

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Tuesday, 7 February 2012

(Extract from book 1)

Internet: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

The ministry

Premier and Minister for the Arts	The Hon. E. N. Baillieu, MP
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
Treasurer	The Hon. K. A. Wells, MP
Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business, and Minister for Tourism and Major Events	The Hon. Louise Asher, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Finance	The Hon. R. W. Clark, MP
Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, and Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade	The Hon. R. A. G. Dalla-Riva, MLC
Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing	The Hon. D. M. Davis, MLC
Minister for Sport and Recreation, and Minister for Veterans' Affairs	The Hon. H. F. Delahunty, MP
Minister for Education	The Hon. M. F. Dixon, MP
Minister for Planning	The Hon. M. J. Guy, MLC
Minister for Higher Education and Skills, and Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession	The Hon. P. R. Hall, MLC
Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship	The Hon. N. Kotsiras, MP
Minister for Housing, and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development.	The Hon. W. A. Lovell, MLC
Minister for Corrections, Minister for Crime Prevention and Minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission	The Hon. A. J. McIntosh, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads	The Hon. T. W. Mulder, MP
Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
Minister for Gaming, Minister for Consumer Affairs, and Minister for Energy and Resources	The Hon. M. A. O'Brien, MP
Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.	The Hon. E. J. Powell, MP
Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry	The Hon. G. K. Rich-Phillips, MLC
Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. R. Smith, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and Minister for Water.	The Hon. P. L. Walsh, MP
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women's Affairs and Minister for Community Services	The Hon. M. L. N. Wooldridge, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Mr D. J. Hodgett, MP

Legislative Council committees

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

Procedures Committee — The President, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr D. M. 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, #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 Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

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

* *Inquiry into Environment Protection Amendment (Beverage Container Deposit and Recovery Scheme) Bill 2011*

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 Naphine 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.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Council*): Mr P. Davis, Mr O'Brien and Mr Pakula. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Ms Hennessey, Mr Morris and Mr Scott.

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

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

President: The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President: Mr M. VINEY

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

Leader of the Government:

The Hon. D. M. DAVIS

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
Darveniza, Ms Kaye Mary	Northern Victoria	ALP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Davis, Hon. David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pakula, Hon. Martin Philip	Western Metropolitan	ALP
Davis, Mr Philip Rivers	Eastern Victoria	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Petrovich, Mrs Donna-Lee	Northern Victoria	LP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Elsbury, Mr Andrew Warren	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
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, 7 FEBRUARY 2012

<i>Carbon tax: health sector</i>	205
<i>Planning: growth areas infrastructure contribution</i>	205
<i>Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre: ministerial visit</i>	206
<i>Information and communications technology: procurement process</i>	206
<i>Community sector: wages</i>	207
<i>National Stroke Week</i>	207
<i>Australian Formula One Grand Prix: Premier's party</i>	208
<i>Sex trafficking: legislation</i>	209
<i>Planning: shire of Wellington</i>	209
<i>WorkSafe Victoria: safety information</i>	210
<i>Planning: Phillip Island rezoning</i>	210
<i>Coal seam gas: exploration licences</i>	211
<i>Alzheimer's disease: research funding</i>	211
<i>Child protection: Loddon Mallee region</i>	212
<i>Victorian Women's Honour Roll: nominations</i>	212
<i>Youth: mentoring programs</i>	213, 215
<i>Geelong Ring Road: section 4C alignment</i>	214
<i>Respite care: city of Wyndham</i>	214
<i>Bushfires: native vegetation clearance</i>	216
<i>Blackburn North parkland: future</i>	216
<i>Problem gambling: research</i>	217
<i>Baiada Poultry: employment conditions</i>	218
<i>Rail: Clayton level crossing</i>	218
<i>Shire of Macedon Ranges: youth services</i>	218
<i>V/Line: customer service</i>	219
<i>Schools: Torquay</i>	220
<i>Housing: Moorabbin development</i>	220
<i>Health Purchasing Victoria: environmental policy</i>	221
<i>Healesville freeway reservation: future</i>	221
<i>Bushfires: preparedness</i>	221
<i>Planning: green wedge logical inclusions</i>	222
<i>Disability services: individual support packages</i>	222
<i>Local government: town planning</i>	222
<i>Ballarat base hospital: helipad</i>	223
<i>Metropolitan Traffic Education Centre: driver training</i>	223
<i>Manufacturing: Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission report</i>	224
<i>Gaming: Doga Social Club</i>	225
<i>Rail: Southland station</i>	225
<i>Mill Park Heights Primary School: Reading Recovery program</i>	225
<i>Teachers: remuneration</i>	226
<i>Buses: western Victoria</i>	226, 227
<i>Royal Children's Hospital: awards</i>	227
<i>Road safety: Northern Metropolitan Region</i>	228
<i>Australian Country Spinners: job losses</i>	228
<i>Rail: Doncaster</i>	229
<i>Freedom of information: annual report</i>	229

<i>Breast cancer: screening</i>	229
<i>Transgender services: government support</i>	230
<i>Torquay: secondary college</i>	230
<i>Rail: St Albans level crossing</i>	231
<i>City of Wyndham: swimming pool funding</i>	231
<i>Kindergarten inclusion support services: eligibility criteria</i>	232
<i>Manufacturing: i-STEP program</i>	232

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 7 February 2012

Carbon tax: health sector

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 18 August 2011

REPLY:

The health-care system, due to the nature of the services it provides, generates large volumes of greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions primarily result from the energy used by hospitals but also include capital works, aviation fuel, medical consumables, waste and catering supplies.

Analysis undertaken by the Department of Health indicates that the introduction of a carbon price under the commonwealth's 'Securing a clean energy future' could impact the Victorian public health care system by around \$13 million in 2013 and up to \$19 million in 2020 (in real 2011 dollars).

I am concerned that the cost of health care will rise as a result of the carbon price.

Health services are becoming more energy efficient in the delivery of services and the Baillieu government is committed to continuing to work with the health sector to further reduce its energy and carbon intensity. The commonwealth's proposed clean energy package does not provide practical support for hospitals, in comparison to other industries which generate similar levels of carbon emissions.

Planning: growth areas infrastructure contribution

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Scheffer

Raised on: 18 August 2011

REPLY:

Under section 201 SLH(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, the Minister for Planning must apply to the registrar of titles to record a WIK agreement on any land relevant to the agreement, thereby ensuring that WIK agreements are publicly available. The opposition's reading of section 201 SLH(3) to suggest that this is not the case is incorrect. WIK agreements must be registered on title.

The act requires the Department of Planning and Community Development to report annually on the value of all WIK agreements performed or partly performed in each growth area and include details of the projects completed or contributed to under WIK agreements in each growth area (sections 201 VC(d) and (e) respectively). The opposition's suggestion that this provision does not require the government to report on specific WIK projects is incorrect.

In addition, the Growth Areas Authority will maintain a live register of all WIK agreements on their website as they receive them ensuring that an up-to-date list of WIK agreements is easily accessible to the public.

The member for Eastern Victoria has no reason to be concerned that the Cardinia shire council will not be made aware of any WIK agreements in their municipality. The Growth Areas Authority will consult with a council regarding any potential WIK agreement, whenever such a proposal is made.

No WIK process has been agreed to with developers. Information sheets for developers potentially interested in negotiating a WIK agreement are available on the Growth Areas Authority website. The government is preparing guidelines to establish a rigorous process for negotiation, evaluation, management and review of WIK agreements. The guidelines will establish a framework that ensures that there are clear and robust processes in place to evaluate any proposed WIK agreement.

Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre: ministerial visit

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 18 August 2011

The Minister for Planning:

As the local member for Northern Metropolitan, I was pleased to be invited to visit the Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre on 26 August 2011.

Darebin council was most welcoming and presented its vision for the redevelopment of the centre — to create the arts and economic precinct, and requested support for their project.

The centre precinct is well located to transport, schools and other community facilities and accordingly I have offered the assistance of the Department of Planning and Community Development. I am aware that discussions are occurring between council and my department to determine what level of support can be provided.

Information and communications technology: procurement process

Raised with: Assistant Treasurer

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 18 August 2011

REPLY:

The government is not offering rebates to companies who tendered for the eServices Panel refresh. Following feedback from the information communications technology (ICT) industry to broaden the eServices panel, the panel refresh provided industry with another opportunity to win government business.

This opportunity was open to suppliers who were unsuccessful in the initial tender; those who were looking to provide services to government for the first time; or those recently appointed to the panel but who wish to increase the range of services they offer.

The eServices Panel now has 180 additional suppliers bringing the total to 368. There is also an increased scope of services across the 18 service categories.

In support of small and medium businesses, there are now 196 small to medium businesses on the panel, an increase of 90.

It is the largest eServices Panel since its inception, therefore increasing competition more than ever and supporting the Victorian ICT industry.

Community sector: wages**Raised with: Premier****Raised by: Ms Tierney****Raised on: 1 September 2011****REPLY:**

The Victorian government values the work done by community sector workers—predominantly by women—and acknowledges that this work is challenging.

This case is an important test case of the new equal remuneration provisions and the government acknowledges that Fair Work Australia (FWA) is yet to make a decision on any wage increases for the sector.

In its final submission to FWA, the Victorian government re-iterated its support for community sector workers and noted that gender is a contributing factor to unequal remuneration. The submission also acknowledged that funding arrangements and lower levels of bargaining in the community services sector compared to the public sector are significant reasons for unequal remuneration.

This government has committed to provide funding of \$200 million over four years towards the outcome of this case. The government remains committed to fulfilling this promise which is consistent with the need for responsible management of the state's finances and to maintain a strong Victorian economy.

The government will also be working closely with the Victorian community services sector to manage the implementation of any equal remuneration order to achieve the best possible outcomes for those who deliver front-line services in this sector.

National Stroke Week**Raised with: Minister for Health****Raised by: Ms Crozier****Raised on: 14 September 2011****REPLY:**

I thank Ms Crozier (Southern Metropolitan) for raising to the attention of the house that the week of 12th September was National Stroke Week.

This government is well aware of the debilitating and ongoing impacts of stroke. It is complex and challenging condition in terms of its social and economic impact on individuals, carers and our wider community. Victorian hospitals treat more than 14 000 people with stroke and related conditions each year.

The department has been working with the National Stroke Foundation, medical, nursing and allied health staff, people who have had a stroke and their carers, to develop new ways of preventing and better managing stroke and its affects.

The focus has prioritised work to prevent more Victorians from experiencing the debilitating effects of stroke through better management of risk factors through awareness campaigns (such as the one identified by Ms Crozier), limit the impact of stroke by early detection and early access to stroke treatments such as thrombolysis, and promote long term recovery through effective rehabilitation programs such as the one provided at Caulfield Hospital.

The Victorian Stroke Clinical Network was established in 2007 to direct and support this work and has resulted in promotion of stronger prevention strategies, more consistent stroke care, better linkages between stroke services, improved access to stroke intervention, a better skilled workforce and improved community support mechanisms.

This program of work has resulted in a number of key achievements including:

- seven additional rural and regional health services providing thrombolysis;
- six additional rural and regional health services providing best evidenced stroke care through acute stroke units;
- four additional transient ischemic attack (TIA) clinics established at regional and rural health services;
- stroke support groups established at three sites;
- practice improvement initiatives and stroke care education for health professionals including an innovative online medical education tool, and a range of other education and clinical service improvement initiatives which aim to improve knowledge and confidence of health professionals, most particularly in rural and regional areas, in managing stroke patients.

Public education campaigns serve to increase community awareness of stroke, as recommended by Ms Crozier. To this aim I agreed to launch the National Stroke Foundation 'Know your numbers campaign' on Sunday, 15 May at the Guardian Pharmacy in Balwyn, also within the Southern Metropolitan electorate.

Similarly this government supported the 2011 stroke week activities via a \$300 000 investment in the National Stroke Foundation's public education campaigns including the 'FAST' (Face Arm Speech Time) campaign, and the 'Know your numbers campaign'. Both campaigns were promoted during stroke week and will continue to be promoted through this financial year as a consequence of this government's funding. I look forward to the evaluation report from the National Stroke Foundation confirming the positive impact this governments support has made to raising the public awareness of stroke.

Australian Formula One Grand Prix: Premier's party

Raised with: Premier

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 15 September 2011

REPLY:

It has been the practice of successive governments to maximise the business leveraging opportunities at major events such as the Formula 1 grand prix, Australian Open tennis and the Avalon Airshow.

Major events provide government the opportunity to promote trade and investment opportunities for Victoria.

At this year's grand prix international and local business leaders, diplomats, politicians, media and members of the opposition were represented.

The staging of Formula 1 grand prix provides broad media exposure in interstate and international markets and generates tourism visitation to the state.

Sex trafficking: legislation

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Coote

Raised on: 11 October 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian government strongly condemns sex trafficking and is deeply concerned about the recent allegations of sex trafficking occurring in Victoria highlighted in the media.

Investigations that focus on sex trafficking in Victoria are led by the Australian Federal Police (AFP). Victorian authorities are informed, on a general basis, about these operations and have assisted the AFP wherever possible.

AFP inquiries are strictly confidential, and only certain information may be shared during investigations. State regulatory agencies follow the lead of police authorities, and, as such, Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) is careful not to compromise or jeopardise police investigations.

When CAV has solid, admissible evidence of brothel licensees or approved managers participating in criminal activities, it can apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal to determine grounds for taking action against those licensees or managers.

The Victorian government has passed tougher laws against illegal brothels through the Sex Work and Other Acts Amendment Act 2011 (the act), which makes Victoria Police the lead agency for the enforcement of sex work laws to ensure that appropriate attention is paid to the removal of criminal elements in the industry. The changes introduced by the act also grant greater scope for Victoria Police to investigate suspected illegal brothels and to seek court orders to shut them down, strengthen asset confiscation laws, and place tighter restrictions on the granting of licences to individuals with serious criminal backgrounds.

The Victorian government has also established the Victoria Sex Industry Strategic Management Group, involving relevant state, commonwealth and local government authorities. Led by Victoria Police, the task force will oversee a multiagency enforcement program designed specifically to target illegal sex work operations and related crimes.

I am pleased to advise that the government response to the parliamentary Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee's inquiry into people trafficking for sex work was tabled on 8 December 2011. The government has supported the vast majority of the relevant recommendations as part of its determination to take action against sex trafficking.

Thank you for raising this important issue with me.

Planning: shire of Wellington

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Scheffer

Raised on: 11 October 2011

REPLY:

Amendment C33 to the Wellington Planning Scheme seeks to introduce new, and modify existing, flood overlays and land subject to inundation overlays in areas known to be affected by flooding during a 1-in-100-year average recurrence interval flood. The flood levels were modelled by the WGCMA and are based on a number of studies and reports undertaken by several agencies and organisations.

The independent panel that considered the submissions that were made while the amendment was on exhibition recommended that the proposed amendment should be adopted, subject to three changes. These related to specific exclusions and anomalies. The panel also made six recommendations for future action by Wellington Shire Council and the WGCMA. The first of these recommendations was for a peer review of the climate change in Eastern Victoria — stage 3 report 2006, prepared by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), which provided the justification for the controls in Port Albert.

As part of my department's assessment of the amendment adopted by the council it has requested that the WGCMA undertake an independent peer review of the CSIRO report, as recommended by the panel. The requested peer review will provide greater certainty around the modelled flood levels and the extent to which the data can be relied upon and the error margins which can be justified.

At a media conference on 18 July 2011, the Premier confirmed that the WGCMA would be commissioning a review of the proposed flood levels.

To enable the remainder of the amendment to proceed, the amendment has been split into two parts. Part 1 includes the whole of the shire (excluding the area of Port Albert subject to the review) and part 2 will include the Port Albert area. Part 1 is now being progressed while part 2 is currently on hold, pending the completion of the peer review.

This approach has been discussed with the council and WGCMA. I wrote to the mayor, Wellington Shire Council on 17 September 2011 clarifying the request for a peer review and encouraging continued discussions on the issue.

WorkSafe Victoria: safety information

Raised with: Assistant Treasurer

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 11 October 2011

REPLY:

I am advised that the Victorian WorkCover Authority (VWA)'s inspectors and advisory service are able to offer advice; however, they are not in a position to recommend specific manufacturers or suppliers for equipment, as this would unfairly disadvantage other manufacturers and suppliers.

If the VWA was to recommend a particular brand or model it would be necessary for it to conduct research on the suitability of that product for the application, which it is not in a position to do.

While I cannot comment on the specifics of this individual case without further details, I understand that the advice provided by the VWA's advisory service on this topic would be for the caller to contact their local motorcycle or plant supply shop, and to make sure the product complied with the relevant Australian standard. Should the local shop not have this particular product in stock, the buyer may wish to request that a product be ordered in for them.

Planning: Phillip Island rezoning

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Tee

Raised on: 12 October 2011

REPLY:

I meet on a daily basis with members of the community and listen to and respond to their concerns directly, this is the very essence of democracy, and stands in stark contrast to your 11 shameful years in government.

I established the Victorian Planning System Ministerial Advisory Committee in June 2011 to provide advice on ways of improving the planning system. This review has a broad scope in reviewing the legislative base and structure of planning schemes within Victoria. Fundamental to the operation of this review is that the views of municipal councils and the broader public regarding Victoria's planning system are heard, and that they are provided with the opportunity to express how the planning system can be improved.

Coal seam gas: exploration licences

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Ms Pulford

Raised on: 12 October 2011

REPLY:

I thank the member for Western Victoria for the question raised on 12 October 2011 in relation to exploration for coal and coal seam gas resources in Victoria.

Exploration rights are granted under either the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 or the Petroleum Act 1998, which are administered by the Department of Primary Industries and the Minister for Energy and Resources.

Potentially significant environmental issues and impacts associated with any proposed development in Victoria, including a new coal mine or coal seam gas project, would need to be considered and potentially assessed under the Environment Effects Act 1978, for which I am responsible, prior to project approval being considered.

Alzheimer's disease: research funding

Raised with: Minister for Ageing

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 13 October 2011

REPLY:

In March this year, Prana Biotechnology announced that it had secured international funding to conduct a clinical trial to investigate a potential drug treatment for Alzheimer's disease.

There will be three sites for the trial in Melbourne ensuring that Victoria is an active participant in this work.

While the commonwealth government is the major funder of medical research through various grants and programs the Victorian government provides other supports for people with dementia and their carers through funding the following programs:

- the cognitive dementia and memory service clinics that provide assessment and diagnosis of dementia;
- innovative and creative respite and support services to meet unique needs;
- Alzheimer's Australia Vic to provide information, support and counselling to people with dementia, and their families, carers and friends, to train medical students and aged care staff in caring for people with dementia, and to increase awareness of dementia among Victorians;
- Carers Victoria to support Victorians in care relationships;

- Resources and projects in dementia friendly environments in Victoria's public sector residential aged-care facilities;
- Dementia friendly assessments by the Aged Care and Assessment Service (ACAS) and by home and community care (HACC) assessors;
- Other programs such as the Victorian Support for Carers program, and the HACC program.

Child protection: Loddon Mallee region

Raised with: Minister for Community Services

Raised by: Mr Drum

Raised on: 25 October 2011

REPLY:

I thank Mr Drum for raising this matter.

I welcome the Ombudsman's recent report into the operations of the Loddon Mallee child protection program and its contribution to the ongoing improvement of the child protection system.

Protecting vulnerable children is one of the government's highest priorities. Earlier this year the Coalition government established the Protecting Victoria's Vulnerable Children inquiry which is due to report in late January 2012. It will identify the immediate, medium and longer term priorities to strengthen the child protection service system and improve outcomes for children and families at risk.

The Ombudsman made six recommendations, all of which have been accepted, with one being accepted in principle pending the outcome of the inquiry.

In Loddon Mallee several actions are already being taken. To support Loddon Mallee child protection services, the specialist intervention team is working with staff to develop systems that support consistent decision making at intake in the context of increasing demand for services.

Earlier this year, the Loddon Mallee region employed a highly skilled and experienced regional principal practitioner to support practitioners with decision making in more complex matters. This position will continue in the region and is supervised by the statewide principal practitioner.

The department will also be re-issuing practice advice regarding the case recording of risk assessments and case closure decisions to enhance current practice across the state. The government will continue working in Loddon Mallee and other regions of the state to protect vulnerable children.

Victorian Women's Honour Roll: nominations

Raised with: Minister for Women's Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Coote

Raised on: 26 October 2011

REPLY:

I would like to thank the Parliamentary Secretary for Families and Community Services, the Hon. Andrea Coote, for reminding the chamber that the government has announced that nominations for the Victorian Honour Roll of Women 2012 are now open.

We know that women have contributed enormously to building a strong and vibrant Victoria, and through the Victorian Women's Honour Roll, we can acknowledge the leadership of exceptional women, who are making a difference to life in Victoria.

In response to the parliamentary secretary's question about support for a widespread media campaign to alert Victorian women of the importance of the honour roll, I would like to advise that our communications plan entails encouraging nominations from a wide range of Victorian organisations, sectors, regions and communities.

This year we will focus more attention on promoting the honour roll to rural and culturally and linguistically diverse communities and also to young people. This will be done by working closely with the media in these communities and by linking into relevant websites and publications and programs.

Nominations for the honour roll close on 21 December 2011, so all members of Parliament should already be thinking about nominating women from their constituency or community.

I will be announcing the inductees to the 2012 Victorian Honour Roll of Women during International Women's Day celebrations in March next year.

Youth: mentoring programs

Raised with: Minister for Youth Affairs

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 26 October 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian coalition government was left with a number of lapsing, unfunded, programs due to the poor financial management of the previous Labor government. In addition to this, the federal Labor government reduced GST payments to Victorians providing a significant black hole in the state's budget.

The Mentoring Capacity and Building Initiative (MCBI) lapsed on 31 December 2011. The previous Labor government did not provide funding for this program beyond 2011.

The Office for Youth is currently reviewing the results of the 12 pilot projects and 6 regional coordination projects, funded in partnership with the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, to find out how best the coalition government can support mentoring in the future.

As part of this review, the coalition government has committed \$90 000 to a research project to be conducted in partnership with the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust. This research will evaluate the MCBI projects and mentoring best practice.

The coalition government is committed to supporting successful and positive youth mentoring programs in Victoria.

That's why the coalition government broadened the guidelines of the \$12.3 million Engage! grants program to include mentoring projects.

All mentoring organisations funded through the MCBI were encouraged to apply for funding through the Engage! grant round which closed on 21 October 2011 and successful recipients were announced on 22 December 2011.

Geelong Ring Road: section 4C alignment

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 27 October 2011

REPLY:

On 29 October 2011, I announced that I had endorsed and made public the findings of the independent review of the previous Labor government's proposed alignment of section 4C of the Geelong Ring Road.

The open and transparent review has honoured the coalition's election commitment and has ensured that all interested parties including local residents, Greater Geelong city and Surf Coast shire councils, VicRoads, Department of Transport, and the developers of Armstrong Creek had the opportunity to put forward submissions and inform the advice of the advisory committee on this important issue.

The advisory committee found weaknesses in the community consultation of the previous government which should have been undertaken earlier and more effectively.

The purpose of the independent expert advisory committee review was to ensure that the alignment of section 4C is in the best possible location and that it forms part of an efficient and safe transport network across the Armstrong Creek growth area and south Geelong.

The road connection to section 4B, the proposed Armstrong Creek railway station, and the possible future crossing of the Barwon River, to link to the Bellarine Peninsula, are important considerations influencing the route selection for section 4C.

I have concluded that the proposed alignment of section 4C is the preferred location. However, it should not be the eventual freeway that the previous Labor government planned it to be.

The advisory committee found that section 4C was unlikely to fulfil the regional role of a strategic link between the Geelong bypass and Torquay. Rather, it would more likely fulfil the role of a local or subregional road only.

VicRoads is now committed to implementing the recommendations of the advisory committee with regard to improvements to pedestrian and bicycle movements, noise attenuation, landscape treatment and protection of native vegetation by integrating the elements into the project plan for section 4C. VicRoads will also undertake further consultation with landowners and local residents to inform the final project design.

Respite care: city of Wyndham

Raised with: Minister for Community Services

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 27 October 2011

REPLY:

The government acknowledges the increased demand for overnight and other forms of respite support in Wyndham as one of Victoria's significant growth areas. We know the important role that carers play in supporting family and friends with a disability and the role that respite support plays in sustaining those care relationships.

There are a range of respite options available for carers in the northern and western metropolitan region including in home support, overnight breaks, alternative family placement, recreational programs, weekend camps and activities and other flexible and individual supports.

There continues to be a high demand for these supports despite the government's \$101 million investment in respite services in 2011–12.

The government is working towards expanding and improving the range of respite services available for people with a disability, their families and carers. In the 2011–12 Victorian state budget the government allocated \$21 million over four years for innovative respite support and for school holiday respite support.

We have made a clear commitment to reform the respite and carer support service system to deliver efficient, simple and timely services. We also recognise that to achieve this vision, Victoria will need to work collaboratively with local and commonwealth governments.

I am advised that staff from the north and west metropolitan region of the Department of Human Services has had discussions with the City of Wyndham regarding the need for local respite services including an overnight facility-based service.

Youth: mentoring programs

Raised with: Minister for Youth Affairs

Raised by: Ms Darveniza

Raised on: 27 October 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian coalition government was left with a number of lapsing, unfunded, programs due to the poor financial management of the previous Labor government. In addition to this, the federal Labor government reduced GST payments to Victorians providing a significant black hole in the state's budget.

The Mentoring Capacity and Building Initiative (MCBI) lapsed on 31 December 2011. The previous Labor government did not provide funding for this program beyond 2011.

The Office for Youth is currently reviewing the results of the 12 pilot projects and 6 regional coordination projects, funded in partnership with the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, to find out how best the coalition government can support mentoring in the future.

As part of this review, the coalition government has committed \$90 000 to a research project to be conducted in partnership with the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust. This research will evaluate the MCBI projects and mentoring best practice.

The coalition government is committed to supporting successful and positive youth mentoring programs in Victoria.

That's why the coalition government broadened the guidelines of the \$12.3 million Engage! grants program to include mentoring projects.

All mentoring organisations funded through the MCBI were encouraged to apply for funding through the Engage! grant round which closed on 21 October 2011 and successful recipients were announced on 22 December 2011.

Bushfires: native vegetation clearance

Raised with: Minister for Bushfire Response

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 8 November 2011

REPLY:

On 18 November 2011 the Minister for Planning introduced new bushfire provisions into Victorian planning schemes. Under these new provisions, the City of Knox can introduce the 10/30 rule to areas of identified bushfire risk by a planning scheme amendment.

Under the 10/30 rule, residents can clear any vegetation for up to 10 metres of an existing dwelling and any vegetation except for trees for up to 30 metres of a dwelling either constructed or approved by a planning or building permit prior to 10 September 2009.

In addition to retaining the 10/30 rule, the 10/50 rule has been introduced. The 10/50 rule enables residents to create more defensible space in all areas of high bushfire risk in Victoria as identified by the bushfire management overlay (BMO). The BMO applies to parts of Lysterfield, Upper Ferntree Gully, Boronia and The Basin within the city of Knox, giving residents access to the 10/50 rule in these identified areas.

Under the 10/50 rule, residents can clear any vegetation for up to 10 metres of an existing dwelling and any vegetation except for trees for up to 50 metres of a dwelling either constructed or approved by a planning or building permit prior to 10 September 2009.

The bushfire management overlay replaces the wildfire management overlay in Victorian planning schemes and includes a map showing where it applies. No action is required from the City of Knox to provide residents within the BMO access to the 10/50 rule.

The bushfire management overlay was established based on bushfire risk and will be further refined over the coming months in consultation with councils.

Further information on the application of BMOs is available to the public through their councils and the Department of Planning and Community Development's website www.dpcd.vic.gov.au.

Blackburn North parkland: future

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mr Tee

Raised on: 9 November 2011

REPLY:

I have asked VicRoads to obtain valuation advice to further progress discussions regarding an appropriate transfer of the Junction Road land.

I am pleased to advise that VicRoads is actively working with the Department of Sustainability and Environment to progress the transfer of the Junction Road land, consistent with the coalition's election commitment.

Problem gambling: research

Raised with: Minister for Gaming

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 10 November 2011

REPLY:

The member for the South Eastern Metropolitan Region, Mrs Peulich, has raised her concerns with problem gambling and has asked whether I would suggest to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation a research subject as to the difference between problem gamblers and compulsive gamblers to ensure that services are targeted at those most in need.

There are many terms used to describe 'problem' gambling in the literature — 'problem', 'pathological' and 'compulsive' are the most common.

The term 'problem gambling' is frequently used, particularly in North America, to denote a level of gambling, which is at an earlier stage, or which leads to fewer problems than the later stage or more severe problems experienced or caused by those gamblers who are clinically diagnosed as 'pathological gamblers'. Gamblers who meet the criteria of the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, version four, are considered to have a mental disorder that has been clinically verified and are described as pathological or compulsive gamblers.

In Australia, the term 'problem gamblers' tends to encompass gamblers who are experiencing problems but who do not necessarily meet the diagnostic criteria. Often problem gamblers are called such because they indicate that their gambling behaviour, thoughts about gambling and consequences of their gambling has caused some harm to themselves and others and it is thought that clinically defined pathological or compulsive gamblers form a proportion of the problem gambling category.

In establishing the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, the government has established an independent organisation with a mandate to reduce the prevalence of problem gambling, the severity of gambling-related harm and to encourage responsible gambling in Victoria. Its sole focus will be on treatment, research and education activities necessary to address this complex issue.

The foundation will be independent from government control. Its board will include three members of Parliament and up to eight appointed members, selected for their ability to ensure that the foundation achieves its objectives and carries out its functions effectively. The board will be responsible for setting the direction of the foundation's work.

The foundation will have responsibility for developing and implementing its own approach to communication and education strategies, working with established organisations such as Gambler's Help to deliver counselling and treatment services and to commissioning problem gambling research relating to its objectives and functions.

Record funding of \$150 million over four years has been provided to the foundation which is an increase of 41 per cent over the former government's program.

The legislative framework for the foundation and the funding commitment the government has made demonstrates its commitment to ensuring that problem gambling is dealt with seriously. Within this framework it will be up to the foundation as an independent and well resourced entity to set its own agenda in research, education and treatment services.

I have every confidence that the foundation will take its role seriously and develop a research agenda that will target treatment, counselling and education services appropriately.

I anticipate the foundation will seek the views of the community when establishing its agenda and I will inform it of the concerns you have raised.

I look forward to the foundation developing an innovative approach to tackling problem gambling and becoming a national leader in the provision of harm minimisation and prevention programs.

Baiada Poultry: employment conditions

Raised with: Assistant Treasurer

Raised by: Ms Pulford

Raised on: 10 November 2011

REPLY:

I am advised that, in order to make specific inquiries into the particular workers' allegations of bullying, the VWA will require further information from each worker about the specific incidents of bullying behaviour they have experienced, and any further information or witnesses they have to support their allegations. The VWA will also need to confirm with the workers that they are willing to give their permission for the VWA to proceed with raising their specific allegations with their employer.

I would encourage the workers to contact the VWA's advisory service so that information and support can be given to them directly during this process. An interpreter can be provided to assist with these calls.

Alternatively, a third party may contact VWA's advisory service on the behalf of a worker, however, I am advised that it is likely that the VWA's workplace bullying prevention unit (WBPU) would also need to contact the affected person to confirm the nature of the allegations to allow the matter to proceed further.

Rail: Clayton level crossing

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mr Tarlamis

Raised on: 10 November 2011

REPLY:

The Minister for Roads — I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

VicRoads is currently investigating treatment options and priorities for a number of level crossings along the Dandenong rail corridor between Caulfield and Dandenong South, including the level crossing at Clayton Road, Clayton. Both grade separation and short-term improvement options are being considered as part of this study.

Shire of Macedon Ranges: youth services

Raised with: Minister for Youth Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Petrovich

Raised on: 10 November 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian coalition government is committed to providing social, civic and economic opportunities for young Victorians. This includes providing young people with opportunities to volunteer, develop skills, explore pathways to employment and training and play a role in community decision-making.

The Shire of Macedon Ranges is to be commended for its dedicated provision of innovative youth programs and services to young people, including the Live4Life program and CyberLife pilot project.

The coalition government understands the serious impact that bullying and in particular, online bullying, is having on Victorian communities.

That's why the coalition government has invested significant funds towards addressing bullying in schools with the commitment of \$14.5 million to the Stamp Out Bullying plan and \$3.6 million webWise initiative aimed at educating young people up to the age of 25 to be smart, safe and responsible when using the internet and other technologies.

In addition, the coalition government continues to support and celebrate the contribution of young people across Victoria through the activities of the Office for Youth.

In the 2011–12 Budget, \$18.6 million over four years was allocated to the Youth Affairs portfolio to create more opportunities for young Victorians to participate in their communities. This includes funding to support programs such as Advance, Be Heard!, Engage!, FReeZA, Involve!, National Youth Week, Rock Eisteddfod Challenge, Scouts and Guides and Victorian YMCA Youth Parliament.

V/Line: customer service

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Barber

Raised on: 22 November 2011

REPLY:

V/Line procedures state that if a train is redirected for operational purposes, then the train controller must notify railway stations on the line, so that arrangements can be made for announcements to be broadcast at unstaffed stations such as Rockbank.

V/Line was unable to investigate and provide a response to the alleged incident because no date and time were provided.

I'm concerned that passengers would proceed through emergency gates resulting in a near miss, whether one of the gates was faulty at the time or not.

V/Line inspected the gates at Rockbank railway station on 12 December 2011 and reported that both of the electrically opened gates and the emergency gate were deemed in serviceable and reliable order with no signs of vandalism or interference present. The gates at Rockbank railway station are inspected every eight weeks as part of V/Line's routine maintenance schedule.

The pedestrian crossing gate at Rockbank railway station has an automated fault alarm. This means that if the gate is faulty, an alarm will sound to the Ballarat signal panel which will be investigated by the Ballarat signal maintenance technician.

I am advised that advanced bookings for Melbourne to Beechworth trips can be made online through the <www.vline.com.au> website or by calling 136 196.

Schools: Torquay

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 22 November 2011

REPLY:

The Minister for Education: I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is investigating a number of options to acquire land in Torquay for the establishment of a new primary school, with funds set aside in the 2011–12 budget for this purpose.

The government is guided by advice from the Valuer General Victoria in negotiating land purchases and is confident that sufficient funds will be available for the purchase of a suitable site for the new primary school.

Capital funding is pending future state budget announcements.

The department continues to monitor primary and secondary enrolments at the existing Torquay P–9 College. I understand additional space will become available at the current Torquay P–9 College for primary school enrolments once the new secondary college is opened.

Housing: Moorabbin development

Raised with: Minister for Housing

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 23 November 2011

REPLY:

I thank the member for Southern Metropolitan for his inquiry about the recently opened Moorabbin social housing development at 977–999 South Road.

Firstly, I am delighted that the new development, is delivering much-needed affordable housing for 75 households in a tight rental market.

The development is owned by Port Phillip Housing Association, who I understand are selecting a mix of tenants to support a sustainable community and to provide the best outcomes for all residents.

It was this developed that I visited with the member for Bentleigh, Elizabeth Miller in November 2011.

A proper check of *Hansard* shows that the references you make to public meetings and the concerns raised on behalf of residents were in reference to the still yet-to-be-completed development at 973 Nepean Highway.

Local residents raised concerns about the location of this development and were determined to be heard, despite the former Labor government's refusal to listen to the local community.

During 2011–12 the housing portfolio will acquire around 1600 new homes for low income Victorian households.

Looking ahead in 2012, my top priority is the development of the housing framework, which the Baillieu government foreshadowed in response to the parliamentary inquiry into the adequacy and future directions of public housing in Victoria.

This framework will guide key strategic reforms to the housing system and will provide clear pathways towards greater social and economic participation and housing independence.

The consultation for this framework will commence early in the new year, and will inform stakeholders of the direction of housing policy and seek comment on options for its implementation.

Health Purchasing Victoria: environmental policy

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 23 November 2011

REPLY:

The government continues to support the role and functions of Health Purchasing Victoria in building capability in Victorian health services in regards to procurement as well as achieving best value outcomes in the procurement of health related goods, services and equipment. HPV receives funding from the Department of Health toward achieving these ends.

The Department of Health, in conjunction with Sustainability Victoria, is working closely with Health Purchasing Victoria to embed sustainability within its procurement processes.

Healesville freeway reservation: future

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 23 November 2011

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

In line with the government's pre-election commitment, VicRoads will develop a structure plan to provide a clear vision for future land use within the reservation based on extensive consultation with the community and key stakeholders throughout the process.

Bushfires: preparedness

Raised with: Minister for Bushfire Response

Raised by: Mrs Petrovich

Raised on: 23 November 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian coalition government has allocated \$5 million over four years to the Fire Ready Communities program.

This program will provide flexible funding across some of Victoria's most bushfire prone areas to support innovative locally identified and locally managed projects to make those communities safer. Under the program, councils and community organisations develop potential projects and submit funding requests for these proposals to the Department of Planning and Community Development.

This is a community-led program and, as further proposals come in, a steering committee chaired by the Department of Planning and Community Development will determine the funding allocations.

Planning: green wedge logical inclusions

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Scheffer

Raised on: 23 November 2011

REPLY:

The precinct structure plan process, led by the Growth Areas Authority, is designed to ensure that landowners, developers, the local council and all affected agencies of government are involved jointly in determining what infrastructure and services are needed and who provides them.

Disability services: individual support packages

Raised with: Minister for Community Services

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

I am aware of this family and of the dedication and commitment they have shown in caring for their son with autism. I appreciate that this young man's needs are complex and that multiple supports are required including behavioural interventions. I am advised that the family is in receipt of a substantial individual support package that funds a range of services and supports. I also understand that the region has agreed to increase the family's funding allocation for additional short-term supports to better meet their needs, which can include behavioural therapies.

Staff from the regional disability services team have been working closely with the family and that the regional disability services manager has met with them to further discuss their situation and concerns.

The Victorian government is committed to providing a flexible system of supports to people with a disability in a way that maximises an individual's potential. Flexibility in how people choose to utilise their individual support package for proven approaches continues to be a key principle.

Ms Mikakos is correct in asserting that the current government has reduced flexibility.

Local government: town planning

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

I thank the honourable member for Western Victoria, Simon Ramsay for his adjournment debate question on 24 November 2011 in relation to town planning support for the Shire of Northern Grampians.

On 25 November 2011, I announced the launch of the regional planning flying squad.

This is a \$2.8 million government initiative for a range of planning specialists to assist regional and rural councils by providing short-term expertise and assistance to ease the backlog of planning requests.

Funding is provided over the next three years and is an important part of the government's commitment to supporting the development of strong and vibrant rural and regional communities.

Councils such as the Shire of Northern Grampians are now able to apply to my department for assistance with a range of planning matters such as advice, discussions and assessments of major project development proposals and applications, and helping to process planning scheme amendments and authorisation requests in peak periods or when council planning officers are not available.

This program will give councils the opportunity to deal with a backlog of planning issues and get on with the important tasks of strategically planning for their communities.

I would encourage councils such as Northern Grampians to contact my department to discuss the need for assistance.

Ballarat base hospital: helipad

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Mr Koch

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

The Ballarat helipad implementation working group was established to provide advice on the helipad issue. This group was chaired by the member for Western Victoria David Koch and other members of the group included MP Simon Ramsay and representatives from Ambulance Victoria, Ballarat Health Services, the Department of Health and the community group HELP (Hospitals Emergency Landing Pad).

I am pleased to confirm that the report of the Ballarat helipad implementation working group was completed and publicly released on 31 October 2011.

I have requested the Department of Health to review operational, capital planning and funding implications with input from specialist consultants. The department will continue to consult with Ambulance Victoria and Ballarat Health Services to further progress this important project. The business case for funding will be considered as part of the usual state budget process.

I thank all members of the Ballarat helipad implementation working group for their participation and input and look forward to providing further update.

Metropolitan Traffic Education Centre: driver training

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

Research in Australia and overseas conducted over the last 40 years has not shown off-road driver education/training programs such as those provided by Metropolitan Traffic Education Centre to offer any crash

reductions for novice drivers. This includes evaluation of programs conducted in Victoria at off-road facilities located at Shepparton and Charlton.

In addition to providing little road safety benefit, off-road centres are expensive to build and maintain. Off-road centres also provide an artificial road environment that cannot reproduce experience gained on a real road, in real traffic. Funds allocated to off-road driver education/training divert resources away from more effective road safety measures.

Metropolitan Traffic Education Centre representatives have previously been informed of the lack of road safety research evidence supporting the use of off-road driver education or training for novice drivers. The organisation's representatives have also been informed about more effective approaches to novice driver safety including graduated licensing systems and the provision of supervised on-road experience for learner drivers which leads to reduced crash risk in the first years of solo novice driving—reductions of between 20 per cent and 32 per cent have been reported in European studies. The 120 hours of on-road supervised learner experience required under Victoria's graduated licensing systems is based on such findings.

An evidence-based approach to road safety has served Victoria well with the road toll reduced to less than a third of what it was 40 years ago. While the recent spate of young driver crashes has quite reasonably caught the attention of the media and the public, it is important to note that young driver deaths have been trending downwards over the last 20 years. For example, deaths among young drivers aged 18–25 years in 2010 were about one-third of those recorded in 1989. These gains have resulted from the application of an evidence based approach to strategy, policy, programs and evaluation.

However, providing ongoing safety education targeting key causes of crashes is important. Victoria has an extensive program of traffic safety education for pre-school, early primary school, transition from primary to secondary school and year 10 secondary school students with resources developed by VicRoads and the Transport Accident Commission.

Finally, the Victorian government (through VicRoads and the Transport Accident Commission) is collaborating with five other project partners nationally to develop, trial and evaluate the effectiveness of a behaviour change program in reducing crashes for newly licensed probationary drivers. The P Drivers Project, as it is known, will involve 28 000 young drivers, with approximately 26 400 participants recruited in Victoria and 1600 in New South Wales. The project was launched on 18 October 2011. It is hoped by the project partners that this program will prove more effective than traditional driver education and training courses.

As it may be useful to provide some of the latest road safety research on driver education and training, I have arranged for VicRoads to send copies of two recent reviews on the subject to the member and the Metropolitan Traffic Education Centre, under separate cover.

Manufacturing: Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission report

Raised with: Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

The Treasurer and I received the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) final report on 1 September and the government has considered its recommendations. The Victorian government released its response on Monday 19 December 2011. Copies of the VCEC final report and the government response are available at www.vcec.vic.gov.au.

In conjunction with the government response to VCEC, I launched the government's new manufacturing strategy — A More Competitive Manufacturing Industry, which is available at www.dbi.vic.gov.au.

Gaming: Doxa Social Club

Raised with: Minister for Gaming

Raised by: Hon. M. P. Pakula

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

I refer to the adjournment debate raised relating to a media article published by the *Herald Sun* regarding the 'Clocks' venue managed by Doxa Social Club Incorporated at Flinders Street station.

The article incorrectly states that 'pokies will be pushed out of Flinders Street Station'. The 'Clocks' lease is a commercial arrangement between Metro Trains Melbourne and Doxa Social Club Incorporated.

As the premise of the story is false, it follows that there has been no discussion of leasing matters with Doxa Social Club Incorporated by me or my office.

Rail: Southland station

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Tarlamis

Raised on: 24 November 2011

REPLY:

The Southland railway station project will involve the construction of a new railway station adjacent to Southland Shopping Centre, between Highett and Cheltenham on the Frankston line.

The coalition government allocated \$700 000 in the 2011–12 state budget to plan for the new Southland railway station to ensure the right transport solution is delivered for the local community.

The planning phase is already under way which includes identifying the exact location of the station, station layout and access requirements, bus interface arrangements and connections with local roads and communities. Further cost estimates will be determined from this process.

Construction cannot commence until detailed planning is completed. Timing for the project will be determined following the planning phase.

Mill Park Heights Primary School: Reading Recovery program

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 6 December 2011

REPLY:

The Minister for Education: I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's northern metropolitan regional office has not cut any Reading Recovery programs or Reading Recovery teachers in any schools in the region, including at Mill Park Heights Primary School.

Schools are able to fund Reading Recovery programs for their students from their student resource package.

Two years ago, two teachers were seconded to the northern metropolitan regional office on a fixed-term basis as Reading Recovery tutors to provide training and ongoing support to teachers providing the Reading Recovery program in schools. Their contracts expire at the end of 2011 and they will be returning to their schools.

If there are schools that require a Reading Recovery tutor, principals are able to establish a network or cluster arrangement to share this resource. The student resource package can be utilised to fund the tutor. These decisions are made at the school level.

Teachers: remuneration

Raised with: Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 6 December 2011

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

As I have previously indicated while negotiations for a new industrial agreement between the Victorian government, employee bargaining representatives and the unions that represent teachers and principals are under way, I do not intend to comment on the detail of the negotiations. The agreed confidentiality protocols which encompass good faith bargaining preclude me from disclosing or discussing particular issues which are the subject of negotiation.

However, I will say that I am committed to achieving improved student outcomes in Victorian government schools while recognising and rewarding excellence among Victoria's teaching profession.

Buses: western Victoria

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 6 December 2011

REPLY:

The Department of Transport (DOT) conducted extensive reviews of the Peshurst to Hamilton, and Hamilton to Mount Gambier bus routes. As a result, patronage figures did not support retention of the bus route from Hamilton to Mount Gambier and reflected inconsistent patronage from Peshurst to Hamilton.

The Peshurst to Hamilton bus has been extended for a further six months on a one-day-per-week trial basis. The continuing operation of this bus is subject to it being adequately utilised by the community.

Should the trial bus not prove successful, the Peshurst community would not be left without public transport. Peshurst has a return weekday bus to Warrnambool which provides the community with vital access to hospitals, a university, shopping and additional public transport. This includes trains that operate between Warrnambool and Melbourne.

Additionally, on Fridays the Peshurst community can make use of V/Line buses to Hamilton. This provides a 4-hour window before returning to Peshurst.

The trial buses between Hamilton and Mount Gambier will not continue. The communities of Hamilton, Coleraine and Casterton will not be left without public transport. A V/Line bus provides transport to Mount Gambier Monday to Friday. Casterton and Coleraine residents can travel to Hamilton or Warrnambool on the morning bus on weekdays. If these residents only travel to Hamilton, they can return again on the lunchtime bus that travels through Hamilton on its route from Ballarat to Mount Gambier.

Buses: western Victoria

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Pulford

Raised on: 6 December 2011

REPLY:

The Department of Transport (DOT) conducted extensive reviews of the Peshurst to Hamilton, and Hamilton to Mount Gambier bus routes. As a result, patronage figures did not support retention of the bus route from Hamilton to Mount Gambier and reflected inconsistent patronage from Peshurst to Hamilton.

The Peshurst to Hamilton bus has been extended for a further six months on a one-day-per-week trial basis. The continuing operation of this bus is subject to it being adequately utilised by the community.

Should the trial bus not prove successful, the Peshurst community would not be left without public transport. Peshurst has a return weekday bus to Warrnambool which provides the community with vital access to hospitals, a university, shopping and additional public transport. This includes trains that operate between Warrnambool and Melbourne.

Additionally, on Fridays the Peshurst community can make use of V/Line buses to Hamilton. This provides a 4-hour window before returning to Peshurst.

The trial buses between Hamilton and Mount Gambier will not continue. The communities of Hamilton, Coleraine and Casterton will not be left without public transport. A V/Line bus provides transport to Mount Gambier Monday to Friday. Casterton and Coleraine residents can travel to Hamilton or Warrnambool on the morning bus on weekdays. If these residents only travel to Hamilton, they can return again on the lunchtime bus that travels through Hamilton on its route from Ballarat to Mount Gambier.

Royal Children's Hospital: awards

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Mrs Coote

Raised on: 6 December 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian government is committed to achieving a strong health system that is underpinned by highly trained health professionals, delivering informed and informative services across the continuum of care. The government works with all stakeholders in the Victorian health system to address the many challenges that lie ahead to create an equitable, sustainable health system with people at its heart.

The Victorian Public Health-care Awards (the awards) play a significant role in acknowledging the leaders in our health system who are at the forefront of providing care to the Victorian community. These awards recognise innovation and excellence in improving hospital capacity, developing community-based health services, promoting healthy living, providing more extensive and high-quality health care information, improving emergency services and creating more effective health-care outcomes.

The two initiatives from The Royal Children's Hospital, raised by the member for Southern Metropolitan Region, the 'Power to the parents — Taking child warfarin therapy monitoring home' and 'Early diagnosis — better outcomes' received Better Health Awards in the categories of Excellence in Health-care Outcomes through Person-centred Care and Excellence in Enhanced Quality Health Care through e-health and communications technology respectively. These particular awards recognise the diverse ways in which leadership and high quality performance contribute to the Victorian Health Priorities Framework 2012–2022 and are well known to me.

Whilst I learnt about these two initiatives through the awards program, I would welcome an invitation from the Royal Children's Hospital to learn first hand about the initiatives and the benefits they are providing to Victorian children. I look forward to this occurring in early 2012.

Road safety: Northern Metropolitan Region

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mr Elasmarr

Raised on: 7 December 2011

REPLY:

VicRoads has investigated the two intersections at Sydney Road–Albion Street and Upper Heidelberg Road–Banksia Street in response to your concerns. I am advised that neither intersection has had any casualty crashes associated with poor lane discipline on the nominated approaches in the past five years.

During onsite investigations, VicRoads staff observed drivers at both intersections using the left-turn lane to proceed straight ahead when the right lane was backed up due to right-turning vehicles giving way to through traffic.

VicRoads will further investigate both intersections from a road safety and operational perspective to determine the optimum lane arrangement. The review will be undertaken in consultation with the City of Moreland and the City of Banyule respectively.

I also note your correction to refer to Upper Heidelberg Road, rather than Lower Heidelberg Road.

Australian Country Spinners: job losses

Raised with: Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 7 December 2011

REPLY:

I understand that manufacturing firms like Australian Country Spinners are facing unprecedented challenges, particularly the high Australian dollar and increased global competition from low wage economies, compounded by the high wool price.

On 2 and 12 December 2011, the Department of Business and Innovation and the Rural City of Wangaratta held information forums, through the North East Victoria Employment Response Network, to assist affected ACS employees with future decision making and career path opportunities. As part of this, Skills Victoria will work with affected employees in relation to an exemption for access to the Victorian training guarantee to undertake re-skilling and re-training. Initial feedback from the participants in the information forums has been very positive.

Australian Country Spinners has assured the government and its workforce that reductions to its workforce will be via voluntary redundancies as far as is possible.

Rail: Doncaster

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 7 December 2011

REPLY:

The Doncaster rail study commenced on 26 October 2011. Mr Tim Gosbell of URS has been appointed to independently lead the study.

The purpose of the study is to determine the best way for a railway to serve the needs of the Doncaster area. The study will run for two years. Extensive investigations will be undertaken to enable the government to better understand the requirements of a high-quality heavy rail link for local communities.

The study will include a detailed assessment of patronage demand, train operations, land use opportunities and construction costs to ensure that the project is fully developed and accurately costed before funding is sought.

Freedom of information: annual report

Raised with: Minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission

Raised by: Hon. M. P. Pakula

Raised on: 7 December 2011

REPLY:

I refer to the adjournment debate raised in the Legislative Council regarding the tabling of the 2010–11 freedom of information annual report.

The freedom of information annual report 2010–11 was tabled on 8 December 2011.

Breast cancer: screening

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 7 December 2011

REPLY:

The Baillieu government is committed to reducing the burden of breast cancer on Victorian women and provides \$35 million in funding to support the BreastScreen Program every year.

Almost half of invasive breast cancer cases diagnosed each year in Victoria are detected by the BreastScreen Program.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Victorian women. As highlighted by Ms Crozier, in Victoria, around 3400 women are diagnosed with breast cancer annually and over 700 Victorian women die from the disease.

Victoria, in partnership with the commonwealth, is in the process of replacing analogue mammography technology with digital technology across Victorian breast screening services.

The commonwealth has provided \$120 million nationally to support this rollout which represents the largest capital investment in breast screening services since establishment of the program in 1991. This funding builds on the over \$10 million the Victorian government has provided to rollout of digital mammography to public breast screening services statewide.

I was pleased to launch BreastScreen Victoria's most recent digital upgrade of their mobile screening service that will provide access to state-of-the-art screening technology to thousands of women across rural and regional Victoria, and the new radiographer training centre and Moorabbin BreastScreen clinic — Victoria's only co-located breast screening and mammography training facility.

This new digital technology enables mammography images to be captured more efficiently and be sent to radiologists over a broadband network.

This investment aims to improve sustainability and capacity of the BreastScreen program and so best equip Victoria to meet the needs of a growing target population of women aged 50–69 years.

BreastScreen Programs nationally are facing a number of challenges meeting increased demand as a result of the ageing population, workforce pressures and the rising cost of health care.

BreastScreen Victoria workforce supply has been identified as a significant constraint to meeting growth in program demand, in particular the medical radiation workforce. The Department of Health is working with the commonwealth and BreastScreen Victoria on strategies to improve recruitment and retention of the medical radiation workforce.

The Victorian Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011–2015 also reflects the Baillieu government's commitment to working with BreastScreen Victoria and other screening partners to develop coordinated strategies aimed at increasing cancer screening in communities that have lower than average participation rates, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

I would like to take this opportunity to reinforce the message to all Victorian women aged 50–69 that a BreastScreen appointment every two years is the best way to find breast cancer early.

Transgender services: government support

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Pennicuik

Raised on: 7 December 2011

REPLY:

Thank you for the invitation to meet with representatives of Ygender and TransGender Victoria. I have requested my department to contact the organisations to arrange a meeting.

Torquay: secondary college

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 8 December 2011

REPLY:

The Minister for Education: I am informed as follows:

The new Surf Coast Secondary College opened on 1 January 2012 with the school commencing in existing buildings at Torquay P-9 College. A number of specialist relocatables will be made available to the school in 2012; at present it is understood that these buildings will be adequate for 2013 enrolments.

It is anticipated that permanent facilities will be available to the new school in 2013.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will continue to work closely with the school councils of both Torquay P-9 College and Surf Coast Secondary College to determine any future needs for students and will develop strategies to address these needs as they arise.

Rail: St Albans level crossing

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Elsbury

Raised on: 8 December 2011

REPLY:

The Victorian coalition government is committed to eliminating Melbourne's worst level crossings, particularly in areas with high train and vehicle numbers. Eliminating these level crossings will ease congestion and improve safety for the hundreds of thousands of motorists and train users who must travel through these level crossings every day.

The Victorian government has committed to a \$379 million blitz on metropolitan rail crossings. This is the biggest effort by a government to remove rail level crossings in Victoria's history.

The 2011-12 Victorian budget makes an initial commitment of \$16.5 million for planning work on level crossing removal.

The rail crossing at Main Road, St Albans, is one of the priority sites for removal. The Victorian government is committed to planning and commencing work on removing this level crossing in our first term.

On my behalf, the member for Western Metropolitan Region, Bernie Finn and the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Edward O'Donohue, visited the Main Road level crossing site during June 2011. They met with representatives of the local community and some members of the local traders association.

City of Wyndham: swimming pool funding

Raised with: Minister for Sport and Recreation

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 8 December 2011

REPLY:

I refer to your adjournment debate question raised on 8 December 2011 in the Legislative Assembly seeking funding for the redevelopment of the Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre.

On Tuesday, 20 December 2011, I announced that Wyndham City Council had been successful in securing \$2.6 million from the 2012-13 community facility funding program — better pools category towards the redevelopment of the Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre.

Kindergarten inclusion support services: eligibility criteria

Raised with: Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 8 December 2011

REPLY:

The Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development: I am informed as follows:

The application for kindergarten inclusion support to assist with Lily's inclusion in the Lancefield Kindergarten in 2012 was approved on 19 December and her family and the kindergarten have been advised of this successful outcome.

The arrangements necessary to support Lily's inclusion are now being facilitated by DEECD Loddon-Mallee regional staff.

The provision of this support is a result of the 2011–12 state budget commitment of \$10 million to increase the availability of kindergarten inclusion support services including expansion of the kindergarten inclusion support packages program.

In October of this year the eligibility for this program was expanded to include children with complex medical needs without a disability for the 2012 kindergarten year.

Kindergarten inclusion support to assist with inclusion of children with complex medical needs without a disability has not previously been provided through the kindergarten inclusion support packages program.

The 2012 information and application kit for kindergarten inclusion support packages for children with complex medical needs is available on the departmental website.

All DEECD regions are now engaged in assessing applications, including those previously submitted, for the kindergarten inclusion support package program for children with complex medical needs. The applications deemed eligible for this support will be submitted to the department's central office for approval and to enable needs based distribution of funding for this support.

Manufacturing: i-STEP program

Raised with: Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 8 December 2011

REPLY:

The Department of Business and Innovation continues to work closely with NORTH Link on industry support initiatives in the Northern Metropolitan Region and there continues to be a close ongoing collaboration supporting the government's current business engagement model.

I look forward to working with NORTH Link in support of the business community in the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne.