

## PAEC Inquiry into the 2018-19 Budget Estimates – Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearing

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### Minister Pulford, Regional Development, Wednesday 13 June 2018

#### Question 1

1. With respect to the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund:
  - a. Please provide an estimate of grant funding unallocated as at 30 June 2018.
  - b. Please provide a breakdown of the departmental administration costs from this fund.

#### Response

Details of grants and operating expenses are published in Regional Development Victoria's annual report.

It should be noted that the *Regional Development Victoria Act 2002* establishes Regional Development Victoria with broad objectives for the economic and community development of regional Victoria.

The Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund is just one of the means by which Regional Development Victoria undertakes this remit.

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### Question 2

2. With respect to the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, please provide the sums from 2 June 2016 to 30 June 2017 and the expected sums to 30 June 2018 for the following:

- a. The total money appropriated by the Parliament for the purposes of the fund under section 16(a) of the *Regional Development Victoria Act 2002*.
- b. The total money received from the investment of money in the fund under section 16(b) of the Act.
- c. The total money received from any other source under section 16(c) of the Act.
- d. The total payments for regional development purposes under section 17(a) of the Act.
- e. The costs and expenses incurred in administering part 3 and part 4 of the Act as per section 17(3)(a) of the Act.
- f. The costs and expenses incurred under section 17(3)(b) of the Act.
- g. The credit that was applied to the fund under section 20(1)(b) of the Act.
- h. The liabilities that were transferred to the fund under section 20(1)(c) of the Act.

### Response

The Labor Government promised to deliver for every corner of Victoria.

A range of initiatives, including our \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, have boosted local economies, created job new opportunities, and built stronger local communities.

Financial details relating to the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund and Regional Development Victoria are published in Regional Development Victoria's annual report.

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### Question 3

3. With regard to page 3 of your presentation which states, 'Every \$1 of government investment driving additional \$3.95 investment', is there a report or study that is publicly available which could be provided?

### Response

There are currently no publicly available reports on the status of the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund.

The Auditor-General has typically undertaken a periodical audit of the Trust Fund established by the *Regional Development Victoria Act 2002*. These reports, including a likely future audit of the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, are available to the public.

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### Question 4

4. Please provide protocols or further details on how Regional Development Victoria facilitates working and planning with local government areas and others such as the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

### Response

As the Government's lead agency responsible for driving economic and community development across rural and regional Victoria, Regional Development Victoria works across all tiers of government and in partnership with local businesses and communities to provide services and programs designed to deliver maximum long-term benefits.

Regional Development Victoria's broad remit means that its work with other relevant government agencies occurs in a variety of ways. For example, inter-agency collaboration at State and Local Government level is typically required:

- In the delivery of regional infrastructure, jobs and community development projects through the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund where there are planning, environmental or other implications;
- In the implementation of place-based investment strategies and initiatives, such as in the Latrobe Valley or the Barwon region, which may have implications for local tourism or other new industry development;
- In the provision of targeted business and community assistance and infrastructure to enable regional communities to recover from natural disasters.

In addition, Regional Development Victoria plays a critical role in representing the interests of regional Victoria in the development and delivery of legislation, regulation, policies and programs by other State Government agencies where these have regional impacts. It does this in a number of ways including direct involvement in inter-departmental committees and working groups or by advocacy and briefings through the Cabinet process.

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### Question 5

5. With respect to the Gippsland food and fibre agenda:
  - a. In your pre-budget media release you said that the \$700,000 budget allocation would implement the new Gippsland food and fibre agenda, but Budget Paper No. 3 (p. 16) states it will 'drive development of the Gippsland Agriculture Agenda'. Which is it? Is there one already developed or is it to be developed?
  - b. There is \$700,000 over one year for this initiative. How will it be funded after June 2019?

### Response

The Andrews Labor Government listens to local communities, because they know best.

Regional Partnerships are the centrepiece of the Labor Government's *Regional Statement*, which was released in November 2015; replacing Regional Management Forums and delivering key recommendations directly into the heart of government decision-making.

Gippsland's inaugural Regional Assembly identified a range of priorities for the region, including better public transport, boosting the local food and fibre economy, and developing a plan for tourism across the region.

The Gippsland Food & Fibre Taskforce, announced in the 2018-19 Budget, will operate as a working group under the auspice of the Gippsland Regional Partnership.

The membership of the working group, led by former Agribusiness Gippsland Chair, Paul Ford, will include key stakeholders across Gippsland to maximise buy-in and effectiveness.

The working group will decide and agree on priority projects in the food and fibre sector for Gippsland from the allocated funding of \$700,000 in 2018-19.

If further priorities are identified by the working group that deliver value and benefit within the food and fibre sector, they can be assessed through the Gippsland Regional Partnership for possible support in the future.

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### Question 6

6. With respect to the GovHub projects, 150 jobs identified within the public service will be relocated to the Latrobe Valley GovHub. Please provide information on what the jobs are and the breakdown.

### Response

As outlined on page 72 of Budget Paper 4: *2018-19 State Capital Program*, the Latrobe Valley GovHub is a project of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, not my department.

I note, however, that the details sought by the Committee are public knowledge and widely available through the media.