

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

27, 28 and 29 March 2018

(Extract from book 4)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

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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

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

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Mr K. EIDEH

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Mr L. B. O'SULLIVAN

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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 ¹	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	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ⁸	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel ³	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 ⁹	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona ¹⁰	Northern Metropolitan	RV
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Drum, Mr Damian Kevin ⁴	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
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Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ratnam, Dr Samantha Shantini ¹¹	Northern Metropolitan	Greens
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Gepp, Mr Mark ⁵	Northern Victoria	ALP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred ⁷	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph ⁶	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 ¹²	Western Metropolitan	Greens
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
			Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP

¹ Resigned 28 September 2017

² Appointed 15 April 2015

³ DLP until 26 June 2017

⁴ Resigned 27 May 2016

⁵ Appointed 7 June 2017

⁶ Resigned 6 April 2017

⁷ Resigned 9 February 2018

⁸ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁹ Appointed 12 October 2016

¹⁰ ASP until 16 January 2018

¹¹ Appointed 18 October 2017

¹² 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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WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 27 March 2018

Palliative care

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 10 August 2017

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Southern Metropolitan Region for his question.

The assertion that the Andrews Labor Government has cut palliative care funding is completely incorrect. The Labor Government invests around \$135 million per year on palliative care services, and has increased palliative care funding each year since coming into office.

In March 2017, we announced a further \$5 million equipment and infrastructure grant for community palliative care providers to assist them to deliver palliative care in people's homes. We also expanded the eligibility criteria for the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund to enable community palliative care providers to access this \$200 million program and improve home-based palliative care provision in rural and regional areas.

I am further pleased to advise that the Andrews Labor Government in late 2017 announced an investment of more than \$62 million in additional funding over the next five years to increase the options for people with a terminal illness to be cared for, and die, in their place of choice.

This includes \$19 million to be provided immediately this financial year. This will help provide more options for support and care, particularly for people living in regional Victoria.

This funding boost will provide:

- \$19.9 million to support home-based palliative care across regional and rural Victoria to provide care for an additional 1215 people and their families each year
- \$6.25 million to establish a 24-hour expert advice line to address variability of access to after-hours palliative care advice for clients, carers and generalist health services, and address gaps for people living in rural areas
- \$19.5 million to better respond to demand and patient complexity by providing additional palliative care physician or nurse practitioner positions in Regional Palliative Care Consultancy Services
- \$10 million in one off grants for end of life auxiliary support services to assist people, families and carer to manage the day to day activities associated with caring for someone with a terminal illness at home
- \$6.35 million from 2018-19 to support the families of people who have accessed Voluntary Assisted Dying.

The Labor Government has also commissioned an independent review of palliative care funding to address any inequities that exist with the current model. The review will consider how to improve sustainability for palliative care services and boost their capacity to deliver flexible patient-centred care

Neighbourhood houses

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 28 November 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises the important role that neighbourhood houses and men's sheds play in being places of inclusion for many people, as well as assisting in social cohesion, the provision of education and the opportunity to volunteer in local communities.

Since November 2014, the Andrews Government have provided \$3 million to build 44 new men's sheds and refurbish 26 men's sheds across Victoria.

In addition, \$210 000 was provided to the Victorian Men's Shed Association in May 2017 for a project to strengthen the ongoing governance and viability of men's sheds through enhanced sector leadership.

Through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program, the Andrews Labor Government provides recurrent funding of \$30.11 million per annum to support 375 neighbourhood houses across Victoria, 16 neighbourhood house networks and the peak body, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

This core investment enables a typical neighbourhood house to leverage more than five times the amount in funding and support from other sources such as local government, the Commonwealth Government, philanthropic organisations and local donations.

In addition, a further \$210 000 was provided to Neighbourhood Houses Victoria for a project to support sector governance and enhanced operational management. This has enabled Neighbourhood Houses Victoria to deliver more information and support to neighbourhood houses facing operational management and governance issues.

Our Government has provided more funding for the sector each year it has been in office. The funding to be provided in 2018-19 will be finalised through the budget process.

Social enterprise employment strategies

Raised with: Minister for Industry and Employment
Raised by: Ms Shing
Raised on: 7 February 2018

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Eastern Victoria for raising this matter, and for her ongoing advocacy for employment and investment outcomes in regional Victoria, including opportunities through the social enterprise sector.

The Victorian Government is committed to maximising meaningful long-term employment opportunities for the Victorian community, including local economies in transition such as Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley. This includes leveraging opportunities through the government's major projects and infrastructure spend, as well as supporting jobs through our employment and procurement policies.

Thanks to our \$10.8 million Victorian *Social Enterprise Strategy*, the Government is providing capacity building and skills development to Victoria's social enterprise sector and its workforce. This includes the development of the Victorian Social Enterprise Network to support leadership, peer learning and mentoring, as well as building business capacity and the overall sustainability of the sector. This will directly benefit vulnerable workers through the creation of more jobs, improved work conditions and better incomes.

The social enterprise sector contributes more than \$5.2 billion to the Victorian economy and generates around 60 000 jobs — including more than 12 000 jobs for Victorians with a disability, 4000 jobs for long-term unemployed people and 985 jobs for Indigenous Australians.

I note the Member's concerns regarding adequate safeguards around exploitation or underpayment of workers in the social enterprise sector. The Government recognises vulnerable workers — especially those engaged on a casual or part time basis or experiencing barriers to social or financial inclusion — can face additional challenges in the workplace.

Following the independent Victorian Inquiry into the Labour Hire Industry and Insecure Work, the government released a Supplier Code of Conduct which reflects our commitment to ethical, sustainable and socially responsible practices. It requires suppliers to meet minimum ethical standards in the areas of integrity, ethics and conduct.

The Government is also working on broader procurement reform that will ensure that disadvantaged Victorians fully benefit from our record infrastructure spend. The Supplier Code of Conduct will be incorporated into this framework to ensure a range of protective measures and safeguards for vulnerable groups working in the social enterprise sector.

We are strongly committed to not only driving inclusive employment participation but protecting the most vulnerable workers in the Victorian economy.

Assistance dogs

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Raised on: 7 February 2018

REPLY:

Dementia is an important issue and it impacts over 104 000 Victorians and their families each year. Dementia is complex with varied types of dementia affecting individuals differently. Accordingly some people benefit from having an assistance dog but this is not the case for all those affected by dementia.

The Assistance Dogs Australia fund raises \$40 000 to train an assistance dog, and support its placement for 10 years. People who receive an assistance dog pay on average \$2000 a year for bedding, food, veterinary bills and toys for the dog.

Currently there is limited research on the value of assistance dogs to people with dementia. To address this, Assistance Dogs Australia, Melbourne University and Dementia Australia are conducting a trial of assistance dogs placed with people with younger onset dementia in Victoria. This research will be important to further understand the benefits of assistance dogs for people with dementia and their carers.

Like you, I am very keen to ensure people with dementia and their carers are supported. To this end, the Andrews Labor Government funds a range of organisations such as Dementia Australia (Victoria), Cognitive Dementia and Memory Services clinics and service providers of the Support for Carers Program for varied services and supports for Victorians with dementia and their carers.

Knox early childhood education

Raised with: Minister for Early Childhood Education
Raised by: Mr Leane
Raised on: 7 February 2018

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering a record \$76.4 million to build, expand and improve early-years infrastructure across Victoria, including \$10 million targeting growth areas. This investment in early-years infrastructure ensures local families can continue to access great local kindergartens.

I was pleased to meet recently with Knox City Council recently to discuss a range of issues including ways in which they could better enhance their early years services. Knox City Council manages one of the largest early years systems in Melbourne. They offer high-quality kindergarten programs and have a strong history of strong engagement with the Department of Education and Training in the development and implementation of reforms.

In the most recent 2017-18 Children's Facilities Capital Program Major Grants round, Knox City Council received \$1.6 million to build a new Integrated Children's Centre in Bayswater.

The centre will provide single-entry integrated services for children and families as well as improve the community's access to an affordable long day care service. The facility will provide early-years and family support services to support a range of educational and family needs. This early-years hub will include a natural outdoor play space, a maternal and child health service, an allied health consultation suite and a community/playgroup room. I was very pleased to attend the recent turning of the sod for this important project.

I thank the Member for his strong advocacy for this project and interest in making sure early years services in the Eastern Region of Victoria continue to be well supported by Government.

Eastern Victoria Region public transport

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 7 February 2018

REPLY:

I understand that my office is liaising with the Member for Eastern Victoria about details for this meeting.

South Shepparton Community Centre

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 8 February 2018

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises the important role facilities like neighbourhood houses play in being places of inclusion for many people, as well as assisting in social cohesion, the provision of education and the opportunity to volunteer in local communities.

Through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program, the Andrews Labor Government provides funding of over \$30.11 million per annum to support 375 neighbourhood houses, 16 neighbourhood house networks and the peak body, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

Last year, the Andrews Labor Government increased its support to the sector by providing a further \$210 000 to Neighbourhood Houses Victoria to deliver more information and support to neighbourhood houses to enhance operational management and governance where required.

I appreciate the valuable work of South Shepparton Community Centre and other neighbourhood houses in the Greater Shepparton region undertake in the local community. I note that the funding hours provided to South Shepparton Community Centre have remained unchanged through successive governments. Funding to be provided in 2018-19 will be finalised through the budget process.

While the Andrews Labor Government is continuing to back neighbourhood houses, the Federal Liberal Government have slashed the national occasional childcare program and put funding at risk.

This devastating cut will potentially leave more than 50 neighbourhood houses that deliver the occasional care program across Victoria stripped of more than \$800 000 funding from July 1 this year.

This includes cutting the Morrell Street Occasional Care program at Mooroopna Education & Activity Centre which will be \$15 900 worse off per year as well as the Bridie Knight Child Care program at Numurkah Community Learning Centre which will lose \$13 250 per year due to the Federal Liberals cuts — all while the Victorian Coalition simply stands by and watches.

The member would be familiar with the impact callous cuts like these can have on local communities particularly in regional and rural areas when as a Minister in the former Liberal government in 2011, she cut the popular Take a Break Occasional Care program which led to many services ceasing to operate, others increasing fees or offering reduced program hours.

I am advised that South Shepparton Community Centre is presently located in a community facility owned and managed by the Director of Housing. A recent property condition report found the building does not meet accessibility requirements. The Department of Health and Human Services is actively working with the Centre to find a more suitable premises and the centre will continue to operate from its current location while the search for an alternative site takes place.

Neighbourhood houses

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 20 February 2018

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises the important role that neighbourhood houses play in being places of inclusion for many people, as well as assisting in social cohesion, the provision of education and the opportunity to volunteer in local communities.

The Andrews Government continues to support Victoria's neighbourhood houses through recurrent funding of \$30.11 million per annum to support 375 neighbourhood houses across Victoria, 16 neighbourhood house networks and the peak body, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

This core investment enables a typical neighbourhood house to leverage more than five times the amount in funding and support from other sources such as local government, the Commonwealth Government, philanthropic organisations and local donations.

In addition, a further \$210 000 was provided to Neighbourhood Houses Victoria for a project to support sector governance and enhanced operational management. This has enabled Neighbourhood Houses Victoria to deliver more information and support to neighbourhood houses facing operational management and governance issues.

This is in stark contrast to the Turnbull Liberal Government who are slashing the occasional childcare program which will potentially leave more than 50 neighbourhood houses stripped of funding from July 1 this year.

Neighbourhood houses in the member's Southern Metropolitan Region electorate stand to collectively lose almost \$50 000 per year due to the Federal Liberals cuts. This includes the Prahran Community Learning Centre, the Hawthorn Community House and the Kew Neighbourhood Learning Centre, all of which will each be \$15 900 worse off per year — all while the member and the Victorian Coalition simply stands by and watches.

Our Government has provided more funding for the sector each year it has been in office. The funding to be provided in 2018-19 will be finalised through the budget process.

Recycling industry

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 21 February 2018

REPLY:

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.

Midland Highway upgrade

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 21 February 2018

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Western Victoria for his question regarding the development of a business case for the upgrade of the Midland Highway, between Geelong and Bannockburn.

The Midland Highway is the primary link between our State's two largest regional cities in Geelong and Ballarat; a busy freight corridor for a range of agricultural industries and an increasing commuter corridor for people travelling to school and work in Geelong, from the growing development of Bannockburn.

The planning underway to upgrade the Midland Highway is vital for these communities and the regional economy, which is why we have partnered with the Australian Government to invest \$4 million in getting the planning right.

I am advised that VicRoads is working very closely with the Batesford community on this matter.

I am advised VicRoads has submitted four options for upgrade of the Midland Highway to the community so far, one being for duplication and three being for bypass options.

In March last year, VicRoads consulted with the community on the upgrade of the Midland Highway by proposing a first option of duplication.

In response to community feedback, VicRoads then developed three bypass options in September.

I am advised that in the early months of this year, VicRoads met on a weekly basis with the Batesford Highway Action Group and developed a detailed understanding of their proposal and concerns.

As a result, in January VicRoads commissioned WSP to undertake a detailed analysis of the Batesford Highway Action Group's suggested option of a northern bypass. This analysis is expected by the end of March and its findings will be discussed in full with the group.

Water policy

Raised with: Minister for Water
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 21 February 2018

REPLY:

The Victorian government is already undertaking a delivery share review as outlined in Water for Victoria. We expect the review to be completed mid-year.

I recently announced findings from the work of a Strategic Advisory Panel I appointed to support Goulburn Murray Water. This included necessary actions for improving GMW delivery and securing the long-term prosperity of the region. The GMW Board and I have accepted all 30 recommendations of this review to ensure GMW can continue to deliver reliable and affordable prices for its customers — in the short, medium and long term — as well as to develop more transparent reporting to better explain costs to customers.

The recommendations, which will be implemented by 2020, include:

- Creating a simplified business structure for better community transparency
- A transformation panel will be appointed to drive the changes necessary
- Reducing operating and capital costs to ensure prices remain affordable
- Better managing and utilising GMW assets into the future and delivery of capital projects
- A new customer engagement program to improve customer and stakeholder trust, and performance management
- Developing a more transparent reporting framework to explain costs, financial performance and project updates to customers and the Board.

The Victorian government remains committed to ensuring a secure and prosperous future for our irrigators.

St Kilda Road

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 21 February 2018

REPLY:

It is acknowledged that the Member for Southern Metropolitan has been consistent in her opposition to the construction of the Metro Tunnel. Her long term strong advocacy against the project has helped ensure that the Victorian community is aware that the Liberal Party will do everything they can to try and prevent this project proceeding.

The Commonwealth Environment Minister, Josh Frydenberg, has provided every approval required of him for this project to proceed, including in relation to the removal of the trees required to deliver this project.

The Commonwealth Environment Minister has himself admitted that his Government has approved the removal of all the trees that are required.

The Andrews Labor Government recognises the historical and cultural importance of the St Kilda Road Boulevard. It was, in fact, the Victorian Government that applied for St Kilda Road to be listed on the Victorian Heritage Register so that there would be clear management measures in place for any Metro Tunnel works undertaken along St Kilda Road.

All efforts are being made to minimise the impacts to the boulevard by the construction of the Metro Tunnel. Unfortunately, with a project of this scale and complexity there will be a range of unavoidable impacts at surface level. The Melbourne Metro Rail Authority is doing everything it can to reduce the number of trees required for the Metro Tunnel Project.

The impact on trees was carefully assessed through the Environmental Effects Statement process. While many Victorians made a submission to this process, the Member for Southern Metropolitan and the Liberal Opposition decided to not make a submission.

The Liberal Opposition has announced that they will renegotiate the project's contract to redesign ANZAC station. This will delay the project by two years, cost billions of dollars and compromise the operation of the station. The Liberals' decision to delay the project will delay the running of more trains more often right across our public transport network.

Caulfield–Dandenong line elevated rail

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 21 February 2018

REPLY:

As requested by the Member for Southern Metropolitan, as a matter of urgency I asked the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) to investigate his claim that he had "very solid reports" that a large piece of sheet metal has fallen on to a house in Ella Street Murrumbena.

I can confirm that this investigation has verified that the Member for Southern Metropolitan is incorrect.

It is possible that his claim was actually in relation to a piece of plastic, measuring 840mm by 600mm, that was identified resting on the roof of a resident's property.

If the Member for Southern Metropolitan has any evidence at all to back up his claim that a large sheet of metal fell on a house he is welcome to provide it.

North-east rail line

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Symes

Raised on: 22 February 2018

REPLY:

I was happy to join the Member for Northern Victoria at Benalla on 5 March to call on the Federal Government to make a commitment to bring the North East rail line up to at least class 2 track to allow faster, modern trains to run.

I am pleased to advise that Victoria has been successful in securing extra funding for the North East line as part of the Regional Rail Revival package, so that we can now get on with the job of upgrading every regional rail line across Victoria. As the Member for Northern Victoria is aware, as part of the Regional Rail Revival program, a joint Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government steering committee was established to look at the work needed to upgrade the North East line. The steering committee resolved the initial \$100 million committed by the Federal Government was not enough to upgrade the track to run new modern trains.

I am very pleased to advise that, in addition to the \$1.57 billion Regional Rail Revival package that has already been announced, the Commonwealth will increase its contribution by \$135 million to upgrade the North East rail line to a class 2 standard to give communities along the North East line the services they expect and deserve. The Andrews Labor Government has committed to purchasing new trains for the corridor once works on the track are complete.

The Andrews Labor Government has also signed a Bilateral Agreement in relation to Inland Rail, making Victoria the first state to sign up to the Inland Rail project. This agreement includes a commitment to negotiate a new long term lease with the Australian Rail Track Corporation and to support the extension of the corridor to accommodate any changes to the North East rail Line alignment required to support the delivery of Inland Rail.

On completion, the Inland Rail Project will create a direct rail freight connection between Melbourne and Brisbane capable of moving double stacked freight containers. Inland Rail will deliver almost \$7 billion in additional Gross State Product through construction and in the first 50 years of operation.

I thank the Member for her ongoing advocacy and for fighting so tirelessly for this additional investment in the track, which we know is so desperately needed in order to run faster, more modern trains.

Belgrave–Monbulk bus service

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 22 February 2018

REPLY:

At the commencement of the 2018 school year, it quickly became evident that the change to this service significantly impacted students within this area.

As a result, as of 29 January 2018, the 3.14pm service departing Belgrave has been re-established.

Duck hunting season

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 22 February 2018

REPLY:

Duck hunting is a legitimate activity that is fully supported by our government.

The vast majority of hunters do the right thing, but last year there was a small group of hunters whose actions were completely unacceptable: a number of people shot early (out of season), shot protected species, and failed to retrieve their birds.

Two new regulations have been introduced that formalise what is standard practice for responsible hunters. Hunters are now required to make all reasonable efforts to immediately recover a downed game bird and to recover at least both breasts of the game bird they have harvested.

The expectation that reasonable effort is made to immediately recover a downed game bird is not new. It has been a requirement under section three of the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals in Hunting (revision no. 1) — made under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 — since 2005.

Immediate recovery is also best practice under the Shotgun Education Program, which is delivered in partnership with the Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (SSAA Victoria) and Field and Game Australia (FGA).

Under the new regulations, if a pair of birds present, they can both be taken (as long as one of the birds has not been downed). However, to minimise the possibility of wounding, the Game Management Authority (GMA) recommends that a hunter focuses on one bird only. If one bird is struck, the second shot is recommended to be reserved to immediately dispatch the bird, if wounded.

Other changes to the season include delaying the hunting start times over the opening weekend, as part of a two year trial recommended by the GMA. This will provide improved light conditions for hunters to positively identify birds, and assist in detection of offences.

Morwell power station site

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 6 March 2018

REPLY:

On 12 February 2018, the Heritage Council of Victoria — an independent statutory body established under the Heritage Act 2017 — included the Morwell Power Station and Briquette Factories on the Victorian Heritage Register. Unfortunately, I am unable to overturn this decision.

I am advised by my department that the inclusion of the Morwell Power Station and Briquette Factories in the Victorian Heritage Register does not prohibit its future development or demolition.

Of a similar note, in 1994 the old Yallourn Power Stations were included in the Victorian Heritage Register. Shortly after registration, a heritage permit was issued by Heritage Victoria for their demolition, subject to documentation and recording. Issues such as the presence of asbestos and other contamination, the practicalities of conserving the power stations, and the reasonable or economic use of the redundant power stations, were all factors that were considered in allowing the permit to demolish the buildings.

It is understood that Energy Brix Australia Corporation intend to make a permit application to Heritage Victoria for demolition of the Morwell Power Station. Once this permit application is received, it will be advertised and open to public submissions.

I am assured by Heritage Victoria that the matter of asbestos contamination will be a key consideration in the determination of the permit application.

VicTrack Glenroy land

Raised with: Treasurer
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 8 March 2018

REPLY:

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

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 28 March 2018

Ballarat railway station precinct

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 20 February 2018

REPLY:

The Ballarat Station Precinct Redevelopment project will deliver a new, more accessible and user-friendly bus interchange as well as extra Disability Discrimination Act compliant car spaces to make it simpler for people with a disability to park and ride.

The new commuter car park at the Ballarat Station precinct will provide 405 spaces for public transport users. This will include designated car spaces for people with a disability. The Disability Discrimination Act compliant car parks on the south side of the station will also be retained.

People with disabilities (or prams) will continue to access between platforms by crossing the rail tracks at the pedestrian crossing at Lydiard Street.

Transport for Victoria will continue to investigate improvements to accessibility as part of ongoing station upgrade programs.

Gippsland rail services

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Shing
Raised on: 21 February 2018

REPLY:

I'm pleased to confirm that Victoria has now received approval for the funding for the Regional Rail Revival program from the Federal Government to be released, so we can get on with the job of upgrading track, stations and signalling including on the Gippsland Line.

I would like to thank the Member for her ongoing advocacy on behalf of the Gippsland community for better public transport.

The Member for Eastern Victoria and I recently announced that, over the coming months, crews will drill over 50 boreholes and 120 test pits near the bridge and in various locations along the Gippsland line, to better understand ground conditions and soil quality.

The \$530 million Gippsland Line Upgrade works will include:

- second platforms at Bunyip, Longwarry, Morwell and Traralgon stations
- track duplication between Bunyip and Longwarry, and sections near Moe, Morwell and Traralgon
- level crossing upgrades along the line
- signalling upgrades at Traralgon
- relocation of Traralgon stabling facilities

- extending the crossing loop at Morwell
- replacing the Avon River bridge in Stratford.

Geotechnical investigations are underway to inform design and planning ahead of major work.

The Gippsland Line Upgrade will create more than 400 jobs and supplier opportunities and will establish a project office in the Latrobe Valley. This will boost the economy and create local job opportunities. Further information about the site office will be made available following the appointment of a contractor.

Work during the intensive project planning and site investigation phase will provide opportunities for local contractors and increase demand for local hospitality and accommodation businesses.

The project will develop industry skills and ensure local content through the Victorian Government's Local Jobs First — Victorian Industry Public Participation (VIPP) policy.

At least 10 per cent of the program's total work will be completed by apprentices, trainees or engineering cadets as part of the Major Project Skills Guarantee.

Registrations of Interest to be involved in delivering works for all Regional Rail Revival projects opened in December 2017, and we encourage potential contractors to register.

Goulburn-Murray irrigation district

Raised with: Minister for Water

Raised by: Mr Gepp

Raised on: 8 March 2018

REPLY:

Victoria has been implementing the Murray Darling Basin Plan as required since 2012 and we are committed to the plan and its intended outcomes for the environment.

I share your concerns that the decision to disallow the Northern Basin Review is an attempt to re prosecute a plan we all signed up to. It brings into question the future of the 605 gegalitre (GL) SDL adjustment which is currently due to be considered by the Senate in May 2018.

The 605 GL worth of offset projects are crucial in that they help Victoria reach its 1075 GL recovery target under the basin plan. The projects will also protect important wetlands for which ecological objectives cannot be achieved with water recovery alone.

If the 605 GL is disallowed, the following is at risk:

- \$320 million of investment in regional Victorian communities, jobs and local investment.
- nine environmental works projects which will deliver environmental benefits
- achieving the 2750 GL water recovery target.

Victorian communities may also face the potential of further water buybacks of over 250 GL and uncertainty, which is unacceptable to the Victorian Government. Any further water recovery from productive agriculture would be a disaster to regional communities as it would reduce the water available to grow jobs and industry.

I recently discussed these concerns with the Hon David Littleproud MP, the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources.

I will continue to put the interests of the Victorian community and the environment first.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 29 March 2018

Southern Metropolitan Region CCTV cameras

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 15 December 2017

REPLY:

Victoria Police has initiated Operation Sandsafe which is the standing response to these local issues in St Kilda. Operations Response Unit commitments have been obtained to support local deployments on days when the temperature is likely to result in large crowds.

The Port Phillip Local Area Commander (LAC) is engaged with the St Kilda community and met with foreshore operators, the City of Port Phillip CEO and the Hon. Martin Foley, Member for Albert Park, in December 2017 to form a coordinated response.

On 5 February 2018, Mr Foley announced a grant of up to \$220 000 to the City of Port Phillip as part of this coordinated response. Of these funds, \$100 000 will support traffic treatment measures to address hooning behaviour in the Pier Road area and to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to the St Kilda foreshore. A further \$120 000 has been allocated to support the planning and installation of CCTV cameras, subject to final designs and council support.

This approach builds on the Government's investment in 2015 of almost \$250 000 through the Public Safety Infrastructure Fund to Council to install CCTV cameras in Fitzroy Street. While these cameras are part of a two-year trial, it is clear they have supported police operations and led to the successful identification and prosecution of offenders.

On 7 February 2018 Victoria Police also joined Mr Foley, St Kilda Foreshore Traders and other concerned traders and residents to encourage Council to extend the alcohol ban within the municipality. City of Port Phillip has now agreed to extend the alcohol ban until April 2018.

Minister for Families and Children comments

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 8 February 2018

REPLY:

The President has previously ruled that this matter has been discharged and I regard it as having been concluded.

Communities that Care

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr Melhem
Raised on: 20 February 2018

REPLY:

I thank Mr Melham for his advocacy for community safety in Melbourne's West. The Andrews Labor Government's 2016-17 State Budget included \$19.4 million of new funding to continue and expand the Community Crime Prevention Program. This included almost \$1 million to expand the Communities That Care initiative across Victoria.

The available funding for Communities That Care includes support for three new sites which are now underway. I am proud to announce that one of the new sites is the Melbourne western suburb of Hobsons Bay. This program is now well underway with the establishment of a community board and the recruitment process underway for a coordinator.

Communities That Care is an evidence-based process aimed at building capacity within communities to improve the healthy development of children and young people.

Through this funding, the Government is supporting local community leaders to work together and build healthy behaviour and social commitment among children and young people.

Sunbury Road duplication

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 6 March 2018

REPLY:

The recently announced safety improvements for Sunbury Road, between Tullamarine Freeway and Oaklands Road, are being undertaken as part of Towards Zero. The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$1.1 billion 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, of which seven people were seriously injured and one person tragically lost their life. I am advised that VicRoads has undertaken other safety improvement projects along various sections of Sunbury Road in recent years.

The safety improvements include new flexible safety barriers along the centre median strip and the eastern side of the road heading 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 a priority and they do not preclude further works to improve the capacity of Sunbury Road in the future.

The capacity of Sunbury Road and the population growth in the north and west of Melbourne is 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 MP.

Fussell–Victoria streets, Ballarat East

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 6 March 2018

REPLY:

VicRoads completed works in mid 2017 at the intersection of Victoria Street and Fussell Street following this Labor Government's allocation of \$320 000 to address a crash history at the site that included eight injury crashes, three of which resulted in serious injuries.

As part of the changes, VicRoads upgraded the traffic lights to enable the site to be monitored and altered remotely, as well as adapt to varying changes in traffic movements throughout the day such as at busy school times. As is the case with this site, faults do occasionally occur with traffic lights and the problem was able to be quickly rectified.

Horse-drawn vehicle safety

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Pennicuik
Raised on: 8 March 2018

REPLY:

Horse-drawn vehicles are still considered to be vehicles under the Road Safety Act 1986, and this remains consistent with the Australian Roads Rules. There are currently no plans to amend the legislation to address a local issue.

It is understood that horse-drawn carriages are often illegally parked in the Melbourne CBD and Schedule 11, clause 4, of the Local Government 1989 Act, confers power to a council to move or impound any vehicle that is causing an unlawful obstruction, or that is unlawfully parked. This is separate to the power in Schedule 11, clause 3, to remove abandoned vehicles.

VicRoads has offered to meet with the City of Melbourne to discuss the issues of horse-drawn vehicles within the council area and to look at possible options to address any safety concerns related to this local government issue.