

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

12, 13 and 14 April 2016

(Extract from book 6)

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HANSARD¹⁵⁰



1866–2016

Following a select committee investigation, Victorian Hansard was conceived when the following amended motion was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 23 June 1865:

That in the opinion of this house, provision should be made to secure a more accurate report of the debates in Parliament, in the form of *Hansard*.

The sessional volume for the first sitting period of the Fifth Parliament, from 12 February to 10 April 1866, contains the following preface dated 11 April:

As a preface to the first volume of “Parliamentary Debates” (new series), it is not inappropriate to state that prior to the Fifth Parliament of Victoria the newspapers of the day virtually supplied the only records of the debates of the Legislature.

With the commencement of the Fifth Parliament, however, an independent report was furnished by a special staff of reporters, and issued in weekly parts.

This volume contains the complete reports of the proceedings of both Houses during the past session.

In 2016 the Hansard Unit of the Department of Parliamentary Services continues the work begun 150 years ago of providing an accurate and complete report of the proceedings of both houses of the Victorian Parliament.

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Education	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Employment	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Industry, and Minister for Energy and Resources	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. J. F. Garrett, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Training and Skills	The Hon. S. R. Herbert, MLC
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Police and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Kairouz, MP

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Mr Drum, Ms Hartland, Mr Herbert, Ms Mikakos, Ms Pulford, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips and Ms Wooldridge.

Procedure Committee — The President, Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Davis, Mr Jennings, Ms Pennicuik, Ms Pulford, Ms Tierney and Ms Wooldridge.

Legislative Council standing committees

Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure — #Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Morris, Mr Ondarchie and Ms Tierney.

Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning — Ms Bath, #Mr Bourman, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, #Ms Hartland, Mr Leane, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, Ms Shing, Mr Somyurek and Mr Young.

Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues — Ms Fitzherbert, #Ms Hartland, Mr Melhem, Mr Mulino, Mr O'Donohue, Ms Patten, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Springle and Ms Symes.

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

Port of Melbourne Select Committee — Mr Barber, Mr Drum, Mr Mulino, Mr Ondarchie, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Shing and Ms Tierney.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Council*): Ms Bath, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Staikos and Ms Thomson.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O'Brien, Mr Pakula, Ms Richardson and Mr Walsh

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmarr and Mr Melhem. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Nardella and Ms Ryall.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Ms Patten and Mr Somyurek. (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon, Mr Northe and Ms Spence.

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson, Mr Tilley and Ms Ward.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn. (*Assembly*): Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards, Ms Kealy, Ms McLeish and Ms Sheed.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O'Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells.

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Ms Patten. (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing. (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O'Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Ms Bath and Mr Dalla-Riva. (*Assembly*): Ms Blandthorn, Mr J. Bull, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto.

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 A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

President: The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President: Ms G. TIERNEY

Acting Presidents: Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mr Ramsay

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Deputy Leader of the Government:
The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

Leader of The Nationals:
The Hon. D. K. DRUM

Leader of the Greens:
Mr G. BARBER

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ¹	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel	Western Metropolitan	DLP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Dalidakis, Mr Philip	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	V1LJ
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

² Appointed 15 April 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP — Labor Party; ASP — Australian Sex Party;
DLP — Democratic Labour Party; Greens — Australian Greens;
LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals;
SFP — Shooters and Fishers Party; V1LJ — Vote 1 Local Jobs

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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, 12 April 2016

Gippsland ambulance stations

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Shing

Raised on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

Funding to rebuild ambulance stations at Orbost, Sale and Traralgon was provided in the May 2015 State budget to implement the Government's \$20 million election commitment to rebuild 11 ambulance stations across the State.

Ambulance Victoria has commenced work on the design of the Orbost, Sale and Traralgon projects to improve amenity of the ambulance stations and to improve ambulance response times in their service areas.

Planning, design and tendering phases are to be completed by May 2017 with construction for all three stations scheduled for completion by December 2017.

The upgraded ambulance stations will be contemporary facilities designed to meet current and future ambulance service demands.

I am advised that Ambulance Victoria applies well developed standard design guidelines to ensure the new stations are fit for purpose, take into consideration gender diversity, and are designed and developed in conjunction with the Ambulance Victoria paramedics to ensure the designs respond to differing demands.

I'd like to recognise Ms Shing's strong advocacy for the upgrading of Ambulance branches across Gippsland, for improved ambulance services and for paramedics in her community.

Latrobe Performing Arts Centre

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 9 February 2016

REPLY:

Through Regional Development Victoria and Creative Victoria, the Andrews Labor Government has been working closely with Latrobe City Council and other community stakeholders to develop a proposal for funding consideration at various levels of government. Council have confirmed that they intend to proceed with funding applications for this project.

The Government will be considering the \$30 million Latrobe Creative Precinct project, which includes a new performing arts centre in Traralgon.

Chandler Highway bridge

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Elasmar

Raised on: 10 February 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government has committed \$110 million to widen the Chandler Highway from Yarra Boulevard to Heidelberg Road.

VicRoads expects the construction of the Chandler Highway Upgrade to commence in mid 2017, with completion by the end of 2018.

Venus Bay

Raised with: Minister for Local Government

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 10 February 2016

REPLY:

Thank you for your question regarding South Gippsland Shire Council.

Firstly, I understand the land in question is owned by the South Gippsland Shire Council.

The sale of council land is governed by section 189 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act). Submissions regarding the proposed sale of council land may be made under section 223 of the Act.

If the provisions of the Act are complied with by the South Gippsland Shire Council in regards to the sale of the land in question, then I have no authority, as Minister for Local Government, to interfere with the sale of the land owned by the Council.

Wyndham schools

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 11 February 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Labor's first budget included an unprecedented \$730 million package to build new schools, upgrade existing school, and buy land for future demand.

Due to the woeful neglect of the Liberals, we are now faced with the costly task of playing catch-up to deliver primary and secondary schools across the state.

School infrastructure funding fell under the former Government reign to a mere \$200 million a year.

Families across Wyndham have felt the pressure of the former government ripping the guts out of the school infrastructure budget.

The Andrews Labor Government is conscious that the City of Wyndham is one of the fastest growing areas in the state and solutions are being developed for meeting current and future school demand.

There has already been a significant investment to increase school provision in the City of Wyndham with commitments to deliver three new schools in the area: Point Cook South P-9, Davis Creek Primary School and Point Cook Senior Secondary College.

The Government has fast tracked Point Cook South P-9 which will be delivered through the New Schools Public Private Partnership (PPP) Project. It will open its doors to students in Term 1, 2017 and additional community facilities and programs will be incorporated into the design, transforming it into a community hub.

Funding for land acquisition was allocated in the 2015-16 Budget for Davis Creek Primary School and we are committed to funding this school within this term of government.

We have also committed to building Point Cook Senior Secondary College. My Department is working with the City of Wyndham and local schools to finalise an appropriate site for this new school.

Schools in the City of Wyndham received \$17 million in school capital funding in the 2015-16 State Budget with Werribee Secondary College receiving \$7 million to upgrade their buildings and be replaced with 21st century facilities and Tarneit P-9 College receiving \$10 million to complete landscaping works and construct permanent buildings for years 7-9 students.

The Government will continue to work with the City of Wyndham, the Metropolitan Planning Authority and other relevant stakeholders to ensure that future enrolment growth is properly planned for.

Western Victoria bushfires

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

I refer to the Adjournment Debate matter raised by you in the Legislative Council regarding disaster assistance for affected communities following the February 2016 fires in Western Victoria.

The Victoria Government recognises and greatly values the vital contribution made by the Country Fire Authority firefighters to protect the community.

The Government, through the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is supporting the City of Ballarat with relief and recovery coordination. The Government has also made emergency relief payments available to those affected by the Mount Bolton fire and activated emergency re-establishment payments.

Personal hardship emergency relief assistance provides a maximum of \$1,300 per household, including \$520 for a sole adult and \$260 per dependent child to assist households during the first seven days after a natural emergency such as these fires. This assistance is not income tested and should not be considered as insurance replacement or compensation for losses. As at 10 March 2016, eight emergency relief assistance payments totalling \$9,100 have been made to those affected by these fires.

Personal hardship emergency re-establishment assistance up to a maximum of \$32,500 per household is available to those people whose principal place of residence is destroyed, or rendered uninhabitable or made inaccessible for more than seven days, have met the income test, and are not covered by insurance. DHHS has been working with property owners to assess eligibility, however, no payments have been made to date.

As stated by you, a relief centre was initially established at the Cooina Community Centre in Wendouree to help with the community's immediate needs. From 29 February to 4 March, after the relief centre had closed, a recovery

centre operated at the Learmonth Bowling Club. Further, community meetings were held on Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 February 2016. DHHS staff were present to provide personal support and assistance at the relief and recovery centres and community meetings.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Urban Camp Melbourne

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

I am advised that Civic Nexus states that it continues to accommodate access requests at reduced access fees for approved charities. A portion of the access fees are used to fund the operation and maintenance of the bus interchange. I have requested PTV discuss this matter further with Civic Nexus and Urban Camp Melbourne.

Consumer scams

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Raised by: Mr Melhem

Raised on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

The government is committed to being part of a successful effort to combat travelling con men.

Travelling con men move across the state, and across borders, selling their services door-to-door offering cheap, “today only” deals on jobs such as but not limited to bitumen laying, painting and roof repairs. They are often in organised groups, and put pressure on residents to have work done on their house. They ask for cash up front and often take the money and run, leaving the job unfinished or completed to a poor standard.

Travelling con men are known to target vulnerable groups, such as older Victorians, people with a disability, and residents who speak little or no English.

Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) works closely with Victoria Police, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection, and consumer protection counterparts across the country to ensure a strategic and coordinated approach to this issue, including disruption of activity where possible.

In October 2015, I, together with CAV and Crime Stoppers Victoria, launched a new campaign to raise awareness across Victoria. The campaign includes a strong focus on informing Victorians from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and consists of a television commercial and radio and print ads. The radio ads and supporting information on the CAV website have been translated into 23 languages.

With respect to the issues raised by your constituents, Mr and Mrs Mahon, I am advised that CAV has assessed and referred the matter to Victoria Police, who retain the lead in policing responses for travelling con men criminal activity. Mr and Mrs Mahon have been advised of this referral.

CAV has recorded all the information provided by your constituents which will assist in identifying any future issues concerning these particular travelling con men.

Victorians can report suspected travelling con men to the national hotline on 1300 133 408 or to their local police. Consumers can also access warnings on the national travelling con men Facebook page or on Twitter using the hashtag #stopconmen.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Bulla-Diggers Rest Road

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

Bulla-Diggers Rest Road is a local road and is the responsibility of the Hume City Council.

Any queries relating to the upgrade of this road will need to be referred to the Minister for Local Government.

Nagambie Lakes Tourism & Commerce Inc.

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development

Raised by: Ms Symes

Raised on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

I can confirm for you that staff from Regional Development Victoria are working closely with Nagambie Lakes Tourism & Commerce Incorporated (NLTC) to progress its request for funding. The NLTC has been asked by Regional Development Victoria to submit its formal application for funding under the Farmers' Market Expansion Program.

I am aware that the NLTC has been successfully operating a community market for many years and that a new farmers market will provide a greater opportunity for producers to sell their product directly to the public whilst also improving tourist visitation.

I know that Nagambie is attracting new residents and visitors and that the NLTC has identified that a new Farmers Market would be well supported.

VicRoads land

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that the properties located at 4 Studley Park Road, Kew, and 85 Kilby Road, Kew East, were originally acquired by VicRoads specifically for road purposes and are now surplus on the completion of the road projects.

The Victorian Government Land Transactions Policy and Guidelines requires VicRoads to seek expressions of interest from other State, Commonwealth or local government agencies to acquire properties surplus to road purposes, through the Governments first right of refusal process to ensure efficient land use across Government.

VicRoads advises me that it attempted to negotiate the transfer of both properties to the City of Boroondara at a diminished value, based on the use as public open space. However, the City of Boroondara opted not to exercise its

option to acquire either of the properties at 4 Studley Park Road, Kew, or 85 Kilby Road, Kew East, under the first right of refusal process.

VicRoads further advises me that an expression of interest from another Government agency has been received to acquire the land at 4 Studley Park Road, Kew. Accordingly, it is anticipated that this property will remain in public ownership for public use.

However, the land at 85 Kilby Road, Kew East, has received no expression of interest through the first right of refusal process. Therefore, in accordance with the Victorian Government Land Transactions Policy and Guidelines, the land at Kilby Road, Kew East, can be sold at an appropriate land value.

The responsibility to manage public open space for the community is the relevant local council authority; in this instance, the City of Boroondara.

Given that City of Boroondara has not exercised its option to acquire 85 Kilby Road, Kew East, under the first right of refusal process, VicRoads is required to proceed with the sale of the land in accordance with Government policy.

If the City of Boroondara considers that land at 85 Kilby Road, Kew East, is required for public open space, then the Council should contact VicRoads and acquire the land in accordance with the Victorian Government Land Transactions Policy and Guidelines.

Western suburbs education and training

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

Can I firstly commend Mr Eideh for his hard work, passion and commitment to growing opportunity in Melbourne's west.

The government is working to make Victoria the Education State and Victoria's education system the best in the country. Population growth in the West Growth Corridor will be significant and provide greater demand for further education in the future.

Our aim is to help the next generation of Victorians to get the skills they need for the jobs they want. Creating opportunities for young people and workers in transition to develop their vocational skills is critical to the future of our economy. Government investment must be aligned with both established and emerging industry skill needs.

Quality Review

In February 2015, we undertook an external review of quality assurance in the VET system and we accepted all 19 recommendations in the Review. So far the Government has implemented a \$9 million blitz to crackdown on low quality training providers and implemented other aspects of the Review. We have tougher market entry requirements, introduced a probationary period and have placed tighter controls on the subcontracting of training services. The Government is determined to stamp out underhanded providers and practices that have undermined confidence in our training system. Industry, students, indeed all Victorians, have a stake in guaranteeing that high quality training is the norm and not the exception.

Asset Planning

The Department of Education and Training's aim is to improve the education and training provided from current and future campuses. Asset management planning for future investment in the sector targets the replacement of poor quality infrastructure that impedes campuses' ability to grow and meet the demands of the West Growth Corridor growth.

TAFE play a key role in ensuring students can access a diverse range of pathways that include high quality vocational and applied courses that prepare them for work, meet industry skill needs, and grow economic productivity.

TAFE Rescue Fund

A strong TAFE system delivering more training in the right areas is vital to growing jobs. The \$320 million TAFE Rescue Fund is helping TAFE institutes rebuild and retain staff, and improve training, courses and job opportunities for students.

TAFE Back to Work Fund

In addition to the \$320 million TAFE Rescue Fund, is the TAFE Back to Work Fund. This funding is allowing TAFEs to better meet the training needs of businesses that hire unemployed youth, the long-term unemployed and retrenched workers as part of the Back to Work Scheme.

In December 2015, I was delighted to announce \$1.4 million to Victoria Polytechnic from the \$50 million TAFE back to Work Fund for its new YouthSpark IT Program. The program will support disadvantaged unemployed young people in Melbourne's west to get them into work and support the skills needed by industries in the area.

Skills and Job Centres

This Government has committed \$16 million to establish Skills and Jobs Centres based at every Victorian TAFE and dual sector university. These Centres will be the first point-of-call for students looking to start training, workers needing to reskill, unemployed workers needing support for retraining and work placement and for employers. These centres will help link jobseekers and employers to ensure they are engaged in quality training that will lead to a job at the end of their course.

Victoria Polytechnic has received \$500 000 to establish Skills and Jobs Centres, including one in MetroWest that will also be an automotive transition specialist Centre to help workers in the auto supply chain reskill and move into new work. The Gordon has received \$1 million for its Centres and, as part of this, a presence will be established at Wyndham.

Victorian Skills Commission regional consultations

We have established the Victorian Skills Commissioner who will lead the development of a new Industry Engagement Framework, including effective industry advisory bodies whose membership will include key industry employer organisations, trade unions and professional associations.

The Commissioner will help ensure employers, TAFEs and training providers and the Government are able to align training delivery with Victoria's changing skill needs, supporting job creation and economic growth.

The newly appointed Victorian Skills Commissioner, Mr Neil Coulson, will be holding a series of consultations in regional areas throughout March 2016 to help determine where government funding is best directed to meet the skills needs of learners.

The aim of these consultations is to hear the regional perspective of industry and other interested stakeholders on:

- Emerging or growing occupations associated with VET training;
- Skill shortages and occupations which are hard to fill;
- How the skill profiles of occupations/industries are changing; and
- VET-level occupations that should be a priority for Government funding, and why.

Wye River and Separation Creek bushfires

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

I refer to the Adjournment Debate matter raised by you in the Legislative Council regarding the establishment of the one-stop planning shops and the access to emergency payments by affected communities following the Wye River-Jamieson Track Fire on 25 December 2015.

The Australian and Victorian Governments and Colac Otway Shire continue to work together to monitor the impacts of this fire and provide assistance to affected communities as required. This assistance includes a number of arrangements to help with the cost of relief and recovery.

One-stop shops

There are a range of complex challenges for rebuilding in Wye River and Separation Creek, including erosion and land stability, bushfire management, community safety, and retaining the character of the communities.

The Victorian Government and Colac Otway Shire have set up a range of initiatives to fast-track and streamline the planning and rebuilding process. This includes the development of site-specific planning controls for Wye River and Separation Creek which will modify the Colac Otway Planning Scheme to streamline the approvals process. This is currently with Colac Otway Shire for comment. The controls are to be introduced by the end of March 2016.

Four one-stop shops opened in late February in Wye River, Apollo Bay, Richmond and Colac. All the shops have flexible opening hours based on demand. They will provide guidance and advice around planning, building surveying, geotechnical matters, Bushfire Attack Levels and waste water management.

Personal Hardship Assistance Program

The Government has made personal hardship emergency relief assistance available to those affected by the Wye River-Jamieson Track fire, and activated personal hardship emergency re-establishment assistance.

Personal hardship emergency relief assistance provides a maximum of \$1300 per household, including \$520 for a sole adult and \$260 per dependent child to assist household during the first seven days after a natural emergency such as bushfires. This assistance is not income tested and should not be considered as insurance replacement or compensation for losses. As of 29 February 2016, 77 personal hardship emergency relief assistance payments totalling \$69 680 have been made.

Personal hardship emergency re-establishment assistance which is available to eligible households, provide up to \$32 500 per household for clean-up, emergency accommodation, repairs, rebuilding (a principal place of residence), and replacing some damaged contents. The maximum assistance amount available to the household is calculated based on the number of adults and children and the total household income. An initial emergency re-establishment assistance payment of up to \$3000 may be provided to eligible applicants as an upfront amount where the applicant cannot provide all evidence.

Re-establishment assistance is targeted to households who have lost their principal place of residence, are on low incomes and don't have insurance. Assistance provided through the program is not intended to replace insurance and should not be considered as compensation for losses. Other forms of assistance (such as concessional loans, grants or mated.al aid from charitable sources) may also be available to assist people to recover from an emergency. Assistance from the government and other agencies should only be recognised as a 'helping hand'.

This assistance is cost-shared under the national Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, and the eligibility criteria are set in agreement with the Commonwealth Government. Criteria can only be varied in exceptional circumstances, for example where people are suffering extreme financial hardship.

Fourteen properties lost in the fire have been determined as primary residences. As at 29 February 2016, 14 personal hardship emergency re-establishment assistance part payments totalling \$42 000 have been made.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Stawell underground physics laboratory

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

I commend Ms Tierney for her strong advocacy for this world class ground-breaking project.

The Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL) consortium will be preparing a communications and marketing package in due course that will guide how the SUPL project will be conveyed, not just to Victorians, but to Australia and internationally. I will keep you informed as this is developed.

On the 19th February 2016, I met with those leading plans to develop the underground physics laboratory in Stawell including Murray Emmerson, the Mayor of the Northern Grampians Shire Council as well as Professor Elisabetta Barberio, from the University of Melbourne and representatives from Regional Development Victoria and the Stawell Gold Mine. This meeting reinforced our belief that this project will help put the region's scientific research on the world stage, whilst bringing more universities and leading researchers from around the world to our state.

It is expected that the SUPL-Stage 1 project will directly create 15 new Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions with the users, and 36 indirect FTEs. In addition, there will be 19 construction jobs supported by this project.

Given the suitability of the mine as a location for an underground physics laboratory, it is also envisaged that when this project comes to realisation, there would be further significant opportunities to attract associated research and high level scientific training programs to the site and or Stawell. By attracting world class researchers to perform research at SUPL, benefits for up- and-coming scientists will be well-established within 5 years.

Northern Metropolitan Region small business

Raised with: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

Raised by: Mr Elasmar

Raised on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government offers a range of programs and services to assist the State's more than 540 000 small businesses. These include workshops, mentoring sessions, events and funding support.

The Small Business Victoria Workshops program provides low-cost and local access to expert information, advice and skills development. 25 workshops are scheduled to take place over the remainder of 2016 in the Northern Metropolitan Region, with seven already completed. The Member will be interested to know that topics include, 'Starting Your Business Right', 'Understanding Marketing', 'Effective Record Keeping' and 'Business Planning Essentials'.

The Member mentioned the Small Business Bus program, which brings information and free mentoring to time-poor small business operators. He will be pleased to know that the bus made 28 individual visits to the Northern Metropolitan Region in 2015, running 264 free mentoring sessions on board. Likewise, the bus has already visited Thornbury, Fawkner, Thomastown and Preston this year, and is currently scheduled to visit North Melbourne, Kensington, Brunswick West, Campbellfield, Richmond, Carlton North, Clifton Hill and Fitzroy over March and April. More locations will be confirmed over the course of the year.

For more personalised support, the Small Business Mentoring program provides small businesses with access to low-cost and expert business mentoring. Last year, more than 4200 mentoring sessions were delivered across the State. If the Member is in contact with local small businesses that feel they need guidance, I recommend he refers them to the Small Business Mentoring Service.

I would also recommend the Member promote the Small Business Festival, which runs for the entire month of August each year. The Festival features more than 440 events designed to build capability and provide valuable networking opportunities. In 2015 the Festival hosted around 40 000 attendees across the State, including eight regional festivals. Planning is well underway for the 2016 Festival, and I look forward to publishing the Festival Guide in due course.

The Grow Your Business program helps innovative and export focused small businesses become internationally competitive. Funding is available for a range of planning and management services for both individual businesses and groups. Small businesses across the State, including in the Northern Metropolitan Region, are encouraged to apply to this program.

Small businesses in the automotive supply chain, of which there are many in the Northern Metropolitan Region, may also access support from the Automotive Supply Chain Transition Program. This initiative provides Victorian automotive supply chain companies with intensive support to plan for their future.

Likewise, the Future Industries Manufacturing Program is available to assist companies, including small businesses, adopt new manufacturing technologies and processes that will provide a critical foundation for growth.

Finally, the Victorian Government has an extensive network of metropolitan and regional offices to support job creation and investment throughout the State. The Northern Metropolitan Office is located in Bundoora, where local businesses can access the full range of government support.

Victoria is the leading state for business start-ups with more than 8600 net new businesses created in the last financial year. I look forward to working with the Member to continue to support small businesses in his region, which are essential to creating jobs and growth in our state.

International drivers

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Purcell

Raised on: 25 February 2016

REPLY:

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau conducted an extensive review of crashes and found no evidence to suggest that foreign born drivers were over represented in accidents when compared with Australian born drivers.

The review concluded that international visitors did not represent a significant road safety problem in Australia. The review noted that whilst international visitors have a slightly higher crash rate due to disorientation and fatigue, they are far less likely than Australian drivers to be involved in crashes related to high-risk behaviour (drink driving and speed).

In 2009, a review of existing literature and reports on foreign drivers was undertaken by VicRoads. The review included Australian and foreign jurisdictions. All of the Australian studies suggested that the crash rate for foreign

drivers is either equal to or less than Australian born drivers. There were only two reports from overseas; one dealt with intoxicated drivers from a neighbouring country and the other did not fully cover all foreign drivers.

Western Metropolitan Region roads

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 25 February 2016

REPLY:

The Government recognises that Point Cook residents encounter traffic congestion on the road network and is working closely with key stakeholders, including the Wyndham City Council, on various transport priorities.

In May 2015, the Government announced a \$3.75 million contribution for improvement works on Palmers Road and Dunnings Road, with the Wyndham City Council contributing a further \$3.1 million towards these improvements. The works, which will provide an additional northbound bus and multi occupant lane on Palmers Road, will improve access to the Princes Freeway and the Williams Landing train station.

The Government also announced \$1.9 million to widen the Princes Freeway off-ramp onto Forsyth Road in Hoppers Crossing. The improvement works will reduce the length of traffic queues on the ramp, particularly during the evening peak.

VicRoads is also delivering \$72 million in transport and planning infrastructure improvements in the East Werribee Employment Precinct (EWEP), which is planned to accommodate 58 000 jobs and 7100 new homes. As part of these improvements, VicRoads has commenced works on the Princes Highway at the Old Geelong Road/Hoppers Lane and Sneydes Road intersections.

Other EWEP transport improvements include a new interchange on the Princes Freeway at Sneydes Road, which will improve traffic flow in and around Point Cook by providing direct access to the Princes Freeway and provide a direct link from East Werribee to Point Cook West. VicRoads expects the interchange to reduce traffic pressure on other routes, such as Palmers Road, Forsyth Road and Point Cook Road. Construction of the interchange is expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

Following extensive community consultation, Public Transport Victoria has re-designed the bus network in Wyndham to better connect with train services and provide more frequent bus services.

Melton railway line

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 25 February 2016

REPLY:

The government has recently committed to delivering a variety of initiatives to improve the capacity and reliability of the Ballarat/Melton railway line.

The construction of a new passing loop at Rowsley will be completed by mid-2016 and will improve reliability.

The May 2015 budget includes investment in 21 additional VLocity cars that will be progressively delivered by 2018 and will be allocated on the Regional Victoria network taking into consideration the demand growth on each corridor, including the Ballarat/Melton corridor.

As part of the Trains, Trams and Jobs Plan released in 2015, the government has committed to the delivery of the Next Generation Regional Train, which will provide additional capacity and replace the aging V/Line fleet with new trains by the early 2020s. Allocation of these new trains will depend on demand growth.

The Melbourne Metro project will create capacity to increase the number of services across the rail network and enables expansion of the metropolitan rail network in the future; including to Melton.

The recently released Australian Infrastructure Plan produced by Infrastructure Australia lists the Melton Rail Line Upgrade as a medium term priority initiative, with Infrastructure Australia highlighting the need to commence the development of a business case for the staged delivery of upgrades on the line.

Shepparton region employment

Raised with: Minister for Employment

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

Since the election of the Andrews Labor Government, we have seen a number of positive trends occur in the Shepparton labour market, including:

- A decrease in the unemployment rate from 7.8 per cent to 6.8 per cent;
- A 6.2 per cent increase in the participation rate;
- A rise in the total number of people employed (up 7600);
- A rise in the total number of people employed full-time (up 1700); and
- A fall in the total number of people unemployed (down 200).

Additionally, we have seen a significant fall in the 12-month average youth unemployment rate from 17.5 per cent to 13.8 per cent.

While we know that labour force statistics for regional areas and young people tend to have a high degree of volatility, these figures run in stark contrast to the atrocious record of the former failed Liberal Government which oversaw a rise in Shepparton's unemployment rate from 7.2 per cent to 7.8 per cent.

The Honourable Member for Northern Victoria may wish to talk down the Shepparton economy but we are getting on with the job of delivering for all Victorians, irrespective of their postcode.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to driving job creation, facilitating new investment and improving infrastructure in regional Victoria through the establishment of our \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, which has supported the recent \$120 million investment by Fonterra at its facility in nearby Stanhope.

As part of the 50-year lease of the Port of Melbourne, a new \$200 million Agriculture Infrastructure and Jobs Fund will also be established to drive economic growth in our regions.

Furthermore, we recognise that some cohorts face complicated barriers in entering the workforce, including Aboriginal Victorians, and we will have more to contribute on this matter in the near future.

Morwell schools

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Shing

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

I was pleased to visit the Morwell Regeneration sites on Wednesday 16 March. This included Morwell Primary School, currently under construction at McDonald Street, and then Morwell Park Primary where we discussed plans which have been developed for that new school. Naturally, we also discussed how both projects will assist in delivering better educational outcomes to children in this region of the Latrobe Valley.

I also visited Kurnai College where the State Government has committed \$7.8 million to improve the school's existing facilities. This includes the construction of a new library, and the refurbishment and upgrade of existing science facilities and administration buildings. The architect has been appointed and planning has commenced, and I understand that there will be opportunities for the school to influence the selection and use of materials within its project.

Postgraduate student travel concessions

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

Victoria offers public transport concessions to full time tertiary undergraduate students, recognising that the majority of these students are not financially independent.

Students who are enrolled in a masters, doctorate or other postgraduate course do not automatically qualify for public transport concessions. However, these students can access concession fares if they are a low income earner with a Centrelink issued Health Care Card.

Each state determines its public transport concessions rules and have differing levels of support for students and low income earners. While other states may offer public transport concession for postgraduate students, it is generally offered for full time enrolled students only and not all provide concession to Health Care Card holders.

The Victorian Government provides concessions to Health Care Card holders to ensure that benefits are equitably targeted to people in need-including postgraduate students.

Timboon streetscape upgrade

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

I am pleased to say that I announced funding of \$400 000 from the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund for Timboon Streetscape project on 19 March, at Timboon.

This project will generate economic benefits through the revitalisation of the CBD of Timboon with improved character and amenity, connectivity and pedestrian access to businesses and services. The infrastructure will improve the liveability and economic vibrancy of Timboon, creating places in the town for tourists to stop and shop.

The Timboon Streetscape project is the number one community priority in the Timboon Community Plan and one of the highest priorities for Corangamite Shire Council, delivering on Council's key objectives as well as the objectives of the Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan. The project will complement the Timboon Ice cream development funded through the Regional Jobs Fund and add to economic and business growth that has occurred in the town over the past 24 months.

The Government is focused on delivering its agenda as set out in the 'Regional Statement', including investing in the key drivers of population attraction infrastructure, jobs, education and liveable communities. We are committed to building a thriving regional Victoria that is a great place to visit, work and live. The \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF) is open for business with a pipeline of projects being developed, considered, approved and funded across all program streams.

Geelong safe harbour project

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

The 'Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour Precinct Public Access and Infrastructure Development Project' will provide infrastructure to deliver a sustainable safe harbour and the necessary facilities to open up the precinct for public access; improve major event amenities; expand marina capacity; and facilitate education and training opportunities. Ultimately the project is expected to sustain existing major events, increase visitor numbers and expenditure and facilitate further private investment in the Geelong Waterfront resulting in continuing diversification of the Geelong economy.

Stage 1 of the \$19 million project is being supported locally by the Royal Geelong Yacht Club (\$3 million) and the City of Greater Geelong (\$3 million). As a transformational project for the waterfront area of Geelong, the Victorian Government has agreed to invest \$4 million in the project to see the Safe Harbour Precinct become a high quality sporting facility and tourism attraction which also creates local jobs.

The Royal Geelong Yacht Club is seeking remaining funding for the project from the Federal Government's National Stronger Regions Fund.

South Melbourne Park Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

When the former government fails to invest in new schools across the inner city, then fixing their mess comes at a cost.

Labor is building two new schools in South Melbourne. The Opposition failed to build one.

The former Coalition Government did not lay one brick to build a new school at Ferrars Street. And they refused to support building the second new South Melbourne Park primary school.

Future funding for this project will be considered as part of ongoing budget deliberations.

Shepparton region projects

Raised with: Treasurer

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to rural and regional Victorians. This is evidenced by the development and release of Victoria's Regional Statement which outlines the Government's significant commitments and investments for regional Victorians and highlights the opportunities and challenges for Shepparton and the Goulburn region.

Specifically, the 2015-16 Victorian Budget provided \$10 million in additional funding to Goulburn Valley Health to help meet increased demand and open beds to treat more patients.

This funding allowed Goulburn Valley Health to open eight more acute inpatient beds which will enable 635 patients to be treated every year, as well as an additional \$1 million to plan for the proposed redevelopment of the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health. The outcome of this planning process is being considered as part of the 2016-17 budget process alongside other critical and immediate priorities for Victoria.

I recently joined local Shepparton MP Suzanna Sheed at Goulburn Valley Health on 18 March to discuss this budget submission.

Transport services and infrastructure across Victoria are being considered as part of the 2016-17 budget process to ensure connectivity of regions. As with all budget determinations, competing priorities for the use of the Government's limited resources will be assessed in the best interests of the Victorian community.

Sunbury Road duplication

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

The future duplication of Sunbury Road from Melbourne Airport and Shepherds Lane, north of the Bulla Township, will form part of the future Bulla Bypass project.

VicRoads is working with key stakeholders, including the Metropolitan Planning Authority and the City of Hume to plan the future duplication of Sunbury Road between the Bulla Bypass and the Sunbury Township.

VicRoads recently completed a \$1.65 million road safety improvement project on Sunbury Road between Wildwood Road and Bulla Road-Diggers Rest Road. The works included the installation of safety barriers, removal of roadside hazards, new centre median, minor road widening and improved line marking, signage and delineation.

VicRoads will continue to monitor the safety and operation of Sunbury Road to determine the need for further improvements.

It should be noted that you were quiet about road upgrades in your electorate for 4 years, while you were a member of the former Napthine Government.

Technical schools

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Tech Schools initiative is part of the Victorian Government's commitment to creating the Education State by ensuring every Victorian has access to an excellent education. This exciting initiative will invest \$125 million to create 10 high-tech centres of learning that will use leading-edge technology, discovery and innovation to deliver the advanced education and training that Victorian school students need to flourish in the rapidly changing global economy. The Tech schools will deliver high-tech STEM-based taster and enrichment programs linked to the new Victorian Curriculum for Years 7-12 with the aim of connecting children to future skills, opportunities and emerging industries.

As Mr . Leane MP, correctly points out, it is important to ensure that the Tech Schools complement and enhance, rather than replicate, the facilities that are already available to the partnership schools. Tech Schools will operate differently from previous models of technical and will be aimed at developing STEM Skills and preparing students for future industries using shared learning environments and practical problem solving.

Central to the development of the Tech Schools is that they are locally driven proposals. Over the last six months, extensive consultation with local partnerships comprising schools, local industry, tertiary institutions and local government has taken place regarding the development and establishment of the Tech Schools at each of the 10 locations. The high level of support has seen local partners participating in design workshops, Business Breakfast Forums and 'working groups to progress this initiative. Events at each of the locations have been attended by local MPs, government and non- government schools, university and TAFE representatives, local government, industry and community groups. This consultation specifically aims to ensure that the Tech School programs and facilities are suitable for local requirements and addresses the needs identified by the local partnerships, as each Tech Schools will deliver general and industry-specific programs tailored to the location of the Tech School.

Gardiners Creek Reserve, Burwood

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

On 18 December 2015, I approved Amendment C210 to the Whitehorse Planning Scheme to allow the construction of a pedestrian bridge between the two sections of Deakin University's Burwood Campus, subject to conditions.

I decided to exercise my powers under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to approve Amendment C210 to provide prompt approval for this project for several reasons. The new bridge will improve safety and accessibility and enable compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1999. Police have advised that the current pathway to the bridge is isolated with insufficient lighting and poses major safety concerns for staff, students and the community. I also considered the concerns raised by the community and council with the planning permit issued in 2010 and how Deakin University had addressed those issues in the new design.

The new design of the pedestrian bridge addresses concerns raised by community members as it is lighter, less imposing and less visually intrusive on Gardiners Creek, has only one pylon in the creek reserve (the previous design had four pylons) and significantly decreases tree removal from 85 to 19 trees.

The Strand, Williamstown, toilet facilities

Raised with: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 10 March 2016

REPLY:

The toilet block referred to on Burgoyne Reserve, The Strand Williamstown is cleaned and maintained by Hobsons Bay City Council (HBCC). While the toilet block is located on Parks Victoria land, the facilities service the foreshore area, and as such Council have had responsibility for the facility.

In 2012, HBCC began preliminary work, along with Parks Victoria, about the future of the facility, and many other public toilet facilities in the municipality, in the 'Hobsons Bay Public Toilet Strategy'.

The Council proposes taking over the management of the land currently managed by Parks Vic, and undertaking a realignment of facilities. More information can be found here:

http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/files/15e360e0-c985-4290-ac8b-a22d00f18ad4/Hobsons_Bay_Public_Toilet_Strategy_August_2013.pdf

If pressing local issues arise whilst in the area, there are more public toilets 800 metres away at Commonwealth Reserve (managed by HBCC).

Valkstone Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 10 March 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure, and this has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million to school facilities in the 2015-16 State Budget. I was especially pleased to announce that almost \$20 million of this amount would be allocated to the local government area of Glen Eira alone.

The funding provided through the State Budget represents a crucial first step in creating the Education State, and the Government will continue to invest in school infrastructure throughout this term of government.

State Budget constraints do not allow for all school building projects to be immediately funded, and the needs of all government schools must be balanced and prioritised accordingly.

The Government is aware that schools such as Valkstone Primary School may have capital or maintenance needs, and I acknowledge the challenge this presents. However, it will take time to bring all school facilities, especially older assets, up to a desired standard.

The infrastructure needs of all schools, including Valkstone Primary, will be considered when determining priorities for the 2016-17 State Budget and future budget allocations. We will continue to responsibly balance and

prioritise the needs of over 1500 government schools across the state in order to achieve a long-term outcome of great learning environments.

North Road, Ormond, level crossing

Raised with: Premier

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

Removing the level crossings will have great benefits for traders for decades to come.

Level Crossing Removal Authority is working with individual businesses to assist them through the disruption caused through construction.

But the disruption during construction is nothing compared to the disruption these congested death traps cause every day for thousands of drivers and train users across our city.

We'll continue working with residents and traders while we get on with this project, and get rid of these relics for good.

Knox Innovation, Opportunity and Sustainability Centre

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Knox Innovation, Opportunity and Sustainability Centre (KIOSC) in Wantirna is an inspiring example of a shared learning centre. While initially developed as a Trade Training Centre, the KIOSC has been designed as a high-tech discovery and learning facility to engage and stimulate students. As part of the Andrews Labor Government's establishment of the Education State, KIOSC has provided a working model for the development of the Tech Schools Initiative. This exciting initiative will invest \$125 million to create 10 high-tech centres of learning that will use leading-edge technology, discovery and innovation to deliver the advanced education and training that Victorian school students need so they can flourish in the rapidly changing global economy.

The Government is committed to supporting KIOSC. I am pleased to advise that the 2015-16 State Budget handed down by the Treasurer on 5 May 2015 provided \$4 million allocated over four years in output funding to support operations of the Wantirna KIOSC, as well as an initial \$8 million in funding for planning works for 10 new Tech Schools across the state, which will be open to students from years 7 to 12.

Sex work regulation

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Raised by: Ms Patten

Raised on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

I can advise that some aspects of the regulatory scheme are currently being considered, as the Sex Work Regulations 2006 are in the process of being remade. Public consultation on draft proposed regulations closed on 4 March 2016. The consultation process involved writing to all licensed sex work service providers and to interested stakeholder groups.

A large number of submissions were received, and these have been published on the Consumer Affairs Victoria website. I am currently considering these comments.

Two proposed changes I am considering are first, to remove the current restriction on advertising the race, colour or ethnic origin of sex workers; and second, to allow advertising on the Internet of images that depict more than the head and shoulders of a sex worker, subject to some explicit content restrictions.

While there are no plans to undertake a broader review of the sex work regulatory scheme at this time, if you would like to raise particular options for reform or to discuss this more generally, I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these matters with you.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 13 April 2016

Port Phillip planning scheme

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

I am informed that:

The City of Port Phillip has prepared Amendment C107 to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme to implement the St Kilda Road North Precinct Plan. It seeks to introduce a suite of policy and controls to guide future built form of the precinct.

The controls proposed specify a range of design objectives and requirements, including mandatory building heights and setbacks.

Council carried out extensive consultation with the community and exhibited the planning scheme amendment. Submitters were provided with an opportunity to be heard at an independent Panel Hearing.

The amendment is complex and has raised significant community and stakeholder interest, generating over 200 submissions.

It is important that the planning framework for the area offers maximum protection to the Shrine, St Kilda Road boulevard and the amenity of surrounding parkland and residential areas whilst allowing for some reasonable development opportunities in close proximity to the Melbourne CBD.

The amendment is now being assessed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, prior to me making a decision.

Healesville freeway reservation

Raised with: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 25 February 2016

REPLY:

Thank you to the Member for Eastern Metropolitan for the fantastic work advocating on behalf of the local community on this issue.

The former Coalition Government wanted to sell this open space off, and the campaign run by community will protect this public open space into the future.

The Andrews Government has honoured its commitment to preserve the Healesville Freeway Reserve as public open space for the benefit and enjoyment of the local community.

The process to transfer the land from VicRoads to the Crown, so it can be reserved and protected for public use, is underway.

A community reference group will shortly be established to ensure the local community and users of the reserve can play a key role in the development of a master plan for the reserve.

Ballarat police resources

Raised with: Acting Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

I appreciate your continued interest in policing in Western Victoria and note that the Hon Wade Noonan MP wrote to you about this issue on 4 December 2015.

As previously advised, in May 2010 the Labor Government committed funding for an additional 1966 police to frontline duties. That commitment resulted in an increase of 286 police in the Western Region which includes the Ballarat Police Service Area.

Our continued investment in policing has seen a record \$2.5 billion budget for Victoria Police in 2015–16 to continue their important work.

As indicated, the Andrews Government has funded almost 700 additional police personnel reflecting the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep the community safe.

The government is investing \$148.6 million in custody officers, over four years, to free up police to undertake frontline duties protecting our community where they are needed.

On 11 January 2016, Ballarat became one of the first six locations to receive Police Custody Officers (PCOs). Victoria Police advises that three PCOs have commenced duties within the Ballarat Police Complex and already shown themselves to be valuable assets in prisoner management, freeing up police personnel.

Under Victorian law, I cannot direct the Chief Commissioner about the allocation or deployment of police officers to or at particular locations in accordance with section 10 of the Victoria Police Act 2013. The decision of how and where resources are deployed is appropriately a matter for the Chief Commissioner.

I am informed that police in the Ballarat area have recently established a range of new crime response teams, including a team focusing on burglary and recidivist offenders. Police also continue to investigate incidents of arson.

A Family Violence Unit has also been created for the Ballarat area. I am advised that the new unit will focus on recidivist family violence offenders and provide an increased capacity to support repeat victims, as well as support community based initiatives, like the Koori Family Violence Protocol.

South Oakleigh Primary School site

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

I appreciate your concern regarding a development plan lodged with Monash City Council for the subject site. I note this development plan proposes to facilitate the redevelopment of the subject site for residential purposes.

You have requested that I investigate the application for this development plan for the subject site having regard to the views of local residents and your concerns relating to neighbourhood amenity and character.

I understand that in September 2015, Monash City Council, who is the responsible authority for the subject site, considered the proposed development plan and resolved to refuse it. The applicant has subsequently sought review of Council's decision at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), and further review of the contents of the Development Plan Overlay-Schedule 5, which informs the preparation of the development plan, at the Supreme Court.

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 allows the applicant can seek a review of Council's decision at VCAT and that is occurring. The submitters and objectors can seek to join the review and will be heard by VCAT.

As the matter is the subject of legal consideration, it would be inappropriate for me to further comment on this matter at this stage.

Planning buffer zones

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 10 March 2016

REPLY:

I understand there is a current planning permit application before the Golden Plains Shire Council (council) for a landfill, green waste and materials recycling facility at 1560 Hamilton Highway, Murgheboluc. I also understand that there is an active quarry currently operating on the same site that would continue to operate concurrently with the landfill and materials recycling facility if this permit is approved.

I am advised that council is using the buffer distances as outlined in the Golden Plains Planning Scheme to assess whether the proposed landfill, green waste and materials recycling facility is appropriate in the current location and whether it is located an appropriate distance from sensitive land uses such as schools or residential areas.

I understand that council has referred the application to the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, in relation to the changes proposed to the quarry operation and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) for the proposed landfill, green waste and materials recycling facility. The landfill and green waste activities will require an Environment Protection Authority Works Approval from the EPA. These agencies are best placed to assess the operation of their respective buffer requirements.

In respect to the review of buffer zones, the current processes and legislation deal with this issue appropriately and include mechanisms to deal with each proposal on its own merit, taking into account differing circumstances and considerations.

I encourage interested parties to actively participate in council's planning permit application process.

Melbourne Regional Landfill

Raised with: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Government takes community concern in relation to odour seriously. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has increased licence compliance inspections for the Ravenhall tip to bi-monthly, conducts regular odour surveys and has undertaken targeted rapid response to odour complaints.

The EPA has twice stationed staff at the nearby Caroline Springs fire station to provide rapid response to odour complaints-most recently in February 2016, when it responded immediately to 17 reports-but found no odour. So far this year, the EPA has conducted 16 odour surveys. The EPA has taken and will continue to take the community's concerns seriously and will continue to promptly investigate odour reports.

The public review of the EPA is currently underway, and the independent Ministerial Advisory Committee conducting the inquiry has provided its report to me. The Andrews Government will consider the report's findings and recommendations on how we can ensure the EPA plays a strong role in protecting Victoria's environment and helping Victorians to meet the environment protection challenges of the future.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 14 April 2016

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard

Raised with: Premier

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government acknowledges the important work of the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (AVCGA) and all marine rescue services who play a vital role in ensuring the safety of Victorian mariners.

The Minister for Emergency Services met with the AVCGA on 9 March 2016 in response to concerns around an insurance shortfall. The Government has approved \$106 700 in financial assistance for the AVCGA, this is on top of over \$500 000 of funding provided this year to flotillas for boat and infrastructure improvements.

I am pleased to note the Gippsland flotillas discontinued their proposed strike action. Emergency Management Victoria will continue to work productively with the AVCGA and other marine rescue services.

As the member is aware, the Government's response to the Inquiry into Marine Rescue Services was tabled in Parliament on 11 February 2016. The response sets out a plan to provide stronger support for marine rescue volunteers and a, coordinated and consistent approach to training, service delivery and interoperability. I thank the AVCGA for their participation in informing the Government's response.

The proposed governance arrangements will mean that all volunteer marine search and rescue organisations, including the AVCGA, will contribute to decision-making for the first time in Victoria. These reforms will ensure that the Victorian community can continue to rely on strong and sustainable marine rescue services.

Women's sporting facilities

Raised with: Minister for Sport

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

I refer to your adjournment debate matter regarding the Deakin Reserve Female Facilities project, raised in the Legislative Assembly on 24 March 2016.

I can confirm an application by Greater Shepparton City Council was received through the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund requesting \$100 000 from the Female Friendly Facilities category.

This project is currently being assessed by the Department of Health and Human Services, with a recommendation to me anticipated in the coming weeks.

I encourage Greater Shepparton City Council to continue to liaise with staff from the department regarding this application and any future projects that address the need for change facilities for female athletes.