

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS**

**9 March to 29 March 2018**

**(Extract from book 4)**

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## **The Governor**

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

## **The ministry** (from 16 October 2017)

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Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services . . . . .	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
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Minister for Training and Skills, and Minister for Corrections . . . . .	The Hon. G. A. Tierney, MLC
Minister for Planning . . . . .	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary . . . . .	Ms M. Thomas, MP

### Legislative Council committees

**Privileges Committee** — Mr Dalidakis, Mr Mulino, Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Springle, Ms Symes 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** — Mr Bourman, #Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Mr Gepp, Mr Leane, #Mr Melhem, Mr Ondarchie, Mr O’Sullivan and #Mr Rich-Phillips.

**Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning** — Ms Bath, #Mr Bourman, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, #Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Melhem, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, #Dr Ratnam, Ms Shing, #Ms Symes, Ms Truong and Mr Young.

**Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues** — #Ms Crozier, #Mr Elasmarr, Ms Fitzherbert, Mr Morris, Mr Mulino, Ms Patten, Mrs Peulich, #Dr Ratnam, #Mr Rich-Phillips, Mr Somyurek, Ms Springle and Ms Symes.

# participating members

### Legislative Council select committees

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

**Fire Services Bill Select Committee** — Ms Lovell, Mr Melhem, Mr Mulino, Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Rich Phillips, Ms Shing and Mr Young.

### Joint committees

**Accountability and Oversight Committee** — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Noonan and Ms Thomson.

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

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

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

**Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee** — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Ramsay and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Halfpenny, Mr Richardson and Mr Riordan.

**Family and Community Development Committee** — (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins and Mr Finn. (*Assembly*): Ms Britnell, Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards and Ms McLeish.

**House Committee** — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, 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 Gepp and Ms Patten. (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley.

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Patten, 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* — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Ms Bridget Noonan

*Council* — Acting Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

*Parliamentary Services* — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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**Deputy President:**

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**Deputy Leader of the Government:**

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

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**Deputy Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

**Leader of The Nationals:**

Mr L. B. O'SULLIVAN

**Leader of the Greens:**

Dr S. RATNAM

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John <sup>1</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina <sup>2</sup>	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David <sup>8</sup>	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel <sup>3</sup>	Western Metropolitan	AC	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	O'Sullivan, Luke Bartholomew <sup>9</sup>	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona <sup>10</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	RV
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin <sup>4</sup>	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	VILJ
Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ratnam, Dr Samantha Shantini <sup>11</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	Greens
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Gepp, Mr Mark <sup>5</sup>	Northern Victoria	ALP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred <sup>7</sup>	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph <sup>6</sup>	Northern Victoria	ALP	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaclyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Truong, Ms Huong <sup>12</sup>	Western Metropolitan	Greens
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
			Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP

<sup>1</sup> Resigned 28 September 2017

<sup>2</sup> Appointed 15 April 2015

<sup>3</sup> DLP until 26 June 2017

<sup>4</sup> Resigned 27 May 2016

<sup>5</sup> Appointed 7 June 2017

<sup>6</sup> Resigned 6 April 2017

<sup>7</sup> Resigned 9 February 2018

<sup>8</sup> Resigned 25 February 2015

<sup>9</sup> Appointed 12 October 2016

<sup>10</sup> ASP until 16 January 2018

<sup>11</sup> Appointed 18 October 2017

<sup>12</sup> Appointed 21 February 2018

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**

AC — Australian Conservatives; ALP — Labor Party; ASP — Australian Sex Party;  
DLP — Democratic Labour Party; Greens — Australian Greens;  
LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals; RV — Reason Victoria  
SFFP — Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party; VILJ — Vote 1 Local Jobs



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**ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS**

*Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers and received by Hansard in the period shown.*

**9 March to 29 March 2018****South Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Directed to:** Minister for Families and Children  
**Asked on:** 15 November 2017

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government believes every young person should have the opportunities and support they need to reach their full potential, including those who face disadvantage.

Engage! is a competitive grant round which provides funding to local government and community organisations enabling young people aged 12 to 25 years across Victoria to actively participate in civic, skill building and economic pathway activities in their communities.

Through the Engage! 2018-20 program, Operation Newstart has been advised that it will receive a total of \$270 000 over three years for three projects, including Operation Newstart Casey.

The funding for all three Operation Newstart projects is at the same level as that received by Operation Newstart under the previous Engage! Grant round.

In addition, as the Education State, Victoria is focusing on improving outcomes for every student, in every classroom and in every community.

We have expanded schools' capacity to support at risk students through increased 'equity funding'. The \$566 million increase over four years provides extra resources and expertise to get the best out of students who need more support.

I am advised that Operation Newstart Casey will receive additional funding of \$60 000 over two years through the Department of Education and Training.

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Patten  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 29 November 2017

**ANSWER:**

Access to sexual and reproductive health services is a fundamental right for every Victorian woman.

The Women's sexual and reproductive health key priorities for 2017-2020 highlights the Government's commitment to support the health and wellbeing of Victorian women, including improving access to reproductive choices.

As a tertiary health service, Mercy Hospital for Women provides high level care for women and babies across Victoria.

Medications that are being taken by patients prior to admission and outside of the treatment being provided at the hospital are recorded to ensure the safe treatment of patients. This is so that contraindications or unsafe combinations of drugs are managed appropriately.

A patient's prescribed medication would be continued at Mercy Public Hospitals Victoria Ltd facilities unless there was a medical reason for that medication to cease, which would be discussed with the patient.

Patients are encouraged to use their own medications when they come in to hospital to ensure consistency of product and to facilitate patient empowerment of their medication management. If a patient runs out of medication whilst in hospital, staff either supply new medication at no charge if the hospital stocks the drug, or the patient / their family could obtain the medication externally.

As a specialist women's and babies' hospital, Mercy Hospital for Women has a restricted drug formulary, consistent with the services they provide, and authorised under the Drug Poisons and Controlled Substances Permit & Plan. The pharmacy at Mercy Hospital for Women is not a retail pharmacy and therefore does not carry the range of medication routinely available in the community.

In the absence of specific details regarding your constituent's case, it is difficult to confirm exactly why Mercy Hospital for Women could not access the medication. Any of these factors could have been involved, most significantly the issue of whether it was safe for that course of medication to continue while your constituent was in the hospital's care.

### Eastern Victoria Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Mulino  
**Directed to:** Minister for Early Childhood Education  
**Asked on:** 6 February 2018

#### ANSWER:

As part of the Andrews Labor Government's \$61 million suite of inclusive education initiatives announced late last year, to ensure that children and students with disabilities get the support they need to maximise access, participation, achievement and wellbeing in school and early childhood education, there was \$19 million specific to early childhood education initiatives.

As you rightly state, of this, \$6.4 million was invested to upgrade early childhood infrastructure and equipment — including playgrounds — across the state and provide grants to allow kinders to provide safe and more inclusive environments.

The Inclusive Kindergarten Facilities Program aims to:

- increase engagement and improve learning outcomes for children with disabilities, or additional needs, through strengthening inclusive early-childhood learning environments;
- promote inclusion in early-childhood learning settings and teaching approaches so they are tailored to the needs of all learners on the same basis, including those with disabilities or additional needs; and
- create innovative early-childhood learning environments based on inclusive best practice and universal design.

I was delighted to recently open applications for this program.

As you note, there would no doubt be many kinders in your electorate of Eastern Victoria region who would be eligible to apply so I would encourage you to let those eligible services know to submit ideas for projects that will benefit all children in your local community, including those with disabilities and additional needs.

Applications for the Equipment stream close on 26 March 2018 and applications for the Buildings and Playgrounds stream close on 30 April 2018.

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Leane  
**Directed to:** Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing  
**Asked on:** 6 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

Unlike the previous Liberal Government who invested \$0 in transition preparation, the Andrews Government has invested \$20 million to deliver the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Transition Support Package. The Transition Support Package is designed to support people with disability, their families and carers and disability service providers to transition to the NDIS.

There are many opportunities for services such as Irabina Autism Services to grow and develop their business statewide and even nationally as a result of the NDIS.

Organisations funded as part of the Transition Support Package assist providers to expand and build their services and prepare for the NDIS by running workshops and providing resources on service delivery planning, staff capability, business systems and financial management.

We have invested in 22 providers to deliver support under the Transition Support Package. You can find details of these organisations and the assistance they provide, on the Victorian Government website <[www.vic.gov.au/ndis/about-the-ndis/victorian-government-role-and-investment/transition-support.html](http://www.vic.gov.au/ndis/about-the-ndis/victorian-government-role-and-investment/transition-support.html)>.

A useful starting point may be National Disability Services Victoria (NDSV) who is funded as the peak body for non-government disability service organisations to provide NDIS readiness supports including an NDIS provider toolkit that is available on their website <[www.readiness.org.au](http://www.readiness.org.au)>.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Dr Carling-Jenkins  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 6 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

Parks Victoria have advised that as the incident occurred after hours, a ranger had to drive from their home to manually open the gate, which caused a delay in visitors being able to exit the park.

Parks Victoria is currently arranging with a contractor to install a sim card system into the gate mechanism to allow remote (and instant) opening and I would be happy to organise a personal briefing by Parks Victoria for yourself or the Keilor Walkers Walking Group on the new system at your convenience.

In cases of emergency, emergency services have access to the park via a farm gate 30 metres from the main entrance.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Melhem  
**Directed to:** Minister for Early Childhood Education  
**Asked on:** 6 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering a record \$76.4 million to build, expand and improve early years infrastructure across Victoria. This includes \$10 million targeting growth areas as well as a further \$10 million to co-locate three early learning centres with government primary schools. This investment in early years infrastructure ensures local families can continue to access great local high quality kindergartens.

Since 2015-16, there have been a number of projects funded in the Western Metropolitan Region totalling \$5.75 million. To date, these include:

- \$1.6 million for the Fraser Rise Children’s and Community Hub in Fraser Rise
- \$1.6 million for the Wyndham Aboriginal Community Centre and Integrated Family Centre in Wyndham Vale
- \$1.2 million for the Truganina East Early Learning Centre in Truganina East
- \$650 000 to redevelop the Church Street Children’s Centre in Footscray;
- \$500 000 for the Alexandra Avenue Children’s Centre in Sunshine
- \$192 000 to upgrade Cooraminta Kindergarten in Laverton North
- \$43 425 to upgrade Stewarts Lane Preschool in Sunbury; and
- \$33 825 to upgrade Taylor Drive Preschool in Gladstone Park.

Altogether, these projects are planning to create more than 886 new four year old kindergarten places.

I was also pleased to recently announce a new early learning centre to be built co-located with Footscray Primary School as part of the Government’s \$10 million plan to build three early learning centres on government school sites.

In addition to this investment, the Andrews Labor Government is also providing \$4.25 million through the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution fund to install relocatable kindergartens in Wyndham and Tarneit as well as in Craigieburn and Roxburgh Park. These brand new, purpose built facilities will provide a rapid response to service needs in these growing suburbs, providing up to 250 new sessional kindergarten places in Wyndham and 130 in Hume.

### **Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Gepp  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 7 February 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Member of the Northern Victoria Region for his question.

The Mildura Youth Commitment Program is funded through the Victorian Government’s Youth Crime Prevention Grants. The Mildura program provides intensive, wrap-around case management support to a targeted group of 10 young people identified as being at significant risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system.

As at 29 January 2018, 11 referrals had been made into the program, resulting in 10 young people receiving support. Support has included linking participants into sport and community groups, and work to improve relationships within the participants’ family units.

The Mildura program is currently funded until June 2019.

The Mildura Program grant is one of six program grants provided by the Government to the Mildura LGA, arising from a number of funds, namely the Community Safety Fund, Placed based targeted Grants, Public Safety Infrastructure Fund and Youth Crime Prevention. These grants amount to \$522 699 and are intended to provide the community of Mildura with the resources to assist the prevention of crime.

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ondarchie  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 8 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

In addition to delivering Melbourne's metropolitan train services, Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) is also contracted to maintain a safe and reliable network.

To minimise disruptions to passengers during peak times, maintenance works are generally completed during the night or on weekends. Depending on the level of disruption, MTM is required to alert residents by distributing flyers to local affected residents, and install signage at stations.

I have asked Public Transport Victoria to ensure MTM is meeting its obligations by ensuring local affected residents are fully aware and informed of planned maintenance works, particularly when works are being completed during the night time.

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Dunn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 8 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

Community Liaison Groups for North East Link will include local residents, representatives from local community groups as well as local council officers.

In addition to Community Liaison Groups, comprehensive engagement will continue across the north-east including meetings with local residents, local traders, schools, businesses and councils as the Authority continues through the planning process for this much needed project.

In addition to the well-attended community drop-in sessions already conducted across the north-east, further sessions are planned in late February and during March in Blackburn North, Kew, Rosanna, Greensborough, Bulleen, Watsonia and in the CBD.

There will be another round of community drop-in sessions around July/August as feedback from community helps shape planning and design of North East Link.

The community drop-in sessions are in addition to the massive response from communities to online material about the project. The Authority has already heard from thousands of people across council municipalities both inside and outside the project area.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 8 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The incident that occurred on the foreshore of St Kilda beach and Acland Street on

13 December 2017 is the subject of an active police investigation. As such, I am unable to comment or provide further specific information regarding the number of arrests or charges.

I am advised that Victoria Police has initiated Operation Sandsafe, which is the standing response to these local issues in St Kilda, inclusive of local and Operations Response Unit (ORU) support. The ORU are deployed as an extra resource to the foreshore on days when the temperature is likely to attract large crowds.

Victoria Police has met with the management of the McDonalds restaurant and strategies have been implemented to reduce the number of young people congregating in the area. There is ongoing stakeholder engagement with the community. Port Phillip Local Area Commander (LAC) met with foreshore operators, the City of Port Phillip CEO and the Hon. Martin Foley MP, Member for Albert Park in December 2017 to form a coordinated response.

Thanks to the advocacy of Victoria Police, St Kilda foreshore traders and other concerned traders, the City of Port Phillip has been proactive in extending the alcohol ban on the foreshore until April 2018 to assist with antisocial crowd behaviour issues.

In addition, the Government has recently committed funding of up to \$220 000 to the City of Port Phillip for urban design improvements and the installation of CCTV along the St Kilda foreshore to help address anti-social behaviour. This is on top of \$576 515 in grant funding which has been provided by this Government to eight community-led crime prevention initiatives operating within the City of Port Phillip.

### **Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Patten  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 8 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

In 2015, a range of safety measures were put in place along Sydney Road to increase cyclist safety, at a cost of \$1.6 million. In 2017, VicRoads began a collaborative, 'co-design' process with key stakeholders to understand the safety related issues facing Sydney Road, as well as future transport and land use needs. This process includes the consideration of the longer-term opportunities and developing options for the upgrade the Upfield Bike Path. Any proposal developed will be forwarded for future consideration by the government.

In addition, I am pleased to advise that the level crossing removal projects at Bell Street and Moreland Road are both considering the Upfield Bike Path, including opportunities for improvement.

### **Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

In December 2017, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) launched its \$10 million Enhancing Volunteerism Grants Program (EVGP). These grants are part of an extra investment of \$60 million in the Victorian fire services, which was recently announced by the Victorian Government. The EVGP, which consists of \$10 million over two years, will fund locally-driven initiatives that strengthen volunteerism and build brigade sustainability.

I have been advised that the CFA has received Shepparton East rural fire brigade's application. Grant applications for the EVGP are assessed and awarded by the CFA. The assessment criteria used by the CFA is available via the CFA website at <https://cfa.smartygrants.com.au/EVGP1>.

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Dunn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The proposed changes in relation to 621 Burwood Highway, Knoxfield, are changes to the City of Knox' planning scheme and are therefore regulated under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 rather than the Environment Effects Act 1978. I have therefore referred the proposed planning scheme changes to the independent Government Land Standing Advisory Committee for consideration and to provide recommendations on the suitability of the proposed changes. The advisory committee comprises independent experts in statutory and strategic planning, land development, economics, and social and environmental issues. The advisory committee hosted a public information session on 6 February 2018, and the proposal and supporting documents have been exhibited for public comment. Public hearings were held on 8 March and 9 March 2018. The committee will consider the proposal, including potentially significant effects, and any submissions received, and provide me its written report. The aim of the advisory committee is to provide a consistent, transparent and timely process for the consideration of changes to planning scheme provisions of government land.

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Patten  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

Through the Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018-28, the Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in a safer, better connected cycling network. Potential projects, including the Upfield Bike Path, will accordingly be developed using safe system principles which seek to minimise the potential for and severity of conflicts between cyclists and vehicles.

VicRoads is working closely with Moreland City Council to develop a proposal for the section of the Upfield Bike Path connecting from Box Forest Road to the M80, with any agreed proposal to be submitted for consideration in a future budget.

**Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Young  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Cobrawonga bridge has been impacted by a series of flood events over the last five years. Following engineering advice, the bridge was closed in May 2016 to ensure public safety.

Parks Victoria has worked with its land and emergency management partners to resolve access issues to Cobrawonga Island on the Murray River near Yarrawonga. However, further flooding and high water throughout 2016-17 delayed repair works.

Parks Victoria has now engaged contractors to undertake repair works and the bridge is planned to reopen in the coming months.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

VicTrack hosted an information session on 15 February 2018 for the Ballarat community to provide their feedback on the concept design. An online feedback survey was also available. The session was attended by over 100 community members, including local residents, passengers and business owners.

The online survey was open from 15 February–25 February, and VicTrack has received over 60 survey responses, clearly demonstrating that the local community has a strong interest in this project.

VicTrack continues to consider all the information received from the community and will continue to work with key operational stakeholders as the final design is refined.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is providing a \$13 million package from the Sustainability Fund to support the ongoing kerbside collection of household recyclable materials. For further detail:  
<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/stepping-in-to-support-industry-and-councils-with-recycling/>

Victoria has a comprehensive framework in place that maps out our goals for waste and recycling for the next 30 years.

The 2017-18 State Budget invested \$30.4 million over four years to improve management of waste and recover more resources, building on \$23 million in the previous Budget. This is the largest single allocation of waste and resource recovery funding ever by a Victorian Government.

In comparison, the former Coalition Government allocated less than \$15 million in new funding from the Sustainability Fund in their entire four years in government.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 20 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The recently announced safety improvements for Sunbury Road, between Tullamarine Freeway and Oaklands Road by the Andrews Labor Government, are being undertaken as part of Towards Zero. The State Government is investing \$1.1 billion state-wide to achieve fewer than 200 deaths by 2020 and to reduce serious injury by 15 per cent on Victoria's roads.

In the five-year period ending in July 2016, there were 13 crashes on this section of Sunbury Road, where seven people were seriously injured and one person tragically lost their life.

The safety improvements include new flexible safety barriers along the centre median strip and the eastern side of the road (towards Melbourne Airport) to reduce the likelihood of head-on crashes, and minor widening of the road



to accommodate the safety barriers in the centre median. Public lighting will also be upgraded along this section of road. Works are expected to be completed by July 2018. These safety improvements reflect the need to invest in protecting people as an immediate priority.

I am advised that VicRoads has undertaken other safety improvement projects along various sections of Sunbury Road in recent years.

The capacity of Sunbury Road and the population growth in the north and west of Melbourne are acknowledged. VicRoads has undertaken a planning investigation for the Bulla Bypass. The investigation is being considered by the Minister for Planning, the Hon Richard Wynne MLA.

### **Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 21 February 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

In Australia, the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (the DDA) makes it against the law for public places to be inaccessible to people with a disability.

This includes public footpaths and walkways; and public transport including trains, buses, ferries, boats, ships and planes.

Because rail corridors are not public places, considerations regarding accessibility— whether it be on elevated rail structures, rail trenches or elsewhere on Victoria's existing rail network — are different to areas that are covered by the DDA.

Accordingly, the LXRA consulted and incorporated advice from emergency services in developing the design solution for the Caulfield to Dandenong Level Crossing Removal Project. The design complies with the rail operator's emergency management procedures, relevant standards and international best practice for infrastructure.

In the event of an emergency, people — including passengers who are disabled or severely injured — can be safely evacuated from the viaduct by rail operations staff and emergency services personnel in compliance with the applicable standards.

However, it should also be noted that it is not standard practice for people to disembark in the rail corridor at any time.

### **Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Gepp  
**Directed to:** Minister for Regional Development  
**Asked on:** 21 February 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I would like to thank the Member for Northern Victoria for this question, and for the opportunity to put on the record some of the work the government has done in regional Victoria to support Murray Goulburn employees who have been made redundant so that they can get back into the workforce as soon as possible.

The programs that you have referred to are helping to support Murray Goulburn workers as well as the Rochester and Kiewa-Tangambalanga townships and their broader communities.

The Back-to-Work program was specifically extended by the government to ensure redundant Murray Goulburn workers were included. The program provides a financial incentive to a business who employs a member of a dairy farm household, or a retrenched dairy worker. The jobs must be in Victoria and can be either ongoing full-time or

part-time in nature. Businesses who employ an eligible worker have access to support for accredited training. Since July 2016, there have been 17 successful claims for the retrenched dairy worker category and 21 for the dairy farm household category.

Business in Transition Support (BITS) information sessions have been facilitated by Regional Development Victoria and the Department Education and Training to support retrenched Murray Goulburn factory and transport staff in affected locations across the state. These sessions have assisted workers to link with support services and employment agencies as well as the government's Skills and Job Centres that can assist with resume development, workshops to increase job seeking skills and access to retraining opportunities.

Community and stakeholder engagement has commenced as part of the Rochester Community Economic Development Plan project. This project aims to identify key focus areas and actions to undertake in order to prepare the Rochester community for a better future. It will consider:

- critical infrastructure works to support economic development;
- social engagement strategies to reenergise the community and build resilience;
- education and training needs to enhance the Rochester community's capacity to evolve in a changing industry / employment environment;
- a marketing plan for Rochester, which includes a town brand; and
- identified short, medium and long-term priority actions.

In early February 2018, facilitated workshops were undertaken to gain community input as part of developing the Plan. This engagement will continue for a further two months. Over 300 contributions have been received from the Rochester community during the initial stage of engagement.

In addition, the Campaspe Shire Council has scheduled a number of Small Business Victoria workshops for Rochester during the first half of 2018. The Council has also contributed funding toward one-on-one business coaching sessions in conjunction with the Rochester Businesses Network.

The Rural Skills Connect Program Manager currently provides support to the community working groups in both Rochester and Kiewa-Tangambalanga, and supports the development of Community and Economic Development Plans in these towns.

Whilst the Murray Goulburn job losses in regional Victoria are very unfortunate, other parts of the dairy industry are investing and creating jobs.

For example, at Stanhope, near Rochester, Fonterra has invested in a new cheese plant with assistance from the Victorian Government. I had the pleasure of opening this plant in 2017 and celebrating the 30 new jobs that it will create. In addition, Fonterra has recently announced a second stage expansion at Stanhope that will create a similar number of new jobs, providing potential new employment opportunities for ex-Murray Goulburn employees.

### **Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Elasmr  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 21 February 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The Social Impact Investment for Sustainability program, delivered by Sustainability Victoria, supports Victorian social enterprises which deliver on social, economic and environmental outcomes. The social outcomes this program has delivered to date include employment opportunities for disabled and newly settled Australians, the construction of infrastructure for e-waste reduction, food recycling apps, vertical farms and affordable housing.

The program provides funding to social enterprises in the form of a 50% low-rate loan and 50% grant. The funding targets operational expenses as well as equipment and infrastructure investment for social enterprises, enabling them to grow and achieve their stated social, economic and environmental objectives. The program is focused on supporting social enterprises that are led by a social, economic and environmental purpose, derive a substantial proportion of their income from trade and reinvest a majority of their profit/surplus in the fulfilment of their mission. This does not exclude other not-for-profits, provided they meet the definition for the purposes of the program.

The Andrews Labor Government is seeking to support the entrepreneurial approach which social enterprises provide in finding innovative solutions to social, economic and environmental problems. The program supports the social enterprise model, recognising that social enterprises seek to make a profit with these profits being re-directed to addressing social, economic and environmental problems. It is estimated that there are 3500 Victorian social enterprises contributing \$5.2 billion to the Victorian economy. I encourage social enterprises to contact Sustainability Victoria directly if they wish to explore their suitability for the program.

### Western Metropolitan Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 21 February 2018

#### ANSWER:

Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria operates a 24-hour hotline to provide the community with a means of reporting pollution, in conjunction with an after hours response roster so these community reports can be attended immediately. This approach ensures that environmental issues are responded to and holders of EPA licences are held to account when issues occur.

If community members are experiencing odour, I would encourage them to report pollution to EPA via the hotline number 1300 372 842. This will ensure that all reports are logged and responded to appropriately.

EPA have advised that they are conducting ongoing monthly site inspections to ensure the operator of Melbourne Regional Landfill (Ravenhall Landfill) complies with its licence, and to ensure issues are addressed in a timely manner. EPA's most recent inspection was on 27 February 2018.

Previously in July 2015 and February 2016, and in response to a significant increase in odour reports, EPA stationed officers at Caroline Springs to enable immediate response to community reports. In the last 12 months, EPA has not detected any non-compliance in regard to odour.

EPA are aware of community concerns, will continue to monitor odour reports and will again station personnel in the area for immediate attendance should an increase in odour reports occur.

EPA also participates in a community reference group whereby representatives from nearby communities can have their views heard and concerns about the ongoing performance of Melbourne Regional Landfill addressed.

### Eastern Metropolitan Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Leane  
**Directed to:** Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing  
**Asked on:** 22 February 2018

#### ANSWER:

The Victorian Disability Awards opened for nominations on Monday 19 February and will close on Sunday 8 April 2018.

To nominate please visit [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disabilityawards](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/disabilityawards).

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Purcell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Sport  
**Asked on:** 22 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

Thank you for your constituency question of 22 February 2018 regarding the AFL Western District proposed capping of numbers for junior football.

I acknowledge the passion and commitment of the Hampden and Warrnambool communities for their community football.

The Victorian Government supports state sporting associations to deliver grassroots opportunities for young players, sustainable club networks and the provision of a competition pathway. However sport, in this case AFL Victoria, is responsible for overseeing rules and regulations. Ultimately, they are accountable to their affiliated leagues, clubs and members.

The Department of Health and Human Services has contacted AFL Victoria to discuss the concerns raised. AFL Victoria has advised the AFL Western District will defer any implementation of the changes until further consultation has occurred with affected clubs.

To discuss this matter further, I would encourage any community members to contact AFL Western District Regional General Manager, Kate Williamson on [kate.williamson@aflwesterndistrict.com.au](mailto:kate.williamson@aflwesterndistrict.com.au) or mobile 0400 928 078.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Directed to:** Minister for Education  
**Asked on:** 22 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for Southern Metropolitan for her belated interest in Port Melbourne Primary School. I note that this school received no capital funding under the previous Liberal Government.

Fortunately the Member for Albert Park, as a member of the Andrews Labor Government, has more than made up for the cruel neglect of the Liberal Party by securing \$5.4 million to provide the school with a brand new competition sized gym.

I was delighted to be able to join him recently to turn the sod at this exciting project.

This upgrade, which you neglected to mention in your constituency question, is why some of the relocatable buildings in question are currently on the school site.

As part of his continuing advocacy on behalf of the school community, the Member for Albert Park has previously raised the situation involving the low-risk asbestos in the window mastic. So, I was pleased to inform him and the school community when I visited that I have instructed the VSBA to remove this from the relocatable building in question at no cost to the school.

This is what effective advocacy by a local Member and delivery from a Labor Government looks like.

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Dunn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 22 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

A decision will be made shortly. Knox Central is a very important centre, which provides significant community, entertainment and retail services and employment opportunities for its local community. It is important to ensure that the planning controls for the centre are in the best possible form to allow for the future growth and infrastructure needs of the centre.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Bath  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 22 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government understands the pressures Victorian businesses are facing and has put in place a range of measures to assist. The 2016-17 and 2017-18 State Budgets contained a range of energy efficiency programs to help small, medium and larger businesses reduce their energy costs.

This includes the Boosting Business Productivity program, which supports businesses to access the expert advice and support needed to cut energy and materials costs, reduce greenhouse emissions, and improve energy productivity. This program includes measures such as gas efficiency grants and a sustainable finance service just to name a few.

The Victorian Energy Upgrades program is also providing businesses of all sizes with increased incentives to upgrade their facilities and reduce energy costs.

The Investment Attraction and Assistance Program, which received an additional \$90 million in the Victorian State Budget for 2017-18, helps create and retain jobs in priority industry sectors such as manufacturing, including by managing the impacts of a volatile national energy market.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Mulino  
**Directed to:** Minister for Education  
**Asked on:** 22 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for Eastern Victoria for his tireless advocacy on behalf of his constituency, specifically on matters relating to education.

Pakenham North-East Primary School will accommodate 475 students from Prep to Year 6. The architects developed the school designs after consulting the local community in 2017.

Thanks to the investment by the Andrews Labor Government, the school is on track to open for local students for the 2019 school year. Early-works are underway at the site and there is considerable site preparation being done in readiness for the concrete pour for the building foundations in the first week of April.

The current works include construction of site retaining walls, progressive construction of school administration and learning community buildings, these works will progress throughout 2018 in preparation for school opening in 2019.

In addition to onsite works, the future school principal will be appointed in Term 3, 2018 to prepare the school for its opening in Term 1, 2019.

I trust this information is of assistance.

### **Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Dr Carling-Jenkins  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 6 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for Western Metropolitan for her interest in the Andrews Labor Government's plan to remove the dangerous and congested level crossing at Buckley Street, Essendon.

The Andrews Labor Government's plan to safely separate Buckley Street and the network's second busiest train line will return 78 minutes of traffic flow during peak travel times to road users, improve reliability for rail users, and make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists in the area.

As part of the extensive and well publicised consultation on the Buckley Street level crossing project, local schools (including Lowther Hall and St Columba's) have been intricately involved providing feedback on how their communities will benefit from the project. In fact, St Columba's even hosted Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) public information sessions open to the entire Essendon community.

The safety of the pedestrians, particularly students, will improve because the LXRA will be installing a new fully controlled intersection between Buckley, Rose and Sherbourne Streets, including signalised pedestrian crossings at Rose and Sherbourne Streets.

The conversion of Sherbourne Street to a two-way street is based on detailed traffic assessments, along with community and stakeholder feedback. This change provides another north-south connection, as well as making travelling across Buckley Street easier when going to and from local schools. Traffic analysis shows it will relieve congestion around the schools in the area.

The section of Sherbourne Street is from Buckley Street to Stanley Street. From this point southward, including in front of Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School, Sherbourne Street has always been a two-way street.

Works are now underway at Buckley Street, with the boom gates expected to go by the end of 2018.

### **Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Directed to:** Minister for Regional Development  
**Asked on:** 6 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

A Memorandum of Understanding, signed in February, has paved the way for a City Deal for Greater Geelong and the Great Ocean Road.

As part of the agreement, all tiers of government will work together to determine and deliver projects that boost jobs, improve infrastructure and ensure the Geelong region remains a great place to live, work, and do business.

While the key elements of the City Deal will be identified through three-way discussions, the Labor Government will push for projects to be included such as: the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre; the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan; Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour Project; the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan; the relocation of Comcare to central Geelong; and the development of the advanced manufacturing precinct at Waurn Ponds.

These projects would build on the strong investment by the Labor Government in the Geelong and South-West regions since being elected in 2014 — including \$75 million for Kardinia Park's Stage 4 Upgrade; over \$100 million of upgrades to the Great Ocean Road; and the rebuilding of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre.

The architectural drawings for the Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre will be progressed following the conclusion of discussions on the City Deal with the Turnbull Government.

### **Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 6 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

Bulla-Diggers Rest Road is a local road under the management of City of Hume.

### **Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Leane  
**Directed to:** Minister for Families and Children  
**Asked on:** 7 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government remains a proud supporter of men's sheds. There are now over 360 men's sheds in Victoria and many are experiencing rapid growth.

Funding provided by the government to men's sheds provides safe, accessible and friendly spaces for men to meet and work on projects that benefit their local community.

On 5 March this year I announced funding totalling \$885 000 to support the construction of new men's sheds and the refurbishment or extension of existing men's sheds across Victoria.

Communities can apply for grants of up to \$60 000 for the construction of new men's sheds, and up to \$30 000 for the refurbishment or extension of existing sheds.

Applications are now open and close on Friday 8 June 2018. The grant guidelines and application form are available on the Department of Health and Human Services website.

### **Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ondarchie  
**Directed to:** Minister for Education  
**Asked on:** 7 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government has a strong ambition to grow educational opportunities for all Victorians. With an allocation of more than \$2.8 billion to school infrastructure over the past three years, this investment delivers the largest overall education package on record to Victoria's schools.

As you are aware, the 2016-17 State Budget allocated \$12 million in planning for schools. This has allowed certain schools to undertake master planning. Reservoir East Primary School was one of those schools.

You speak of the school's capital needs being ignored "budget after budget" and that was certainly the case under the previous Liberal Government, which provided no capital funding towards this school.

In contrast, the Member for Preston has been advocating for some time on behalf of the school and its community, and I know he would have derived great pleasure to announce that the Andrews Labor Government will allocate \$6.3 million to build a new general learning facility and a multi-purpose performing arts and sports hub. The new facility will include administration, general learning area and classrooms. The multi-purpose hall will include facilities that can be used by the school's outside school hours care program, playgroup and for after-hours community events.

### **Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Mulino  
**Directed to:** Minister for Families and Children  
**Asked on:** 7 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is a proud supporter of men's sheds as we recognise the important role they play in bringing communities together. There are currently more than 360 communities across Victoria, including those in Eastern Victoria Region, enjoying the benefits of having a local men's shed. Many of these shed groups are experiencing rapid growth.

I recently announced a new round of funding that will provide \$885 000 in 2018 to men's shed groups so they can create positive, safe and inclusive spaces for men to work together and contribute to their local community.

Communities can apply for grants of up to \$60 000 for the construction of new men's sheds, and up to \$30 000 for the refurbishment or extension of existing sheds. Applications close on Friday 8 June 2018. The grant guidelines and application form are available on the Department of Health and Human Services website.

The government also provides funding of \$116 000 per annum to the Victorian Men's Shed Association for the provision of sector leadership and capacity building to Victorian men's sheds.

### **Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 7 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

On Friday 23 February 2018, a 70m length of pipe containing elements of non-airborne asbestos was found underneath the southbound lane of St Kilda Road during the drainage relocation works for the Metro Tunnel Project.

Asbestos was regularly used in construction until the late 1980s, so discoveries like this are not uncommon or unexpected.

Upon discovery, the material was immediately contained, identified and assessed by qualified asbestos management experts. These experts determined that the asbestos fibres found within the material were non-airborne and should be left undisturbed.

The Tunnel and Stations contractor, Cross Yarra Partnership, immediately implemented asbestos management measures and isolated the material. Work was stopped around the immediate area, and the material was disposed of in accordance with WorkSafe Victoria's Compliance Code for removing asbestos in workplaces.

During the initial inspection, experts confirmed the material posed no environmental or health risk to local residents, passers-by or the Metro Tunnel Project's workforce.

Air monitoring was undertaken by occupational hygienists, and a clearance certificate was issued on 7 March 2018.



At no point during the discovery, containment, assessment or removal of the material, has public health been compromised or put at risk.

The Melbourne Metro Rail Authority and its contractors, Cross Yarra Partnership are committed to upholding the highest safety standards to protect public and workforce health throughout the duration of the Metro Tunnel Project construction.

### **Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Dr Ratnam  
**Directed to:** Treasurer  
**Asked on:** 8 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The land in question is currently owned and maintained by VicTrack, which is the responsibility of the Hon. Jacinta Allan MP, Minister for Public Transport. I have therefore asked that she reply to this matter.

### **Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 8 March 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I am advised that electricity demand on Sunday 28 January 2018 was the highest ever recorded for a weekend. While there was adequate generation and electricity supply in Victoria, heat related stress on distribution assets, which predominantly involved fuse operations, coupled with extremely high electricity demand resulted in a significant number of customers experiencing localised power outages at the distribution network level.

The government's expectation is that all Victorian consumers are provided with a secure and reliable supply of electricity and I have spoken with the heads of all five distributors to re-emphasise the government's expectation that Victorian consumers be provided with reliable power supply.