and years. This has been a problem that has been long admired and has long challenged many people in the Ballarat community.

Bev McARTHUR: It is an industrial area, Minister –

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes, and that is why it has been really challenging, and we are going to do that with –

Bev McARTHUR: and you are going to potentially put housing there. Minister, you mentioned transport –

Jacinta ALLAN: Hang on. I am not going to let that little scare campaign run. No, no, no.

Bev McARTHUR: Let us go to transport.

Jacinta ALLAN: We will be doing all of the housing, and the master plan will be done. We will be working with the EPA, and we are working –

Bev McARTHUR: You have told us that six times.

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes. And anything that goes on there will need the approval of the EPA, so it would be terrible if there was a scare campaign run to the contrary, Mrs McArthur, wouldn't it?

Bev McARTHUR: Well, it would be terrible if you actually put people on a site that they should not be on. But let us go to the transport –

Jacinta ALLAN: No, we would not do that. Let me be clear, Chair –

Bev McARTHUR: Oh, that is excellent. So nobody will be going there if it is a contaminated site.

Jacinta ALLAN: The site will need to go through all the appropriate planning approvals, Mrs McArthur, and it would be terrible if there was a scare campaign run to the contrary. I saw some comment last week with a reference to it being called a 'ghetto'. What a terrible slight on the Ballarat community that reference of your shadow minister was – just terrible.

Bev McARTHUR: Well, let us go to the transport, Minister. Locals in the Ballarat area say it is simply not feasible to rely on buses to transport people from Ballarat station to Mars Stadium. Given that Birmingham saw an unprecedented uptake in public transport for its games last year, why won't the government listen to the locals and build a dedicated event platform at Mars Stadium to manage incoming visitors?

Jacinta ALLAN: Look, I am happy to ask Jeroen to supplement this, but quite simply it is a factor of time. We have made significant investments in facilities in the Ballarat community, we are upgrading the Ballarat train station and the upgrades to the Ballarat line have delivered an extra 135 weekly services, which are already coming in and out of the Ballarat community, so there will be a significant –

Bev McARTHUR: So we will not have a dedicated platform, Minister?

Jacinta ALLAN: It is simply a question of time. The games are in 1008 days. In terms of the time that is needed to be taken to deliver these games, I am confident. The team is already doing significant planning work with, again, the local community to ensure how we move people – not just to Ballarat, there are five host cities that we have to move people around – and we are confident that we can do that. They have done it around the world through a mix of bus, coach, train and road. It is going to be one of the biggest logistical challenges of the running of the games, and I am confident we can do it.

Bev McARTHUR: Thanks.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Mrs McArthur. We are now going to go to Ms Kathage.

Lauren KATHAGE: Thank you, Chair, Minister and officials. Minister, Mrs McArthur spoke quite a bit about the housing that will be provided as part of the games, and there is a lot of sporting and housing infrastructure that is going to be used for the Commonwealth Games. I think there is a bit of a track record of maximising social and economic benefits from infrastructure. Are you able to talk a bit to how that will work with the infrastructure being used for the games?

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes. Thank you, Ms Kathage. Certainly across our entire infrastructure program we have always had a policy setting that looks at how we can drive every dollar we invest in infrastructure – whether it is transport or hospitals or schools – to make sure it goes as far as it can. That goes to some of those policy settings around skills, around Indigenous targets in all of our programs, the use of social enterprises and of course local procurement, particularly relevant here in terms of regional local procurement as well. So it is about making sure we maximise not just the economic value but the social value as well out of what we build and the investments that we make. That is certainly the approach that is guiding us through the delivery of the infrastructure, both the venues and the villages, for the 2026 Commonwealth Games. There is a lot of work that is going on to make sure that we are supporting local regional businesses to be ready for these procurement opportunities as well, and we are doing that through the procurement program that is being run.

Also we have to keep an eye on how we are supporting the skills base of regional communities and how we can make sure that we have, as part of this, apprentices and trainees getting opportunities to work on these sites and also look at how that supports a pipeline into the future of a skilled workforce. There is a lot of work going on. We have talked a lot about procurement already today, but back in May we announced the goods and services procurement pipeline. I have mentioned the 1200 opportunities already a couple of times this morning.

Certainly, too, to give you a sense of the breadth of what we are doing, it is not just the construction procurement, which people would be really familiar with; we have got to go and procure the King's baton that will be used around the country – around the world – the uniforms, the festival programs, the IT, the catering and the professional services. There are so many different areas where we need to procure, as I said, in addition to the investment we are making in the venues and villages. On that, with the venue and villages delivery, Development Victoria, who are leading for us the delivery of the villages and the venues, have been holding industry engagement sessions. They were held in Ballarat and Geelong just last month. We are also doing that in partnership with the Industry Capability Network, who is very well known in terms of the agency in government that is about driving local procurement opportunities, and also Kinaway. They are doing that work to make sure, as I said before, that businesses are games ready, because these are big opportunities that are dropping, and we need to make sure that as many local businesses as possible are ready to catch those opportunities.

I will give you a couple of examples, which I alluded to before. There is in Geelong an architecture firm, Warren and Mahoney, who with Four18 Architecture are working as design consultants on the Armstrong Creek aquatics venue, the new aquatics facility that we are building at Armstrong Creek. In Ballarat Four18 Architecture Moreton+Co Architecture, who work extensively locally, are working with Cox Architecture on the work that we are doing at Eureka Stadium, which will be of course the home of the athletics and para athletics competitions. So they are two really good examples of how local professional services firms are matching up with others to deliver, in this instance, professional services for the design of the venues for the games. This is part of that enabling and supportive work we are doing, as I mentioned, with organisations like

the Industry Capability Network and also with Kinaway, to make sure that we are looking at every opportunity to drive jobs and opportunities into regional communities.

Lauren KATHAGE: Thank you, Minister. I did go to Bendigo on the weekend, actually. We come up past Heathcote and Eppalock, which is full as a goog, and the Tooborac pies, which are still delicious. We love Bendigo, we love Ballarat, but there is much more to regional Victoria. So how will the rest of regional Victoria benefit from the games?

Jacinta ALLAN: This is a great opportunity to talk about that. Whilst there has been a focus on the five host cities, the opportunities for regional Victoria and indeed, can I say, the suburbs of Melbourne as well to be partnering with us to deliver the games that is going to be critical to our success in terms of the delivery of the games. An infrastructure example, if you like, that goes to that point is the investment we are making at Eureka Stadium. It is about \$150 million; it is a package around the redevelopment of Eureka Stadium. As part of that package we are delivering new community sporting facilities at Miners Rest, which will be used for displacement purposes, because the normal activity at Eureka Stadium will not be able to happen in the lead-up to the games. We are building what will be temporary homes for those clubs at Miners Rest that once the games are over will be permanent facilities for the Miners Rest community – again, bringing forward investment in local community sporting infrastructure by many, many years that had been talked about by that local community, and it was great to be in Miners Rest with the Member for Ripon not that long ago to make that announcement.

Also when it comes to, for example, accommodation we know that the rural councils around each of the host cities are working with each of the host cities on how they can be part of housing people and visitors during the games. We are obviously building beds for athletes and officials for during the course of the games at each of the villages. There will be plenty of proud mums and dads and family members who will want to come and watch their family members participate in the Commonwealth Games. That will drive a big demand on every bed, we expect, in the region – every bed. You have referenced Bendigo. There is a lot of work happening with Echuca and communities along the river about how they can provide accommodation services to people wanting to come and base themselves in Bendigo during the course of the games.

Lauren KATHAGE: Thank you, Minister.

The CHAIR: Thank you. We are going to go for the next 7 minutes to Mrs McArthur.

Bev McARTHUR: Secretary, we have heard that there is going to be no dedicated platform at Mars Stadium, so alternatively will you commit to upgrading 300 metres of the Creswick Road between Ballarat railway station and Mars Stadium to a dual carriageway to enable better traffic movement?

Tim ADA: Mrs McArthur, that is an investment decision for government, if the minister wants to respond to that.

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes, that is a government – are you okay?

Bev McARTHUR: Yes.

Jacinta ALLAN: Do you need some – oh, you have got some water.

Danny O'BRIEN: We are all used to it. It has been going for a week.

Jacinta ALLAN: Gosh. This is like a little Petri dish. Are you okay? Okay.

Again I will ask Jeroen to supplement this as well, because, Mrs McArthur, it does go to that conversation we were having before about the movement of people. The decision around an investment decision on Creswick Road is one that I am not able to make or announce today. But if you would like to have further details on how we are planning to have that part of Creswick Road around Eureka Stadium operate as a transport hub, I am delighted to hand over to Jeroen to talk to that in detail.

Jeroen WEIMAR: Yes, thank you, Minister. In terms of the transport plan, that is the biggest logistical challenge around these games, with five cities to manage in parallel. We will be building it up at a number of different levels, recognising that a significant number of the spectators will be coming in from both the host

cities but also wider regional Victoria, so not just coming up from Melbourne. It is about boosting the core public transport networks in those existing five cities and also of course maximising the capacity we can take on V/Line and really using the investment we have put into V/Line over the last few years or so. We are also looking at active transport options, getting walking and cycling right across those cities – giving people a good opportunity to move around those cities will be important – and looking at a broader park-and-ride strategy, again recognising a lot of spectators and workforce will be coming in from broader regional Victoria into the towns as well as coming up from Melbourne. So lots of different layers of networks, and of course in the middle of all that ensuring we have got a dedicated athlete transport network to move them from those local villages to those local venues and making sure they can get to their competitions at the right time. I am happy to expand on any of those comments.

Danny O'BRIEN: I might jump in and give Mrs McArthur a rest, if that is okay, Chair. I am not sure if it is for the Secretary or Mr Weimar, but what is budgeted for marketing for the games both domestically and overseas?

Jeroen WEIMAR: I can take that question on notice, Mr O'Brien. I do not have that detail with me at the moment.

Danny O'BRIEN: Okay. Regional Cities Victoria has called for at least \$30 million to be spent. Will you be responding to their call in that –

Jacinta ALLAN: We are spending a lot more than that.

Jeroen WEIMAR: One of my frames for that, Mr O'Brien, will be – and I have obviously spent a lot of the time with all the members of Regional Cities Victoria and local tourism industries across Victoria. We are spending the entire games budget on promoting regional Victoria, to say it is an amazing place to come to, and the build up to March 2026 will be almost as important as those 12 days that will be in the global spotlight. There is significant dedicated investment going into both marketing the games and ensuring we get massive visibility of the games during the time as well as the wider Victoria program through Visit Victoria, who are our colleagues in this.

Danny O'BRIEN: When would you expect you would finalise the marketing budget?

Jeroen WEIMAR: There is an ongoing marketing program being developed over the next couple of years. We start this of course with the King's baton relay that starts in January 2026. It is not that far away. It will be visiting pretty much every place within regional –

Danny O'BRIEN: Sorry, did you say January 2026?

Jeroen WEIMAR: Yes. The King's baton relay will start in March 2025 internationally. It will come to Australia at the end of 2025. It will be moving through all parts of regional Victoria through 2026. We expect to see a lot of attention being placed on that entire program as we go through. But of course we are expected to start our ticket sales program in early 2025. Again, that will be a period of significant traction, both within Victoria but of course internationally for getting as many people to come here and enjoy these amazing games.

Danny O'BRIEN: Okay. Can I just confirm, Minister, I think you said that – I am not sure if the microphone picked it up – it will be considerably more than \$30 million?

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes, and I think if I can point you to the closing ceremony at the Birmingham games last August where Victoria had a significant part of the program as part of that formal handing over of the flag to the next host jurisdiction. The Governor, along with representatives from the three traditional owner groups that are representing the games, accepted that flag and also in turn handed gifts back to the Commonwealth Games Federation. That, if you like, bounced the ball on the marketing of regional Victoria. We were on a global platform. We can send you the clip. It is quite impressive, because it was an opportunity to spend – I think it was about a 20-minute part of the program – 20 minutes showcasing regional Victoria. There was a lot of work, and we did this in partnership –

Danny O'BRIEN: Thanks, Minister. That is great. Just going back to the –

Jacinta ALLAN: You do not sound like you believe that.

Danny O'BRIEN: No, I do, but you are just taking up my time now.

Jacinta ALLAN: That is very inconvenient.

Danny O'BRIEN: Can I ask, going back to the contributions from councils and the Commonwealth: if councils are not able to contribute at all to whatever the government wants from them, will they miss out on anything?

Jacinta ALLAN: No. We have already announced the five host cities. We will not stray into hypotheticals, because what you are putting is 'What happens if this does not happen?'

Danny O'BRIEN: In a budget the whole thing is a hypothetical, so we really need to ask those sorts of questions.

Jacinta ALLAN: We are talking with councils right now. We are talking with the Commonwealth government as well right now. I am not going to cut across those conversations. In the instance of local councils, can I point you to the fact that whilst officials are having these conversations, as Mrs McArthur pointed to, ultimately it is the elected officials who have to make that decision, and I am not going to disrespect them and their responsibilities by commenting at large about what I think they should and should not be doing. These are conversations and these are decisions that have to be made by different levels of government. Of course we are talking to them. Can I say, and I know there are some that want to throw shade on this –

Danny O'BRIEN: I have not given you 3 minutes to answer one question, and I am sure –

Jacinta ALLAN: The conversations, the discussions we are having with regional councils – yes, there are some challenges. This is a big logistical exercise, but we are all up for it, and the regional councils particularly are excited and want to be absolute partners at the table, and I think that is what you are seeing reflected through some of the commentary that we are getting.

Danny O'BRIEN: So the state government will foot the bill regardless of council contribution?

Jacinta ALLAN: We are working with local councils at the moment in terms of what their contribution may be, and I am not going to presuppose the outcomes and decisions that need to be made by elected officials.

Danny O'BRIEN: What is the estimated total cost –

The CHAIR: Thank you, Mr O'Brien. Your time has expired. I am going to go to Mr Hilakari.

Mathew HILAKARI: Thank you, Deputy Premier and officials, for your attendance today. Sports – we have not talked a lot about the sports themselves, which is, you know, pretty fundamental to these games. I will refer back to of course budget paper 3, page 235. Can you talk through some of the sports that will be offered – your presentation went some way to that – and also some comparisons to previous games?

Jacinta ALLAN: You are right to identify that this is one of the largest international sporting events on the planet that is coming to Victoria and regional Victoria, so we should spend a little bit of time talking about the sports and the athletes and the officials who will be putting on this spectacle of elite sport literally in our backyard.

For each Commonwealth Games there are usually 16 core sports. These games we are offering 20 sports and nine para sports. On the para sport program, we are really proud of this program. It is one of the biggest para sports programs in history and, unlike the Olympics where they are two separate events, this is integrated. The sports and the para sports are run at the same venues at the same time, which is I think a really important part of the work that the Commonwealth Games does. There will be 5000 athletes, 72 nations, from 17 March to 29 March 2026, who will be showing us the best of their talents and ability and also their years of hard work. I mean, there are people training now to compete at the Commonwealth Games in Victoria in March 2026. That is what comes with that sport.

One of the reasons why we were confident in terms of putting a bid in for the Commonwealth Games was that regional Victoria across the regional host cities already had a foundation, if you like, of sporting facilities that we knew could host the events. Again, if I can talk locally, the Bendigo lawn bowls club is ready to go to host

the Commonwealth Games lawn bowls. And for lawn bowls the Commonwealth Games is the highest level of international competition, and they are incredibly proud to be the host venue for that.

We know we have already got a foundation of venues across regional Victoria, but we did need to make some strategic and additional investment in some bigger infrastructure projects. For example, in Geelong we need to invest in a new aquatic centre in Armstrong Creek and a new multipurpose facility will be built at Waurn Ponds next to the village, next to the train station – the new train station that we built at Waurn Ponds, which is now accepting extra services as of the end of May. These builds will be permanent facilities, and after the games are over they will go to the local community. Also, Geelong is hosting triathlon, beach volleyball and golf, which I mentioned is making its debut. That will be held somewhere on the Bellarine Peninsula. Going back to the conversation about marketing, having golf on the Bellarine Peninsula – as the backdrop – is going to be a giant postcard for that region for golf lovers around the world and people who are tuning in to the games.

In Ballarat – I have mentioned already a couple of times the investment we are making to upgrade Eureka Stadium, and that is also going to involve competition facilities and training facilities that post the games are going to be new, permanent athletic facilities for anyone, from Little Aths to some older people who like to run around and do all that fit athletics thing, to go and have those facilities permanently into the future.

I have mentioned lawn bowls in Bendigo. Again, another terrific example of why we were confident we had the foundational facilities to host the games was that Bendigo stadium already hosts elite international sporting events across basketball and netball. It is a 4000-seat stadium that will be home for the netball over the course of the games.

In Gippsland, in the City of Latrobe, there is the work where they will host, for example, the rugby sevens at the Dom Camino reserve, which is also going to attract some investment in permanent facilities. Shepparton is going to be hosting the BMX and a cycling event as well.

I have not listed all of the sports, because there are a lot of them, and all the investments that we are making, but I hope that gives you a sense of, as your question asked, what is happening with the sports, what is going on with the sporting program and how that is going to run but also, along the way, the investments we are making – some of them significant, big investments like the ones in Geelong and Ballarat. Also, at a number of those other venues there will be investments made to upgrade some of their facilities that will be there forever more. That also speaks to some of the conversations we are having with regional cities. Regional cities have asked for investment in facilities for after the games. Well, we are making them, and they are built into the work that we need to do to make sure each of the venues for the sports in each of the host cities is games ready.

Mathew HILAKARI: I represent a community which is quite diverse, but particularly there is a strong Indian community. The sport of kabaddi is one which is close to the hearts of many people in the community I represent. I was so pleased to hear about the commitment prior to the election to have an exhibition game prior to the Commonwealth Games. Could you just give us a bit of an update on where that is up to?

Jacinta ALLAN: Again, this is a great example of how the Commonwealth Games gives us the opportunity to showcase sport and culture and put that on a global stage and showcase Victoria to the world. Kabaddi in India is second only to cricket as the most popular sport, and it is quite a fascinating sport for someone who had not previously been familiar with it – I have been watching some videos. It is a massive sport and really popular. It is also popular in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka – nations with big population bases here. The opportunity to run alongside the games, if you like, some exhibition sports or demonstration sports is part of every host nation's opportunity. That is why we committed to hosting a kabaddi showcase match in the lead-up to the Commonwealth Games. That planning work is underway. We are thinking carefully about where that showcase game will go. I am sure there are plenty of bidders for where those events will go. We have got to have the appropriate indoor court facilities to host the event and make sure we have got plenty of room for spectators –

Mathew HILAKARI: It is going to be huge.

Jacinta ALLAN: because from what we believe, it is huge. It is hugely popular, and I think we are all going to get an education on the sport of kabaddi. By the end of the Comm games, we might also be pretty expert and big fans of the sport as well.

Mathew HILAKARI: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I will go to Ms Sandell.

Ellen SANDELL: Thank you, Chair. Minister, I would like to ask about gambling. The government does have a number of commitments to reduce harm from gambling. We know that gambling ads in sport and gambling's association with sport is still very strong but very harmful. Will the government make a commitment to keeping the Commonwealth Games free of gambling advertising and sponsorship?

Jacinta ALLAN: I will start, and I will ask Jeroen to continue, because under the Commonwealth Games Federation there is a host contract that we sign that goes to a whole range of things – what we have just been talking about today but also in terms of the advertising revenue and the advertising opportunities that are driven by the games and making sure you do not have two car companies sponsoring the events, that different jurisdictions have made decisions on. So there are some formal arrangements. I am speaking in the global, not in terms specific to gambling, but I will ask Jeroen to make some comments on that.

Jeroen WEIMAR: Thank you, Minister. Good morning, Ms Sandell. There are two key elements of this, one of which is there is a provision within our host contract to attract games sponsorship. Of course conversations are happening already with the major sponsors of the games, and that is an important part of revenue and of keeping the overall cost of the games down to the wider Victorian community. Certainly we would not expect to see any gambling companies participate in the sponsorship of this kind of games program. There are a number of other categories that are excluded within those arrangements, and we will have those conversations –

Ellen SANDELL: Sorry, I just missed that there. There are categories –

Jeroen WEIMAR: There are a number of other categories of sponsorship, tobacco sponsorship being a good example, that are excluded from those kinds of arrangements.

Ellen SANDELL: Gambling is excluded, are you saying, or are you just saying that do not expect them?

Jeroen WEIMAR: We do not expect to see gambling as part of those arrangements at this point in time. Of course that is a decision between the Commonwealth Games Federation and us here as the organising committee, and we will review each of those sponsorship opportunities as they come up and make a decision on what is appropriate for these particular games as we go forward. Similarly we will be working very closely with broadcasters, so there are negotiations happening now for the broadcast rights both within Australia and internationally. Again that is a significant revenue stream to the games. It helps offset the costs of running these games. Again we will be talking to broadcasters around what their sponsorship strategy is going to be. So there is no categorical exclusion of gambling, but certainly it is something that we as an organising committee would want to absolutely see avoided in these games.

Ellen SANDELL: Where does the responsibility for that decision lie, should you decide to exclude them?

Jeroen WEIMAR: The decision ultimately in terms of sponsorship for the games sits with the organising committee, and that is a three-way partnership between the Victorian government, the Commonwealth Games Federation and Commonwealth Games Australia. That is where that sits. Similarly with the broadcasting rights pieces that will be a negotiation with the broadcasters around the value of those broadcast rights.

Ellen SANDELL: But the decision ultimately sits with you, your organisation, or no?

Jeroen WEIMAR: It ultimately sits with the organising committee.

Jacinta ALLAN: No. Sorry, to be clear, not with Jeroen as CEO.

Ellen SANDELL: No, not with Jeroen.

Jacinta ALLAN: I mentioned in the presentation earlier Peggy O'Neal is the chair of the organising committee.

Ellen SANDELL: But ultimately that is the body –

Jacinta ALLAN: Yes.

Ellen SANDELL: It is their responsibility. It is not a government decision necessarily.

Jacinta ALLAN: This is why I wanted put up on the presentation a slide on governance. It is a complex governance environment that we operate in, and this is the same for any host nation of the games. It is a three-way between the host nation or the host jurisdiction, in this case us, Victoria; the Commonwealth Games Federation, who hold the games for whichever part of the world they are held in every four years; and Commonwealth Games Australia, as the peak body in the host jurisdiction for the games. There is a board that is appointed each four years for the running of the games. As I mentioned, Peggy chairs it. I can leave with the committee the list of all the other people who are on the board. The government –

Ellen SANDELL: It is their responsibility around –

Jacinta ALLAN: Sorry, I just want to be clear. The government is represented on that board through its three – three? – direct appointments.

Jeroen WEIMAR: Three. That is right.

Jacinta ALLAN: So we would have an opportunity through that to make very clear our views, in the case of this issue, of what we would expect, and it would be our expectation that we would –

Jeroen WEIMAR: Try.

Jacinta ALLAN: Absolutely – in terms of it not being part of the games.

Ellen SANDELL: So it is the government's intention not to have gambling advertising?

Jacinta ALLAN: We are dealing a little bit with a hypothetical at the minute because we do not have a proposal before us, as I understand it.

Jeroen WEIMAR: That is right.

Jacinta ALLAN: There is no proposal before us, so we do need to –

Ellen SANDELL: But presumably the government has a view on whether it is acceptable to have gambling advertising as part of the Commonwealth Games.

Jacinta ALLAN: I think there have already been comments made in this space, and we are seeing this from the federal government as well. When you are having this sort of community event, part of what makes a games event like this really special is you have got the opportunity to inspire the next generation of elite athletes, and we do not want them bombarded with those ads. We all see them. It is something that I think people are becoming – I certainly am – less and less tolerant of. We do not want that to be a feature of the games. I cannot absolutely commit to that right now, because (a) there is not a proposal before us and (b) it has got to be worked through with those partners of the games, but I hope you can get a sense of where the position of Victoria will be – that we will have very little tolerance, indeed none, for that sort of advertising. Again that is starting to stray into a bit of a hypothetical position.

Ellen SANDELL: No problem. Thank you. I will move on to another question. Recommendation 72 from PAEC's report last year on budget estimates was that the department publish its methodology for determining the benefits and costs associated with hosting the Commonwealth Games, including the cost–benefit ratio. Can I just clarify the department is going to do that?

Tim ADA: Thanks for the question, Ms Sandell. There was a robust economic assessment in early 2022. I might take that question on notice to consult with the minister, Ms Sandell. The analysis has been presented as part of cabinet-in-confidence documentation. I will take that on notice to consult and come back to the committee.

Ellen SANDELL: Thank you. I appreciate that. Just to Mr Weimar, you mentioned a number of categories that are excluded from sponsorship, tobacco being one of them. Do you know what the other categories are?

Jeroen WEIMAR: Look, I could take that question on notice, Ms Sandell, in terms of the details, but of the categories that come to mind certainly tobacco sponsorships are excluded, and we have a number of other categories that we have taken a very clear position as an organising committee on that says that we would not encourage those opportunities –

Ellen SANDELL: What are those categories?

Jeroen WEIMAR: Well, I mean, gambling is one, which you have mentioned. We have a number of other categories that would be of concern if they came up. Again, they are hypotheticals, and as we see that work coming through – and I should say the feedback we are getting from very early engagement with potential sponsors is very positive, so there are a lot of very strong organisations out there that are very keen to be part of these games.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Weimar. I am going to go to Mr Hamer.

Paul HAMER: Thank you, Minister. Thank you, officials. You mentioned that there were a number of officials who went over to Birmingham, and obviously it is a good case study, being the immediately preceding games. I was just wondering if you could expand on some of the learnings from those games and how we might be tracking in the cycle compared to where they are.

Jacinta ALLAN: Thank you. It was a great opportunity, not long after having won the right to host the games, which was announced in April of last year, to be able to send teams over. I think, Jeroen, you were over there –

Jeroen WEIMAR: I was over there, yes.

Jacinta ALLAN: with a number of other people in Birmingham in July and August of last year to get life experience in how to run the games. Also this is particularly important given that historically and normally host jurisdictions are given anywhere between kind of six to eight years run-up to host the games. We have got less than four because the opportunity came along in a particular set of circumstances to bid for the games. So it was a great opportunity to go and learn from the event. Also, for the record, Australia topped the medal tally in Birmingham, so there was plenty to cheer about on the sporting field. But there was also the opportunity to look at how we could, as I said, learn. Also, what we are seeing is that a lot of experienced people who worked on those games are also coming to give their advice and expertise to us here in Victoria. There are some similarities between the games, but there are obviously some differences. We have talked about the multicity model. Also, the Birmingham games was the first games to award more medals to women than men and had the largest ever integration of para sports, and we are working to better that benchmark with both the medal program – but there will be some announcements in due course. It is a really great example of how we can build on each of the games that have gone before them.

Also, there was the opportunity to look at some of the logistics around running the games – you know, transport, security, the movement of people, the ticketing. We have had a conversation about advertising. All of these things go into learning from what happened in Birmingham. On ticketing, Birmingham sold 1 million tickets across their 11 days of competition, and we obviously can learn from both how that process ran and, again, the movement of people. I think I mentioned that figure of 1.2 million is what we expect to be selling for the Victorian games. And then in terms of broadcast – the Birmingham broadcast – there were 11 million people reached via the 7 Australia broadcast and 28.6 million via the BBC broadcast, and then there was a global audience of almost a billion for both the opening and the closing ceremonies. And as I said before, Victoria was, as part of that closing ceremony, front and centre as part of that handing over of the flag and showcasing regional Victoria to that audience.

We have also, got some opportunities to, again, work with the local government arrangements, which we have talked about before. There is some work there. And also I should emphasise the trade and investment program that we are wanting to run. We have talked already about sport, regional communities and the cultural and festivals program. There is a big opportunity to run a trade and investment program as well, and this is something that, through the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions, we are working closely with that department on. Again, a Victorian trade delegation went over for the games. There is that opportunity to do that business, particularly given, I think I mentioned before, a number of the countries are top countries for the numbers of visitors who come here. You know, if you think about India and the United Kingdom collectively,

they obviously compete as individual nations for these games but collectively are a big trading partner for Victoria. So those trade and investment relationships are significant already, and there is an opportunity to build on them during the games and then also look at reaching into new markets. This is particularly an opportunity for some of our regional producers to be able to showcase their product literally to the world that is coming to visit them in their backyard.

Paul HAMER: Thanks, Minister. It was mentioned before just about jobs and regional procurement, not just in the procurement section but also obviously when the games are actually operating and in the lead-up to that there are going to be a lot of jobs that are going to be required to be filled and a lot of volunteer roles that are going to be required to be filled. I am just wondering if you could perhaps expand on what those opportunities will be, particularly for regional Victorians, and how people can get involved.

Jacinta ALLAN: Well, the first opportunity that has come has been through the decision to locate our headquarters, the organising committee headquarters, in Geelong. We have been set up there since the start of the year.

Jeroen WEIMAR: Yes, December.

Jacinta ALLAN: It has currently got around 120 people employed, and that will grow in the lead-up to the games, but also there will be staff located in other hubs, particularly in our fabulous GovHub buildings that we have been building in Ballarat and Morwell and soon to open in Bendigo.

Bev McARTHUR: Ballarat is empty most of the time.

Jacinta ALLAN: Well, there is plenty of room for the organising committee to come and staff that facility. And the reason why we can use these facilities is because of the terrific investment that the Andrews Labor government has made in regional communities to invest in these GovHubs, which are civic hubs for the co-location of local and state government services, which makes it easy for the local community to go and access those services, as well as the significant investment that is made through the build of the projects, a great stimulus for the building industry in those local communities as well. So these are already existing infrastructure, and it goes to that point I was making before about that really great foundation we have got in regional Victoria to have the confidence to host these games. We have already got a great foundation of infrastructure, whether it is the GovHubs, I mentioned the sporting facilities before and the strong road and rail connections that we already have. That is a great foundation on which we can build for the games. We will be having 300,000 people from outside of the regions coming in and out of the regions for the duration of the games, and so that gives you a sense in terms of the job opportunities that are going to come during the course of the games.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Deputy Premier and department officials. That is the end of questions for this portfolio. Thank you very much for appearing before the committee this morning. The committee is going to follow up on any questions taken on notice in writing, and responses will be required within five working days of the committee's request.

The committee is now going to take a short break before beginning its consideration of the transport and infrastructure portfolio at 10:20 am. I declare this hearing adjourned.

Witnesses withdrew.