

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

27 and 28 March 2012

(Extract from book 6)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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Deputy Premier, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Bushfire Response, and Minister for Regional and Rural Development.	The Hon. P. J. Ryan, MP
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Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
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Cabinet Secretary	Mr D. J. Hodgett, MP

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Darveniza, Mr D. Davis, Mr P. Davis, Mr Hall, Ms Lovell, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Scheffer.

Procedure Committee — The President, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Viney

Legislative Council standing committees

Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee — Mr Barber, Ms Broad, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, #Mr Lenders, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

Economy and Infrastructure References Committee — Mr Barber, Ms Broad, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Mr Leane, #Mr Lenders, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

Environment and Planning Legislation Committee — Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Petrovich, Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Environment and Planning References Committee — Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Petrovich, Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Brien, Mr O'Donohue, Mrs Petrovich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Legal and Social Issues References Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Brien, Mr O'Donohue, Mrs Petrovich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Participating member

Joint committees

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Lovell and Ms Pennicuik. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Ms Hennessy, Mr Holding, Mr McIntosh, Dr Napthine and Mr Walsh.

Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee — (*Council*): Mr Leane, Mr Ramsay and Mr Scheffer. (*Assembly*): Mr Battin and Mr McCurdy.

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Peulich. (*Assembly*): Mr Burgess, Mr Foley, Mr Noonan and Mr Shaw.

Education and Training Committee — (*Council*): Mr Elasmr and Ms Tierney. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Ms Miller and Mr Southwick.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn, Mr Somyurek and Mr Tarlamis. (*Assembly*): Ms Ryall and Mrs Victoria.

Environment and Natural Resources Committee — (*Council*): Mr Koch. (*Assembly*): Mr Bull, Ms Duncan, Mr Pandazopoulos and Ms Wreford.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Coote and Ms Crozier. (*Assembly*): Mrs Bauer, Ms Halfpenny, Mr McGuire and Mr Wakeling.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*) Mr Drum, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, and Mr P. Davis. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Ms Beattie, Ms Campbell, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Graley, Mr Wakeling and Mr Weller.

Law Reform Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Petrovich. (*Assembly*): Mr Carbines, Ms Garrett, Mr Newton-Brown and Mr Northe.

Outer Suburban/Interface Services and Development Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Kronberg and Mr Ondarchie. (*Assembly*): Ms Graley, Ms Hutchins and Ms McLeish.

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Road Safety Committee — (*Council*): Mr Elsbury. (*Assembly*): Mr Languiller, Mr Perera, Mr Tilley and Mr Thompson.

Rural and Regional Committee — (*Council*): Mr Drum. (*Assembly*): Mr Howard, Mr Katos, Mr Trezise and Mr Weller.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Mr O'Brien and Mr O'Donohue. (*Assembly*): Mr Brooks, Ms Campbell, Mr Gidley, Mr Nardella and Mr Watt.

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr W. R. Tunnecliffe

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Deputy President: Mr M. VINEY

Acting Presidents: Ms Crozier, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Mr O'Brien, Ms Pennicuik, Mr Ramsay, Mr Tarlamis

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Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. W. A. LOVELL

Leader of the Opposition:

Mr J. LENDERS

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

Mr G. JENNINGS

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. R. HALL

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Mr D. DRUM

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Hon. Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Lenders, Mr John	Southern Metropolitan	ALP
Broad, Ms Candy Celeste	Northern Victoria	ALP	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP
Coote, Mrs Andrea	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	O'Brien, Mr David Roland Joseph	Western Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Hon. Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
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Davis, Hon. David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pakula, Hon. Martin Philip	Western Metropolitan	ALP
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Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Hon. Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Guy, Hon. Matthew Jason	Northern Metropolitan	LP	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Tarlamis, Mr Lee Reginald	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Koch, Mr David Frank	Western Victoria	LP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP

CONTENTS

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2012

<i>State Emergency Service: volunteers.....</i>	1841
<i>Horsham College: redevelopment</i>	1842
<i>Planning: Point Cook.....</i>	1842
<i>Employment: regional and rural Victoria.....</i>	1843
<i>Community services: Child FIRST centres.....</i>	1844
<i>Ouyen P-12 College: funding</i>	1844
<i>Iluka Resources: Douglas mine</i>	1845
<i>Children's services committee: membership.....</i>	1845

WEDNESDAY, 28 MARCH 2012

<i>Department of Premier and Cabinet: catering</i>	1847
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WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Responses have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Tuesday, 27 March 2012

State Emergency Service: volunteers

Raised with: Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 7 February 2012

REPLY:

Following the storm impact on Christmas Day, the Victoria State Emergency Service received 3556 requests for assistance (RFAs); more than 2200 calls for building damage and over 900 calls for flood damage. The number of RFAs rose to over 4451 as residents returned home after their Christmas breaks. VICSES volunteers and staff from around the state sacrificed their holidays and time with their families to respond to the needs of their communities.

VICSES volunteers were supported in the field by personnel from the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE). Relief crews from South Australian State Emergency Service (SASES) and New South Wales State Emergency Service (NSWSES) arrived within days and contributed enormously to the overall effort.

I thank those VICSES volunteers and staff from around the state who sacrificed their holidays and precious time with their families to respond to the needs of their own and neighbouring communities. This government greatly values and respects the work of VICSES volunteers who play a paramount role in protecting Victorian's from all manner of disasters. In addition to being called out to assist in emergencies, volunteers also undertake regular training and are to be commended for their level of commitment.

On Tuesday, 27 December 2011, I visited the Brimbank staging area and the Keilor VICSES unit and spoke to volunteers about the tasks being undertaken. A number of visits were also made to affected areas by the chief executive officer (CEO) of VICSES and other members to recognise our volunteers and those who arrived from interstate for their great contribution.

The CEO of VICSES on behalf of its board and all at VICSES has expressed her gratitude to all its volunteers and staff who sacrificed their holidays to respond to the needs of the community through the CEO's newsletter.

I have also written to the CEO of VICSES conveying the government's thanks to all its volunteers and staff, and this advice will be conveyed to VICSES units through the CEO's monthly newsletter. Letters of appreciation by the CEO of VICSES have also been sent to the heads of the NSWSES and SASES for their assistance during this event.

I thank you for your interest in this matter.

Horsham College: redevelopment**Raised with: Minister for Education****Raised by: Ms Pulford****Raised on: 7 February 2012****REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian coalition government has made a commitment to focus on upgrading government primary and secondary schools across the state. Priority projects to be included in the building program for the first term of government were identified in the Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Education, released in November 2010. Further schools were identified for capital funding in the Victorian state budget 2011–12, released on 3 May 2011.

The Victorian coalition government is aware that other schools like Horsham College had been involved in planning for building projects under the previous government's capital works program. Unfortunately, current state budget constraints do not allow for all school building projects to be immediately funded, therefore, the needs of all schools across the state must be balanced and prioritised accordingly. The capital needs of all schools will be considered throughout state budget processes and when determining future priorities for the state government's capital works program.

I appreciate having had the opportunity to visit the school, at the request of the member for Lowan, the Hon. Hugh Delahunty, MP, to meet with Mr Frank Spiel, principal, Horsham College, and Mr Peter French, school council president, and students.

Two major capital works projects are currently under construction on the Horsham College site. One is the relocation of the Horsham Special School (\$7.5 million) and the other is the BER, Wimmera Trade Training Centre (\$7.9 million) which is nearing completion.

I am advised the Grampians region has included the first stage of the Horsham College project in their program for future consideration for capital works.

Planning: Point Cook**Raised with: Minister for Planning****Raised by: Mr Elsbury****Raised on: 9 February 2012****REPLY:**

The Point Cook West precinct structure plan underwent public consultation between 16 January 2012 and 16 February 2012. The Growth Areas Authority held community consultation sessions on 31 January and 1, 7, and 8 February 2012. Furthermore, I understand the Growth Areas Authority briefed Mr Elsbury, MP, member for Western Metropolitan, on Monday, 20 February 2012.

The Growth Areas Authority will continue to work with Wyndham City Council and the local community, including the Point Cook Action Group to resolve any submissions made during the consultation process. I understand the Growth Areas Authority met with the Point Cook Action Group on Monday, 27 February 2012.

I would be delighted to attend a meeting with Mr Elsbury and Mr Finn, MP, member for Western Metropolitan, to discuss the concerns of the Point Cook Action Group.

Employment: regional and rural Victoria**Raised with: Minister for Regional and Rural Development****Raised by: Mr Lenders****Raised on: 28 February 2012****REPLY:**

- Economic development through the facilitation of projects and job creation is a key priority of the coalition government.
- The regions play a key role in the coalition government's vision to achieve balanced growth across the state.
- The representation on the Premier's business round table from key regionally based industry sectors, including food, energy and mining, reflects this.
- In addition, the government is investing in regional Victoria through the Regional Growth Fund and a range of other programs all designed to stimulate population growth and economic activities in regional Victoria.
- Since coming into office, the coalition government has facilitated regional projects valued at approximately \$747 million, resulting in the creation of 1240 new jobs.
- Key new facilitated jobs announcements in regional Victoria have included:
 - 105 jobs as a result of an expansion of Hazeldene's chicken processing plant at Lockwood (Damian Drum, 10 February 2012);
 - 90 new jobs in Mildura from Olam Australia's \$60 million almond processing centre (Minister Dalla-Riva, 25 November 2011);
 - 140 jobs as a result of an expansion of GippsAero, facilitated by a \$1.5 million grant to Latrobe Regional Airport for upgraded facilities for GippsAero (Minister Ryan, 7 November 2011);
 - 40 jobs at RPC Technologies, Geelong, facilitated by a \$2.75 million grant from the Geelong Investment & Innovation Fund (Minister Dalla-Riva, 4 November 2011);
 - 30 jobs from V/Line's new maintenance facility in Ballarat (Minister Napthine, 12 August 2011);
 - 160 jobs from the establishment of a True Foods facility in Maryborough (Ministers Ryan and Dalla-Riva, 13 July 2011);
 - 50 jobs in the Kiewa Valley as a result of Danone's \$40 million plant expansion (Minister Ryan, 24 June 2011).
- Other recent media announcements of regional jobs and investment include:
 - 50 jobs at Burra Foods, Korumburra as a result of a \$54 million expansion (Minister Ryan, 17 February 2012);
 - 35 jobs at Warrnambool Cheese & Butter (*Herald Sun*, 20 January 2012);
 - 40 jobs at Tasman Market Fresh Meats new store in Shepparton (*Shepparton News*, 17 November 2011);
 - 225 jobs at Iluka Resources' new mine near Ouyen (*Sunraysia Daily*, 15 November 2011).
- The Baillieu government also takes all job losses seriously across the state.
- When job losses occur, RDV/DBI staff work closely with companies and with local councils to ensure a coordinated approach to ensure that retrenched employees are aware of available assistance.

Community services: Child FIRST centres

Raised with: Minister for Community Services

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 29 February 2012

REPLY:

I thank Mr Ondarchie for raising this matter.

Protecting vulnerable children is one of the government's highest priorities. The government established the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry in January 2011 and tabled the report on 28 February, 2012.

In response to the report, I announced additional funding to recruit more child protection workers, the expansion of Child FIRST family services and the establishment of three new multidisciplinary centres to respond to child sexual abuse.

Child FIRST and family services have been established across Victoria since February 2009 and are a key part of the broader system supporting vulnerable children and their families. Child FIRST and family services play a critical role in identifying and responding to vulnerable children and families to reduce the risks of harm to children and decrease the need for statutory intervention.

There are four Child FIRST catchments which make up the Department of Human Services north and west metropolitan region. Two of these catchments cover the Legislative Council Northern Metropolitan Region. These are the North East Metro Child FIRST (covering the local government areas of Yarra, Darebin, Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea) and the Hume Moreland Child FIRST (covering the local government areas of Hume and Moreland).

The additional Child FIRST funding announced when the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry report was tabled provides for an additional \$22.38 million in funding over five years for the six Child FIRST catchments experiencing extreme demand. This funding provides an additional \$3.85 million (over four years) to the North East Metro Child FIRST and \$2.69 million (over four years) for the Hume Moreland Child FIRST. This boost in capacity will significantly increase the level of support to vulnerable children and their families in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.

Ouyen P-12 College: funding

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Darveniza

Raised on: 29 February 2012

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian coalition government is committed to upgrading government primary and secondary schools across the state. Priority projects included in the capital works program for the first term of government are identified in the Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for Education, released in November 2010. Further schools were identified for capital funding in the Victorian state budget 2011-12, released on 3 May 2011.

The Victorian government is currently engaged in state budget planning to determine how best to allocate public resources in the 2012-13 financial year. The outcome of this process will be announced in the 2012-13 Victorian budget released in May.

I appreciate having had the opportunity to visit Ouyen P-12 College and meet with school representatives last September with our parliamentary colleague Mr Peter Crisp, member for Mildura. I have a better understanding and awareness of the needs of the school community thanks to my discussions with the school leadership and ongoing representation by Mr Crisp.

Iluka Resources: Douglas mine

Raised with: Minister for Energy and Resources

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 1 March 2012

REPLY:

I refer to the adjournment debate matter you raised in the Legislative Council on 1 March 2012 regarding the Iluka Resources Ltd mine at Douglas.

Under the terms of its current approvals granted in 2009 by the former government, Iluka Resources Ltd (Iluka) can continue to store waste from its Hamilton Minerals Separation Plant at Douglas until its current mineral sands mining operations in Victoria conclude. This would occur when the Woonack, Rownack and Pirro (WRP) mine near Ouyen ends operations.

Iluka has the appropriate approvals from the Department of Health to store waste at Douglas that includes low levels of radioactivity as part of its work plan. The radioactive material is called monazite and it produces low levels of radiation. Monazite is mined along with other mineral sands but has no commercial value at present. As such, it is separated out and returned to the mine void as waste.

Iluka has a strict management plan and has approvals from the Department of Health to store some waste concentrates from the Minerals Separation Plant. The management and disposal of the waste is in accordance with national standards designed to ensure that radioactive materials are disposed of safely so that they present no risk to people or the environment.

In practical terms, one of the significant requirements is that the waste is spread across the bottom of the void and covered with a minimum of 5 metres of clean cover. Iluka's compulsory six-monthly reporting to the Department of Health's radiation team clearly indicates that the radiation emitted by the materials does not exceed prescribed limits detailed in the Radiation Act 2005.

Given concerns raised recently by some members of the local community, officers from my department's independent Earth Resources Regulator met with the Kanagulk Landcare group last week and assured the group that DPI will continue its ongoing review of Iluka's statutory and licence obligations, ensuring the mandated outcomes are met. The department will continue to be available to discuss issues with the company and the local community, and ensure that the company continues to comply with Victoria's rigorous environmental and planning laws and regulations.

Children's services committee: membership

Raised with: Premier

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 1 March 2012

REPLY:

The Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children Inquiry report, conducted by the Honourable Philip Cummins, Emeritus Professor Dorothy Scott, OAM, and Mr Bill Scales, AO, is a most significant contribution to how the

government, and governments going forward, should better deal with children in need. It also highlighted failings by previous governments.

Consistent with the past practice of governments in Victoria, the membership, name and functions of cabinet committees is not generally disclosed. This was indeed the approach taken by the previous government, in which the honourable member was a parliamentary secretary.

However, I have publicly announced that there will be a new, high-level committee of ministers who will develop and implement the comprehensive response to this report. This will include the Minister for Community Services, the Attorney-General, the Minister for Health, the Minister for Education, the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services and other relevant ministers.

The honourable member therefore can be reassured that all ministers with a portfolio interest in the government's implementation of outcomes from the inquiry report will have the opportunity to contribute.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Responses have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Wednesday, 28 March 2012

Department of Premier and Cabinet: catering

Raised with: Premier

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 9 February 2012

REPLY:

Ministers pay for the cost of the food and the drinks (tea, coffee, orange juice and soft drinks) provided by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) for cabinet meetings.

This arrangement is administered by the cabinet secretary.

This is a different approach from that followed by the previous Labor government.

DPC pay the caterers initially, and ministers are invoiced personally each quarter by the department. Ministers send their payments to DPC.

For cabinet committees, light refreshments (tea, coffee, soft drinks, biscuits, etc) are provided, significantly pared back from what was provided under the previous government, and these are paid for by the department as they are available not only to ministers but to officials who attend meetings of such committees.