

## **BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR 2011-12 FURTHER INFORMATION**

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### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO**

#### **Question 1**

***Were any graziers involved in the trial of cattle returning to the High Country recipients of compensation when cattle were removed from the High Country?***

Following the decision by the Victorian Government to cease issuing licences for cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park in 2005, transitional assistance was provided to grazing licensees affected by the decision. No compensation payments were paid as a result of the cessation of grazing in the Alpine National Park in 2005.

To assist in the transition from grazing in the park, the government provided assistance to cattlemen and women to help them adjust their businesses. Approximately \$1.85 million was allocated to provide this assistance. Assistance was provided to 45 graziers.

Payment was calculated at \$100 per adult equivalent cow (based on the maximum licence allocation) for a period of up to 3 years from the cessation of grazing (from 2005-06 – 2008-09) and to a maximum total payment of \$100,000 per operation. An 'operation' refers to a single licence or set of licences for which there is a common group of licensees with the one nominated contact person. This transition assistance is not relevant to the current trial which commenced in 2011 as it relates only to the three year period following the cessation of grazing in 2005.

There are six graziers who provided fuel reduction services to the Department of Sustainability and Environment in Year One of the scientific research trial being conducted to investigate fuel and bushfire risk management in Victoria's high country using strategic cattle grazing. These six graziers or their families received transitional assistance following the cessation of grazing in 2005. It is important to note that graziers participating in the trial are not receiving any financial payment for their participation in the trial.

**QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE AND FURTHER INFORMATION  
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**Question 2**

***Please provide a breakdown of the sources of funding for repairs to flood damage in the Grampians and Wilsons Promontory national parks, including how much came through insurance payments?***

The 2011-12 budget provided \$60.2 million for the Restoring and Reopening Victoria's Park initiative. This is referenced on pages 95, 100 and 101 of Budget Paper No.3.

As part of this initiative, there was \$21.6 million in funding to restore and reopen the Grampians National Park. This funding consists of \$5.5 million in new appropriations funding and \$16.1 million in anticipated insurance payments for loss/damage caused to public assets during the flood events.

Additionally, the initiative provided \$13.0 million over two years to restore and reopen Wilsons Promontory. This funding consists of \$4.9 million in new appropriations funding and \$8.1 million in anticipated insurance payments for loss/damage caused to public assets during the flood events.

The balance of \$25.6 million will provide funding for repairs to flood affected public assets such as visitor facilities, roads and bridges in parks other than Wilsons Promontory and the Grampians.

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**Question 3**

***What is the estimated number of children under 16 that will visit Victoria's zoos on weekends, public holidays and school holidays in the next financial year?***

The Government has committed to providing free entry for children under 16 to the Melbourne Zoo, Werribee Open Range Zoo and the Healesville Sanctuary on weekends, school holidays and public holidays.

The 2011-12 budget will provide \$10.7 million over four years for this initiative and it will commence in July 2011. In 2011-12, this funding will provide free entry for an estimated 266,000 children to attend under the general admission, concession admission and family package admission entry categories on weekends, school holidays and public holidays.

As part of normal business and reporting processes, the Department will continue to monitor zoos admissions to ensure that Zoos Victoria can continue delivering unique and exciting wildlife and conservation experiences.

This initiative will assist families in dealing with increased costs of living by making it easier for them to access some of Victoria's most popular attractions. Improving access to the zoos will in turn enhance children's awareness of environmental protection and wildlife conservation.

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**Question 4**

***What are the estimated and target greenhouse gas emissions reductions resulting from each of the programs under the "Effective adaptation to the effects of climate change" output group over the forward estimates period?***

The Victorian Coalition Government supports action on climate change and we have demonstrated this in the 2011-12 State Budget through a range of initiatives.

The initiatives announced in the 2011-12 State Budget that relate to my department include:

- \$5 million in rebates for pensioners and healthcare card holders to assist with the purchase of energy efficient gas heaters and whitegoods to reduce electricity consumption and resultant greenhouse gas emissions.
- \$8.3 million over four years to deliver the sustainable schools program which will reduce energy consumption, water consumption and waste production in Victorian schools.
- \$5 million accreditation program to provide Victorian consumers and businesses with the option of purchasing goods from businesses that will be recognised for implementing sustainable practices ('Green Tick for Green Businesses' program)
- \$50,000 for a feasibility study into generating green power from Ballarat's green waste

My department has commissioned an independent analysis of the anticipated greenhouse gas savings that will result from the programs outlined above. The estimated greenhouse savings from that independent study will be made available.

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ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE PORTFOLIO

**Question 5**

***What impact will the reduction in funding for the “Sustainable water management and supply” output group have on environmental flows?***

As this question relates to the Minister for Waters’ portfolio responsibilities, please direct this question to the Minister for Water.