

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

6, 7 and 8 February 2018

(Extract from book 1)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

The ministry

(from 16 October 2017)

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer and Minister for Resources	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Industry and Employment	The Hon. B. A. Carroll, MP
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Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development	The Hon. L. D' Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
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Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
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Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation, and Minister for Local Government	The Hon. M. Kairouz, MP
Minister for Families and Children, Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Police and Minister for Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
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 — Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O’Sullivan, Ms Pulford, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips and Ms Wooldridge.

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

Legislative Council standing committees

Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure — Mr Bourman, 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, #Ms Hartland, Mr Melhem, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, Ms Shing, #Ms Symes and Mr Young.

Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues — #Ms Crozier, #Mr Elasmarr, Ms Fitzherbert, #Ms Hartland, 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 Hartland, 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 Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson.

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

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Council*): Mr 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

President:

The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President:

Mr K. EIDEH

Acting Presidents:

Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmar, Mr Melhem, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mr Purcell, Mr Ramsay

Leader of the Government:

The Hon. G. JENNINGS

Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

Leader of The Nationals:

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 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 ⁷	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 ⁸	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona ⁹	Northern Metropolitan	RV
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
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
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	VILJ
Elasmar, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ratnam, Dr Samantha Shantini ¹⁰	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	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	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP	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 25 February 2015

⁸ Appointed 12 October 2016

⁹ ASP until 16 January 2018

¹⁰ Appointed 18 October 2017

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, 6 February 2018

Ararat Rural City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 7 June 2017

REPLY:

As the Member has noted, the draft budget and rating strategy as proposed by Ararat Rural City Council would have resulted in a substantial change to the rates paid by farmers in the Ararat municipality.

While councils are entitled to make their own decisions on differential rates, changes as potentially extreme as those proposed deserve careful consideration.

As a result, a Commission of Inquiry was appointed to consider the council's governance processes in the development of its budget, including its consultative processes and the capacity of the council's administration to deliver good governance for the council and the community.

The Commission delivered its report on 1 August 2017 and the report was tabled in Parliament on 9 August 2017.

The Commission made numerous findings in relation to the council's budget and rating strategy, community engagement procedures, financial stability and ability to provide good governance.

As a result of these findings and recommendations, my predecessor the Hon Natalie Hutchins appointed Ms Janet Dore as a municipal monitor to the council for two years. It was also recommended to the council that it adopt a number of measures aimed at addressing the report's findings, including the adoption of the 2016 rating strategy instead of the proposed draft 2017 strategy.

The report's findings on the termination of the Chief Executive Officer were referred to the Chief Municipal Inspector and the Commission's findings in relation to the councillor code of conduct to the Mayor of the council.

On 5 September 2017 the Mayor of Ararat Cr Paul Hooper wrote to then Minister Hutchins to advise that Council had acted immediately to address the issues raised including adoption of the 2016 Rating Strategy. Cr Hooper also advised that a 'Response to Recommendations Work Plan/ Action Plan' was adopted by Council and will be the subject of monthly updates via the Council's meeting agenda.

On 26 September 2017, the Council addressed another of the Minister's recommendations by appointing an independent external candidate, Mr Allan Bawden to the role of Chief Executive Officer on a 12-month fixed term contract from 2 October 2017 until 30 September 2018.

Gambling advertising

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 8 June 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Government is concerned about the potential for normalisation of gambling as part of sports, especially amongst young people. This is why we are taking decisive action and will ban static betting advertising within 150 metres of schools, on public transport infrastructure and on public roads and road infrastructure.

Very importantly, our Government's support to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation has allowed the Foundation to run many campaigns and initiatives to counter the growing culture of sports betting advertising.

I have also advocated to the Commonwealth Government to crackdown on the alarming levels of broadcast betting advertising, given that this falls under their jurisdiction. Whilst I welcome their moves to restrict betting advertising during live sports broadcasts, their proposed 8.30pm limit needs to extend to include entire matches, particularly given that the broadcast of many of the highest rating televised sports events lasts well beyond 8.30pm.

The prohibition on betting advertising at sporting venues requires a national approach given the interstate nature of competitions and sporting teams that would be affected.

Goulburn Valley Health

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 21 June 2017

REPLY:

The \$168.5 million redevelopment of the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health is entering an exciting phase, with planning almost complete and a builder soon to be engaged to commence construction works.

The redevelopment will provide the community of Shepparton and surrounding districts with a modern, state of the art facility which will ensure Goulburn Valley Health is able to treat more patients with reduced wait times.

This is a redevelopment only made possible because of the investment and support of the Andrews Labor Government — both of which were missing during the four years of the previous Liberal Government. Only this Government is prepared to make the necessary investments to stump up the cash, particularly in regional Victoria, to ensure that all Victorians have access to the health care that they deserve.

The design of the significantly expanded facility is being undertaken with an extensive consultation process through the Community Advisory Group that I established to ensure community perspectives are front and centre of the redevelopment.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to ensuring children receive the best care, close to home. The redevelopment will significantly improve access to health care for children.

I am pleased to draw the Member's attention to the creation of a new women's and children's area in the redevelopment. This area brings currently disjointed services together on the site and will provide a significant improvement to patient flows. The area includes birthing, maternity, special care nursery and paediatrics, all on one floor and directly adjoining each other. The provision of a dedicated paediatric space in the emergency department and dedicated paediatric theatre recovery area also provides further capacity for the treatment of children.

The increased capacity of the special care nursery will also allow for better treatment of neonates that are currently being accommodated in the paediatric ward, further reducing pressure on paediatric beds.

I confirm that there will be at least 12 dedicated paediatric beds in addition to the dedicated space in the expanded emergency department for paediatric treatment.

I thank you for your interest in this major redevelopment and look forward to the commencement of construction works later this year.

Voluntary assisted dying

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 23 June 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Parliament's Legal and Social Issues Committee's Inquiry into End of Life Choices conducted extensive consultations with the community in relation to opinions for or against voluntary assisted dying.

The framework recommended by the Parliamentary Committee was intended to allow people who are suffering, have an incurable illness and are at the end of life to request voluntary assisted dying in limited circumstances. The framework set out by the Parliamentary Committee provided a compassionate option for people who are already dying to choose the manner of their death.

I established a Ministerial Advisory Panel, comprised of medical, nursing, legal, consumer and palliative care experts to provide advice on the detail of the legislation. The Panel did not repeat the excellent work of the Parliamentary Committee. It focused on refining the Parliamentary Committee's framework to provide recommendations for a safe and compassionate legislative framework.

The Panel conducted an extensive consultation in both metropolitan and regional Victoria. The feedback from the consultation process was compiled in the Panel's interim report, which is publicly available on the Department of Health and Human Services' website, as is the Panel's final report.

I introduced the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill to the Victorian Parliament on 20 September 2017. The Bill was passed on 29 November 2017. The legislation will come into effect in June 2019 following an 18-month implementation period.

Prior to this, in November 2016 the Victorian Parliament enshrined advance care directives into legislation, which will make it easier for Victorians to make decisions about the sort of healthcare they want and don't want, and have those wishes respected as they near the end of their lives. The Medical Treatment Planning and Decisions Act 2016 will come into effect on 12 March 2018.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to improving end of life care. We have committed \$13.4 million in additional funding over the last two years to support implementation of Victoria's end of life and palliative care framework and to improve access to home-based palliative care. On 14 November 2017, we announced an additional investment of \$62 million over the next five years to increase options for people with a life-limiting illness to be cared for, and die in their place of choice. This commitment includes an additional \$19 million to be provided in this financial year specifically targeted at supporting rural and regional Victorians. Included in this funding package is a (one-off) \$10 million grant for non-government organisations to support more Victorians with a life-limiting illness to be cared for at home as their life draws to an end.

As part of its commitment to strengthening home-based palliative care, the Andrews Labor Government provided a new \$5 million fund for community palliative care agencies who are supporting Victorians with life-limiting illnesses to be cared for, and if it is their wish, to die at home. The fund has provided grants for equipment and infrastructure that supports direct care in people's homes.

The Andrews Labor Government has also established the \$200 million Regional Health Infrastructure Fund to provide upgrades for rural and regional hospitals to ensure Victorians, regardless of where they live, have access to quality healthcare when they need it, improving: safety and quality of services; service capacity; models of care; patient and staff amenity; and service efficiency. The fund's eligibility criteria were extended to include community palliative care services to support people in rural and regional Victoria to access quality palliative care closer to home.

Greater Geelong City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 8 August 2017

REPLY:

As the Commission of Inquiry into Greater Geelong City Council's report highlighted, the council's own independent Workplace Culture Review conducted in 2015 was seminal in bringing to light the nature and impacts of bullying and harassment that had been occurring at the council over a prolonged period.

The three Administrators who have governed Greater Geelong since April 2016 following the dismissal of the councillors, have taken comprehensive steps in creating a sound governance framework to mitigate the potential for a return to the poor culture that has pervaded the organisation. This includes embedding ongoing governance training and professional development for councillors and staff.

The Workplace Culture Review, Commission of Inquiry and the Administrators have all set out processes to implement lasting organisational change for the future benefit of the Geelong community, rather than dwell on the past actions of individuals. The Government supports this approach and is confident that the processes already put in place, together with the appointment of monitors by the then Minister for Local Government the Hon Natalie Hutchins MP to assist the newly elected council in enshrining good governance practices, will give the council the best chance of delivering services to the standards the community expects.

The two monitors will begin when the new council meets for the first time after the October 2017 election and be in place until the council's general election in 2020. They will monitor the council as it continues to implement the findings of the Commission of Inquiry and the council's long term plan.

Western Metropolitan Region ambulance services

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Mr Melhem
Raised on: 22 August 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government announced last November the biggest ever investment in ambulance services, with a \$500 million plan to improve ambulance response times. This plan includes the establishment of six new ambulance super response centres, housing 210 new FTE paramedics and 41 additional vehicles, to meet increasing demand across metropolitan Melbourne and, in particular, the growing outer suburbs.

In the Western Metropolitan Region, super response centres will be located in Laverton North in the west and in Westmeadows in the north west.

Super response centres will have resources that are flexible in number and may be relocated to another branch during shifts to provide optimum coverage. There will be a variety of rosters, including day shifts, afternoon shifts and night shifts, as well as the flexibility to operate extra shifts.

Ambulance Victoria has secured the leases for the super response centres and are nearing completion in readiness for interim deployment of paramedics from Laverton North and Westmeadows.

These new super response centres will provide better, faster responses and make sure our ambulances are responding to the right patient, at the right time, with the right care.

City of Wyndham councillor

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 22 August 2017

REPLY:

As you have raised, Cr Khan has the right to a presumption of innocence in relation to any charges made under the Local Government Act 1989 and it would be inappropriate for me to comment on a matter which is currently before the courts.

As the charges are not an application for a finding of serious misconduct or gross misconduct, my power to recommend to the Governor in Council that a councillor be ordered to stand down would not appear to be relevant.

I would also note that the Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate has stated that the charges are not disqualifying offences under the Local Government Act 1989.

The Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate is responsible for investigating and prosecuting alleged breaches of the Act and any questions in this regard should be directed to the Inspectorate.

Local government

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

Local councils are democratically elected bodies who are tasked with providing leadership for the good governance of their municipal districts and local communities. They must among other things plan for and provide services and facilities and advocate proposals which are in the best interest of their residents and ratepayers.

The Government expects and encourages all Members of Parliament to raise with their local council matters of concern to their electorates' constituents. It is also incumbent on councils to transparently explain their actions and decisions in relation to those matters.

Allegations of bullying and intimidation made by the Member for Western Victoria are baseless and not backed up by evidence. His comment that the Government is 'systematically removing democratically elected councils around the State' is also incorrect. Dismissal of the councillors of a council is a serious matter and can only occur by an Act of Parliament.

South Yarra Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is conscious that enrolment growth pressures are being felt in a number of communities, including in the inner city. The Government's Inner City Schools Package will see significant investment in this area including:

- \$44 million to construct the new South Melbourne Primary School — Ferrars Street (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2018

- \$31 million to construct the new South Melbourne Park Primary School (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2019
- \$43 million to construct the new Richmond High School (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2018
- \$42 million for the new Prahran High School (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2019
- \$5 million to deliver additional classroom spaces at Albert Park College
- \$1 million to masterplan the future Docklands Primary School
- identification of sites for a primary school and secondary school at Fishermans Bend
- identification of a site for a new primary school at North Melbourne.

These investments will assist to accommodate the growing demand for education places in the inner city.

I am advised in response to the enrolment growth at South Yarra Primary School in 2017 the Department of Education and Training provided a new, triple storey relocatable building to increase capacity at the school. The Department is working closely with South Yarra Primary School to confirm enrolments for 2018, which can be accommodated within the existing facilities at the school, while maintaining availability of the library, art and multi-purpose rooms (where the school currently offers music and after-school care).

South Melbourne Primary School — Ferrars Street (interim name) will open in 2018 and South Melbourne Park Primary School (interim name) will open in 2019. These two new schools will accommodate local enrolments and local enrolment boundaries will be progressively updated as these new schools open. The enrolment boundary for South Melbourne Primary School — Ferrars Street (interim name) in 2018 is available on the Victorian School Building Authority website: www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au (search: 'South Melbourne').

The Department will continue to work directly with the South Yarra Primary School Principal to address accommodation needs in 2018 and beyond.

Hume City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

Thank you for your question regarding parking infringements.

Parliament has conferred on councils responsibility for various matters, including the power to fix and enforce parking restrictions in public areas. I confirm that disputes about parking fines are matters to be resolved between the individual and the council.

I note your constituent has appealed the parking infringement, and that council has rejected your constituent's appeal. The next avenue of appeal is the Magistrate's Court for a hearing. If your constituent wishes to dispute the infringement before a Magistrate they must notify the council in writing.

If your constituent believes that a council officer has acted or decided inappropriately in the issuing of the infringement notice, it is also open to them to raise this matter with the Victoria Ombudsman.

While the Ombudsman can review the conduct of council officers, it is not within their purview to review the infringement notice itself.

Hospital funding

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Ms Wooldridge
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government has invested a record \$18.12 billion across the health system in 2017-18 so that more Victorian patients can get the highest quality care and treatment they need sooner.

Victorian health services alone received \$10.6 billion, which is \$665.84 million — or 6.7 per cent more — than was provided in the previous financial year.

This is \$1.76 billion more than hospitals received under the former Liberal Government in their last budget in 2014-15.

Additionally, on 2 October 2017, the Andrews Labor Government committed a funding boost of \$115 million to give Victoria's health services relief from a massive surge in demand in emergency department presentations following one of Victoria's worst-ever flu seasons. This increase in funding was also to assist hospitals with increased operating costs.

In relation to changes in the way that hospitals are funded the Department of Health and Human Services adjusts funding models to deliver fair, efficient and effective service delivery every year, with this year being no different. The Department of Health and Human Services will continue to work collaboratively with hospital leaders in the development and review of funding policy to ensure that health services continue to meet the needs of the Victorian people.

Dalton–Childs roads, Epping, intersection

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

The intersection of Dalton Road and Childs Road in Epping was a two-lane roundabout with poor traffic flow and safety history. The intersection has been upgraded with additional lanes on all approaches, traffic signals for more equitable flow, and a raised platform to make it safe. In addition, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure has been upgraded. Overall, this will result in better facilities for all modes of transport and a safe environment given the high crash history.

The upgraded intersection will provide the following benefits:

- a) Better and balanced flow conditions, thus improving the overall traffic throughput and travel time, particularly during the morning and afternoon peak periods;
- b) Better reliability of traffic flow for general traffic and bus services;
- c) Enhanced safety through construction of a raised platform in accordance with the Safe System approach. This is an innovative treatment that has not been tried before at similar intersections; and
- d) The signalised intersection has replaced the existing flagged school crossings on the north, south and west approaches of the intersection. Pedestrian and cyclist accessibility will improve as a result of the signalised intersection and new infrastructure.

Police vehicle ramming

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 17 October 2017

REPLY:

I thank the member for his question on the important matter of protecting our hardworking policemen and women.

I note that on 1 November 2017 the Government introduced the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Protection of Emergency Workers and Others) Bill 2017, which creates specific offences of car ramming with the intent to cause harm or recklessly cause risk to emergency workers. The Government worked closely with the Police Association and Victoria police to ensure these amendment met the needs of their members.

These comprehensive new laws protect emergency workers, youth justice officers and custody officers and apply to perpetrators irrespective of whether an emergency worker is harmed.

The Bill creates three new offences and two aggravating versions of the new offences that reflect the serious nature of these crimes and offender culpability.

The first offence involves intentionally exposing an emergency worker or a custodial officer to risk by driving and carries a maximum of 20 years imprisonment. Recklessly exposing an emergency worker or a custodial officer to risk by driving will carry a ten year sentence, while damaging an emergency vehicle will carry a five year sentence. A statutory two-year minimum jail term will also be imposed if an on-duty emergency worker or a custodial officer is injured by an adult offender who has intentionally exposed the worker to risk by driving.

In addition to this, jail time must be served if an offence is committed in certain aggravating circumstances such as where the motor vehicle is stolen, where the offender has damaged the emergency services vehicle, or where the offence occurred in connection with another indictable offence.

The creation of laws for these offences reflects the Andrews Labor Government's ongoing commitment to holding perpetrators to account and protecting those individuals who keep Victorians safe.

Point Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Life Saving Victoria volunteers, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community. The Victorian Government recognises the vital work that the volunteers of the Point Lonsdale Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) perform as highly trained and skilled service providers and appreciates the commitment of these volunteers dedicated to serving the community.

The Victorian Government will consider future funding priorities for capital works to the HC Windmill Back Beach Base building through the regular budget process.

Underbool Early Learning Centre

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Mr Gepp
Raised on: 19 October 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Access to high quality early years services is crucial to giving every child the best start in life.

As you note in your adjournment, this is why the Andrews Labor Government is investing a record \$74 million to build, expand and upgrade kindergartens across Victoria.

As part of this investment, Underbool Kindergarten received \$50 000 in the 2015-16 Children Facilities Capital Program grants round to extend and improve its facilities, enabling it to provide an integrated kinder service and long day care.

I am advised by the Department of Education & Training that the project is currently in the procurement stage, with construction forecast to start in January 2018. When complete, this will be a vital asset for the local community.

I thank the member for his interest in early childhood facilities in his electorate.

Yan Yean Road duplication

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Leane
Raised on: 19 October 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to creating job opportunities and promoting a strong and sustained vocational training culture, through the employment of apprentices, trainees and engineering cadets within the Victorian building and construction industry.

To implement this commitment, the Andrews Labor Government, through its Major Projects Skills Guarantee (Skills Guarantee), will use the awarding of Victorian Government building, construction, infrastructure, civil engineering and other capital projects to stimulate job opportunities and enhance vocational training in these sectors.

Under the Skills Guarantee, all principal contactors awarded contracts for Victorian Government funded building, construction, infrastructure, civil engineering and other capital projects, which have a pre-tender estimated value at or over \$20 million, must utilise Victorian registered apprentices, Victorian registered trainees, or engineering cadets for at least 10 per cent of the project's total estimated labour hours.

I can assure you that this requirement is included in the contract awarded to construct Yan Yean Road duplication.

Also, the Major Projects Skills Guarantee (VIPP) seeks to maximise opportunities for Australian, New Zealand and Victorian suppliers (Local Suppliers) to compete for government business on the basis of best value for money over the life of the goods or services. The VIPP is implemented by Victorian Government departments and agencies to help drive local industry development. Strategic Projects such as this project, with a total project value of \$50 million or more, are subject to mandated minimum local content requirements and other conditions, to help drive additional economic activities and jobs.

I am glad to mention that this contract requires the Principal contractor to meet 95% of the local content using local firms, materials, expertise and skills.

VicRoads advised me that they have encouraged the successful contractor to seek opportunities for the engagement of indigenous workers, and workers from other disadvantaged groups as part of this contract.

As part of Major Projects Skills Guarantee, the Contractor is required to provide quarterly reports to demonstrate compliance to these requirements.

Fire season preparedness

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 31 October 2017

REPLY:

Thank you for your question.

Bushfire safety is a shared responsibility — shared between governments, fire services and emergency management agencies, communities, households, families and individuals. The Victorian Government has adopted a comprehensive approach to improving preparedness for bushfire response that has included significant investment in capital works, training, exercising, organisational structures, policies and procedures.

The Government is currently considering its response to the final report of the inquiry into fire season preparedness.

Drysdale bypass

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 1 November 2017

REPLY:

To improve traffic flow, safety and connectivity in Drysdale and across the whole Bellarine Peninsula, the Andrews Labor Government is investing \$106 million to build the Drysdale Bypass.

The Drysdale Bypass is a six kilometre road from Jetty Road to north of Whitcombes Road, that will provide travellers with a smooth and reliable option to travelling through Drysdale. The Bellarine is one of our fastest growing residential regions, as more people seek the benefits of the coastal lifestyle, which is why this Labor Government is seeking to ensure it has the infrastructure it needs to grow and thrive.

The Drysdale Bypass will support this growth and provide significant improvement to the local community, by reducing traffic in Drysdale by 40 per cent, and providing smoother travel for people coming from Geelong to coastal towns such as St Leonards, Indented Head and Portarlington.

The Coriyule-Hermsley-Curlewis Road route proposed by Mr Ramsay is an alternative route to roads servicing the Jetty Road Growth Area and while located nearby, is not an alternative to the Drysdale Bypass. Roads associated with the Jetty Road Urban Growth Area were approved following extensive community consultation by the City of Greater Geelong in 2007.

The Drysdale Bypass is an important piece of infrastructure for the Victorian community that will support tourism, growth and development of the Bellarine Peninsula. We look forward to delivering it.

State care leavers

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 1 November 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

As part of making Victoria the Education State, the Andrews Labor Government have set a goal of breaking the link between disadvantage and educational attainment, and reducing rates of early school leaving. We know we owe a special duty towards students in out-of-home care, and have therefore established LOOKOUT Centres across the State to help these students to stay in education.

These LOOKOUT Centres work with schools of all sectors, the Department of Health and Human Services, community sector organisations and carers, to improve monitoring and support for students in out-of-home care and their outcomes.

They strive to ensure that the right supports are in place to help students stay connected to education, learning and achieving.

South Yarra Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is conscious that enrolment growth pressures are being felt in a number of communities, including in the inner city. The Government's Inner City Schools Package will see significant investment in this area including:

- \$44 million to construct the new South Melbourne Primary School — Ferrars Street (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2018
- \$31 million to construct the new South Melbourne Park Primary School (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2019
- \$43 million to construct the new Richmond High School (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2018
- \$42 million for the new Prahran High School (interim name) scheduled to open in Term 1, 2019
- \$5 million to deliver additional classroom spaces at Albert Park College
- \$1 million to masterplan the future Docklands Primary School
- identification of sites for a primary school and secondary school at Fishermans Bend
- identification of a site for a new primary school at North Melbourne.

These investments will assist to accommodate the growing demand for education places in the inner city.

I am advised in response to the enrolment growth at South Yarra Primary School in 2017 the Department of Education and Training provided a new, triple storey relocatable building to increase capacity at the school. The Department is working closely with South Yarra Primary School to confirm enrolments for 2018, which can be accommodated within the existing facilities at the school, while maintaining availability of the library, art and multi-purpose rooms (where the school currently offers music and after-school care).

South Melbourne Primary School — Ferrars Street (interim name) will open in 2018 and South Melbourne Park Primary School (interim name) will open in 2019. These two new schools will accommodate local enrolments and local enrolment boundaries will be progressively updated as these new schools open. The enrolment boundary for South Melbourne Primary School — Ferrars Street (interim name) in 2018 is available on the Victorian School Building Authority website: www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au (search: 'South Melbourne').

The Department will continue to work directly with the South Yarra Primary School Principal to address accommodation needs in 2018 and beyond.

Hunting economic impact survey

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture
Raised by: Ms Pennicuik
Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

Action 2.3 of the Government's \$5.3 million Sustainable Hunting Action Plan commits to monitoring the social and economic benefits of hunting, by conducting a study every five years to determine the contribution of hunting to the economy. The next survey is due for completion in June 2019.

Freeway protective barriers

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 14 November 2017

REPLY:

Twenty of Victoria's highest risk, high-speed rural road segments have been identified in the Towards Zero 2016-2020 Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan. The Andrews Labor Government has invested \$450 million to provide world-class, road safety improvements on these roads. Safety barriers are one of the road safety treatments being implemented to prevent run-off-road and head-on crashes.

VicRoads is committed to a short and long-term evaluation of the Top 20 program to gauge its effectiveness. This evaluation considers the crash data provided in the Road Crash Information System (RCIS). Currently, the RCIS data identifies the role of animals in crashes that result in human injury. The evaluation will assist in understanding barrier and wildlife interaction and will be informed by crash data before and after the road safety treatments are implemented.

Country Fire Authority Shepparton station

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 14 November 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of the Shepparton Country Fire Authority (CFA) and its volunteers, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community. The Victorian Government recognises the vital work that the Shepparton CFA volunteers perform as highly trained and skilled service providers and appreciates their commitment and dedication to serving the Shepparton community.

CFA is currently working with stakeholders to locate a suitable new site for Shepparton CFA.

Autism Plus

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 15 November 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government does not tolerate the abuse of people with a disability as it is unacceptable.

We are committed to improving the safeguards for people with a disability, and the safety and well-being of the people currently accessing services from Autism Plus is the highest priority.

You may be aware that in September 2017, the Victorian Ombudsman released her investigation report into the 'management and protection of disability group home residents by the Department of Health and Human Services and Autism Plus'. This report raised a number of matters that concerned me about the management of Autism Plus.

I instructed the Department, in response to a recommendation by the Ombudsman, to assess the suitability of Autism Plus as a service provider and keep me updated on improvements sought and undertaken.

The Department has been actively working with Autism Plus to make immediate improvements to their governance, financial management and service quality.

Of paramount importance is ensuring access to quality services to Autism Plus clients. Unless I am convinced otherwise (based on assessments to date), I am entering into a process, under the powers, in the Disability Act 2006 to appoint an administrator.

Berkeley Living retirement village

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 15 November 2017

REPLY:

On Friday 15 September 2017 Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) received advice that staff at Berkeley Living retirement village had ceased work over an alleged pay dispute. CAV immediately liaised with the Department of Health and Human Services, the Office of the Public Advocate, Victoria Police and local council to ensure the ongoing safety and well-being of residents. These agencies have since been providing support for residents of the village.

In a further step to support residents, on 26 September 2017, Stella Avramopoulos (Chair of the Victorian Council of Social Services) was appointed the Residents' Sponsor, to ensure the ongoing health and welfare of the village residents, while issues concerning the operations of the village are being addressed.

The Government also appointed John Raika of the Department of Justice and Regulation as the State Government Coordinator. Mr Raika acted as a primary contact point for the Residents' Sponsor, and ensured that the efforts of departments and agencies to address the health and welfare needs of residents were coordinated. The Government Coordinator has also assisted staff at the village who have been impacted by the management of the village, including assistance in finding alternative accommodation.

Due to the efforts led by the Residents' Sponsor and Government Coordinator, I am pleased to advise that all residents and staff have now been successfully relocated.

CAV is currently investigating the village. Part of the investigation includes difficulties that have been encountered by former residents or their relatives recovering their ingoing contributions. Ingoing contributions are protected by a charge registered on the title to the retirement village land. Currently, under the RVA, a resident or their estate can apply to the Supreme Court to enforce a charge.

The Director of CAV can intervene in proceedings to enforce a charge, but proceedings need to be commenced by a resident or their estate before the Director can decide whether to intervene.

CAV has requested information from affected former residents of the village or their relatives to assist in its assessment of the village and any role it may have to intervene in court proceedings.

The Government tabled its response to the Inquiry report into the Retirement Housing Sector made by the Legislative Council's Legal and Social Issues Committee on 7 September 2017, and is supporting key recommendations that clarify and improve the rights of residents of retirement villages.

Work is well underway or completed on a number of the Inquiry's recommendations with key aspects of the Retirement Villages Act 1986 having recently been reviewed or currently under review, including through the Consumer Property Law Review.

The Government appreciates that there is significant concern about dispute resolution in the retirement housing sector. The Government is undertaking further investigation into the Inquiry's recommendation that the Government introduce a new alternative, low cost dispute resolution body for the retirement housing sector.

Energy prices

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government understands the pressures Victorian businesses are facing from rising gas and electricity prices 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. They include 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.

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

The \$20 million New Energy Jobs Fund supports projects that create jobs, reduce emissions, and drive innovation in new energy technologies and 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.

My office has been in contact with these businesses to arrange a meeting.

Dulka Yuppata Indigenous Training Centre

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills

Raised by: Mr Gepp

Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

I was pleased to visit the Dulka Yuppata Indigenous Training Centre on 28th September 2017.

The Centre is a key facility for SuniTAFE's Koorie Department, which supports Koorie students across SuniTAFE's three campuses including Koorie Liaison Officers based at the Mildura and Swan Hill Campuses. Besides fostering educational training for young people, the centre has a gallery displaying student art works and a library of indigenous resources.

I thank the Member for Northern Victoria for allowing me to highlight the achievements of the Dulka Yuppata Indigenous Training Centre's students. In particular I would like to take this opportunity to again congratulate former student Tracey Mollison, twice a finalist and 2017 winner of the Koorie Student of the Year at the Victorian Training Awards. Tracey is now employed as a participation assistant as part of SuniTAFE's student support services. Another former student Indi Clarke is now a TAFE Ambassador; Indi was the winner of the Koorie Student of the Year Award at 2016's Victorian Training Awards.

I look forward to a further visit to the Centre with you in 2018.

School asbestos removal program

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The safety of students and school communities is of paramount concern for the Andrews Labor Government. That is why we have allocated \$155 million to address asbestos-containing materials in schools.

The Government conducted a state-wide audit of 1712 government school sites and found high-risk asbestos at 497 of these sites. By March 2016, we had removed it all. This huge achievement has improved the safety of government primary, secondary and specialist schools across Victoria.

The 2017-18 State Budget delivers \$85 million towards the next phase of the Government's asbestos removal program, which includes all schools in the Eastern Metropolitan Region, including Croydon Primary School. We are targeting asbestos that, although not classified as high-risk, may pose a risk in the future.

Specifically, we will be delivering a new architect-designed modular building to Croydon Primary School to replace Block A, which has a high concentration of asbestos that may pose a risk in the future. The replacement building will consist of new classrooms and administration facilities.

Facilities constructed off site or modular facilities require less time for planning and construction, resulting in reduced disruption to students, staff and teaching programs. They are sustainable and innovatively designed, with a comparable lifespan to bricks and mortar structures.

I am also advised that there is some asbestos that may pose a risk in the future located in Block B at Croydon Primary School. This asbestos will be removed and reinstated with non-asbestos containing material as part of the School Asbestos Removal Program. The project at Croydon Primary School is scheduled to commence shortly, with completion expected in October 2018.

I can assure you that the asbestos removal program is being carried out in a methodical, planned and structured way. Following our state-wide audit, school communities can be confident that we know where the asbestos is, and we will make sure it is safe until it can be removed.

Thank you for raising this matter with me and I trust this information is of assistance.

Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre

Raised with: Minister for Sport
Raised by: Mr Melhem
Raised on: 28 November 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian State Equestrian Centre opened in 1984 as the Victorian Government's designated state centre for equestrian activities and has a major focus for delivering equestrian events and supporting grassroots and elite training in Victoria.

The site has been recently nominated as an official Olympic training venue and several major international, national and state sporting events are held at the facility.

The current facility has been jointly managed by Equestrian Victoria and the Victorian Polo Association for the past 30 years.

Through discussion with Equestrian Victoria, an opportunity has been identified to raise the standard of the facilities on site to better meet the needs of the equestrian community, host major events, increase participation and provide greater support for its high performance athletes.

The Victorian Government has provided Equestrian Victoria with \$50 000 to prepare a master plan to redevelop the Werribee Park National Equestrian Centre.

The master plan will express a vision for the centre and provide a guiding document for future investment into this important state facility. It will include proposals for:

- state-of-the-art facilities needed to train and nurture the next generation of world class horses and riders
- female friendly facilities for the high proportion of female participants (approximately 79%)

Outcomes of the master plan would:

- reaffirm the Victorian State Equestrian Centre's status as the premier state equestrian facility
- support Victoria's status as the 'sporting capital' by providing a high-level venue for international, national and state equestrian sporting competition
- provide a high performance pathway development
- provide participation opportunities for the equestrian community

Equestrian Victoria is progressing the master plan and the government expects to receive their submission in the coming months.

Western Highway duplication

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 28 November 2017

REPLY:

The section of road that you refer to is part of a 23.5km duplication between Burrumbeet and Beaufort that was completed and opened to traffic in February 2015. The pavement failures are defects under the construction contract and it is the contractor's responsibility to repair those defects. Rectification works have commenced and are expected to take up to four months to complete.

VicRoads is working with the contractor to understand why parts of the pavement have deteriorated.

VicRoads made a submission to the Minister for Planning to approve a new amendment to the Ararat Rural City Planning Scheme to allow construction works to proceed on the Western Highway duplication between Buangor and Ararat. The new planning approval took effect on 28 December 2017. Pre-construction work has recommenced including utility and fence relocations. A construction contract to complete these works has been awarded to a joint venture between CPB Contractors and Seymour Whyte Constructions.

Darebin–Yarra trail link

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Dunn
Raised on: 28 November 2017

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that it has identified several alignment options to build a safe link to connect Alphington to the new Darebin Yarra Trail. These alignments all incorporate private property, and traverse a Melbourne Water flood plain. VicRoads is developing a comprehensive community and stakeholder engagement process to ensure it identifies the most appropriate alignment. Similar to the main Darebin Yarra Trail, VicRoads expects that a planning permit will be required from the Yarra City Council, approvals will be required from Melbourne Water, and private property will need to be acquired. Given this, VicRoads expects that planning and pre-construction activities for the Alphington Link will take at least one year to complete.

VicRoads expects the Darebin Yarra Trail link project to be completed by early 2018. As such, the link from Alphington to the Darebin Yarra Trail will not have commenced by this time.

Melbourne Metro rail project

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 28 November 2017

REPLY:

Cross Yarra Partnership, the preferred contractor for the Tunnel and Stations package of works, has prepared draft Development Plans for each of the five new underground stations as well as an Early Works Plan to facilitate the delivery of the Metro Tunnel Project.

As part of the planning approval process, and in line with the extensive community and stakeholder engagement that has been undertaken on the project to date, the plans are available for public comment. Feedback from the community and stakeholders will inform the final design of the Metro Tunnel Project's new stations.

Seven information sessions are being held around Melbourne to provide the opportunity for people to view the plans and talk with members of the project team.

People have been notified about the information sessions and submission process via advertising in The Age newspaper, direct emails to more than 8000 people and letter-box drops to hundreds of people living close to the Metro Tunnel alignment.

The draft Development Plans and Early Works Plan are also available to view anytime on Metro Tunnel website at metrotunnel.vic.gov.au and submissions can be made via the website until 5pm 15 December 2017.

Community and stakeholder engagement has played, and will continue to play, an important part in the development of Victoria's biggest public transport project.

Consultation timeframes for these documents are set out in the Metro Tunnel Project's Incorporated Document, approved by the Minister for Planning in December 2016 as part of the robust Environment Effects Statement planning process, and are in line with Heritage Victoria guidelines.

Taxi and hire car industry

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 29 November 2017

REPLY:

Globally the industry is changing and every jurisdiction in Australia is moving towards regulating ridesharing. The Victorian Government is providing over half a billion dollars in financial assistance to the existing taxi and hire car industry.

The Victorian Liberal Opposition supported allowing for ridesharing and removing taxi licences but voted against providing any financial assistance to the existing industry.

The Andrews Government rejected the amendments put forward by the Liberal Opposition in Parliament to block the provision of any financial assistance.

The Member for Southern Metropolitan continues to deliberately mislead the taxi industry by claiming he supports financial assistance but actually opposing it in Parliament.

Under the Government's assistance package, over \$350 million in financial assistance has already been provided to over 4000 licence holders.

Northern Metropolitan Region roads

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 30 November 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises that the growing population of Melbourne's north is placing increasing pressure on the transport network. As such, the Government has committed to delivering a significant number of major transport projects in the short and long term.

The Victorian Government will build the North-East Link — the missing link in our road network to reduce congestion in Melbourne's north, east and southeast. The North-East Link will connect the north and southeast by providing the missing link between the Metropolitan Ring Road (M80) at Greensborough and the Eastern Freeway.

In addition, the Government has committed to the following transport projects:

- \$81 million for the construction of O'Herns Road / Hume Freeway interchange project;
- \$139.4 million for the upgrade of Plenty Road between McKimmies Road in Mill Park and Bridge Inn Road in Mernda;
- \$131.2 million to duplicate Yan Yean Road between Diamond Creek Road and Kurrak Road in Plenty. The 2017-18 State Budget provides an additional \$96.6 million for Stage 2 of the Yan Yean Road upgrade north of Kurrak Road; and
- \$600 million to construct the Mernda Rail Extension from South Morang to Mernda.

Kingston City Council mayor

Raised with: Special Minister of State
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 30 November 2017

REPLY:

I thank the Honourable Member for raising this issue.

The Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate and Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) are responsible for receiving complaints about and investigating misconduct and corruption in Victoria's local government sector.

As these bodies operate independently of the Executive Government, it is a matter for them to determine whether it is appropriate to initiate an investigation in relation to these matters. It would be inappropriate for me or the Executive Government to investigate these allegations.

However, my Department has referred these issues to both the Chief Municipal Inspector and the IBAC for their consideration.

Aboriginal Housing Victoria

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 30 November 2017

REPLY:

AHV, like the Director of Housing or any other registered housing association or housing provider, and like any other landlord in the private market, is legally required to follow the Residential Tenancies Act 1997.

There are times where tenants fail to meet their obligations under the Act and as such landlords need to have further recourse to VCAT. For landlords such as AHV managing large numbers of properties, it is quite ordinary to need to go to VCAT from time to time for such matters.

Corinella foreshore

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 30 November 2017

REPLY:

Bass Coast Shire Council, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), and the Corinella Foreshore Committee of Management have worked together to develop a two-year trial permit system to regulate the times horse riders can use the beach at Coronet Bay. The trial is in response to concerns raised by local residents about horse riders increasing their use of the beach and is to be initiated from December 2017.

The council has taken the lead in the development of the trial due to their ability to initiate local laws to regulate local uses. DELWP (Forest, Fire and Regions division), Parks Victoria and the committee have limited opportunities to regulate the use of the beach area.

I have no role in this matter.

West Gate tunnel project

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 30 November 2017

REPLY:

The environment effects statement (EES) process for the West Gate Tunnel Project provided opportunities for communities to have a say and influence the project's design and management of its environmental effects.

The Victorian Government committed to the project following consideration of its business case in December 2015. Subsequently, I directed an EES be prepared.

As is usual for an EES, the EES scoping requirements, the EES itself and its supporting technical reports were publicly exhibited. A public hearing by an independent inquiry and advisory committee (IAC) was held and the proponent engaged with the community in accordance with its community consultation plan. These documents as well as submissions on the EES, documents tabled at the hearing, the IAC report and my assessment are all publicly available.

This project attracted a high level of community interest, with 504 submissions received, mostly from individuals and community groups from Melbourne's west. Environmental concerns raised by these communities focussed on access, health, air quality, noise and safety around roads where traffic or truck numbers were predicted to increase due to the project, construction impacts and impacts on open space.

During its preparation of the EES and during the IAC hearing, I saw ample evidence of the proponent responding to public feedback during refinement of the project's design. For example, the proponent revised its design to adopt a long tunnel option to minimise impacts on Stony Creek Reserve and amenity, establish nearly 9 hectares of new open space in the inner west, create 14 kilometres of new and upgraded paths and provide greater noise protection at many nearby residences.

During the IAC hearing, the Government made a number of announcements that responded to public feedback including additional truck bans for Blackshaws and Hudsons roads, additional noise walls for some reserves along the West Gate Freeway and removal of a truck toll point to reduce truck traffic on Millers Road.

My assessment acknowledged that the project will generate both positive and adverse environmental effects. I recognised that it is not possible to avoid all adverse effects. However, to further manage adverse effects, my assessment recommended further improvements to the project's design consistent with many of the IAC's recommendations. Improvements include: lowering the Wurundjeri Way extension to achieve better environmental and planning outcomes; transport studies to identify additional traffic management measures; and specific air quality mitigation responses for roads with increased traffic due to the project.

The project's planning scheme amendment establishes a sound environmental control regime for the project. This regime includes 117 environmental performance requirements that set standards for project delivery. Consultation with the communities of Melbourne's west will continue under these requirements, especially for urban design, landscaping and management of construction impacts.

I am satisfied that the EES process for the West Gate Tunnel Project has been open, robust and supported the community to have a say. This process has influenced the project's design and management of its environmental effects for the better.

Robinson Street–Princes Highway, Dandenong

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Rich-Phillips
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

The upgrade works to the Princes Highway and Robinson Street intersection will improve safety for drivers and pedestrians on this key route.

Work commenced in June 2017. However, there have been some unexpected and unavoidable interruptions to finalise this project due to delays in gaining approvals to relocate power poles and to work near a high-pressure gas pipe. VicRoads has been working with its contractor to arrange switch-on for the traffic signals, which occurred on 21 December 2017.

The intersection will initially operate as a single right turn lane from the Princes Highway into Robinson Street until the power pole is removed early next year to enable the remaining work to proceed. The majority of remaining work will be carried out at night to avoid disruption to traffic.

To reduce the impact on drivers over the duration of this project, multiple lane closures have only taken place between off-peak hours of 9:30am and 3:30pm.

The reduction of three through lanes to two at this intersection complements the Lonsdale Street upgrade through central Dandenong. Once completed, this intersection will have two right turn lanes into Robinson Street, which will encourage an alternative access to central Dandenong. VicRoads advises me that the intersection will operate satisfactorily with two through lanes on the Princes Highway.

Boronia CCTV cameras

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr Leane
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

I note that the member has been a long term advocate for community safety in his region and I thank him for bringing this issue to my attention.

I am delighted to announce that the Knox City Council was recently successful in their application to the Andrews Labor Government's Public Safety Infrastructure Fund for the installation and upgrade of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in the Boronia shopping precinct.

The lack of functionality of the current system has limited its usefulness to police and reduced the confidence of traders and community visiting the area.

The Government will contribute \$56 000 for the project, over two-thirds of the total cost of the project. The practical works on this are expected to be completed by April 2018.

The Public Safety Infrastructure Fund grants program supports projects that improve community safety and confidence in public places.

It is part of the Labor Government's \$19.4 million investment in its Community Crime Prevention Program, aimed at tackling crime and its root causes.

This is on top of our record \$2 billion investment in community safety, which includes the recruitment of 3135 police officers on top or attrition over the next 4 years.

From July 2018, Knox will also be a part of our Community Safety Network Program. The Knox Community Safety Network will provide the community with a direct platform to discuss local crime issues and policing priorities.

Traralgon fire prevention strategy

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

The Traralgon South Flora and Fauna Reserve is managed by Parks Victoria. Fire protection works include the annual maintenance to the 'Cashmere Fuel Break' which is an area of approximately 25 metres wide on the Eastern side of the Traralgon South township. These works are part of our Safer Together program to reduce the risk of bushfire, and include mechanical slashing to reduce fuel along the break. This work has been completed.

Community members are welcome to contact the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) or Parks Victoria regarding any issues specific to the management of the reserve, and can have input to the nomination of fuel reduction works via local DELWP offices, the DELWP website, www.delwp.vic.gov.au, or through the Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

Shepparton radiotherapy services

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government has significantly invested in growing and expanding the range and quality of cancer services in regional Victoria. Over recent years this has included development of new regional cancer centres in Ballarat, Bendigo, Warrnambool and Albury Wodonga, as well as new models of care at sub-regional health services linked to major regional hospitals. Radiotherapy has been a feature of these new Regional Cancer Centres.

The Andrews Labor Government is building a modern, first class hospital for the Shepparton community worth \$165 million. This will help address the needs of the local community and includes an expanded emergency department, theatres, Intensive Care Unit, in-patient beds, special care nursery, imaging, dialysis, and a new kitchen.

It is heartening that Genesis continues to invest in providing cancer services in Victoria — we welcome their initiative to provide the people of Shepparton with these services closer to home.

We are continuing discussions with Genesis about how we can work alongside them on future plans for the region.

We will not be lectured by Wendy Lovell and the Liberals when we are getting on with the job they failed to deliver while in Government.

Graffiti

Raised with: Attorney-General
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is serious about responding to community concerns around graffiti vandalism. Victoria has tough penalties for graffiti vandalism, with maximum fines of \$38 057 and up to two years' imprisonment for guilty offenders. Retailers are liable to fines of \$3171 if they illegally sell spray paint cans to persons under 18 years. The application of these penalties in individual cases is a matter for the Courts, who are best placed to make these decisions.

The Government recognises that tough penalties and additional police are not enough. Graffiti vandalism is not an issue that police can tackle alone, and we also need to focus on initiatives to help prevent illegal graffiti occurring in the first place.

The Government is actively funding graffiti education and prevention initiatives for young people through its Graffiti Prevention Grants. These grants provide up to \$25 000 to councils to partner with community groups to develop and deliver projects that prevent graffiti vandalism in local communities. In 2017, the Government provided \$460 080 to support 23 graffiti prevention initiatives, ranging from design initiatives such as murals and landscaping to discourage graffiti vandalism at hotspots, to anti-graffiti education and diversion initiatives to help educate young people about the consequences of engaging in illegal graffiti.

The next round of Graffiti Grant is due to open in early 2018. I would encourage council to apply for a grant to assist with the protection of important symbols such as this from graffiti.

In relation to graffiti removal, the Government is continuing to support the community Correctional Services' Graffiti Removal Program (GRP), which puts supervised teams of offenders on community orders to work removing graffiti from vandalised state and community assets. Since it was introduced by the former Labor Government in 2005, the GRP has seen offenders undertake more than 952 511 hours of unpaid community work to remove over 2.9 million square meters of graffiti from local communities as reparation for their offences. To put this into perspective, that amount of graffiti would cover more than 157 MCG playing fields.

Melbourne Metro rail project

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

As part of the Melbourne Metro Tunnel Project, Draft Development Plans for each of the five underground stations were released for public display and feedback from 27 November for 15 business days. During this time, the selected Tunnels and Stations contractor Cross Yarra Partnership (CYP) received a number of submissions from residents and stakeholders regarding the proposed legacy design of Anzac Station. The Melbourne Metro Rail Authority (MMRA) and CYP met directly with the committee of management for The Domain to discuss their specific concerns prior to submissions closing.

The MMRA will continue to work with the City of Port Phillip regarding the section of land currently used as a vehicle access and drop off point at the front of The Domain building at 1 Albert Road, whilst also considering feedback received from local residents and stakeholders.

During construction, access for emergency vehicles, residents and couriers will be maintained at all times and parking spaces will be available as close as possible to the building for drop offs. If at any point during construction access to the building at 1 Albert Road is restricted, residents and building management will be given early notification and appropriate changes to access will be provided.

Devilbend Natural Features Reserve

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

The decision to allow non-powered boat access to the reservoir was informed by independent research conducted by the Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research (ARI). Recommendations from this research were adopted in the updated management plan for this area. This includes establishing a boating exclusion zone to restrict all boating from the largest area of key habitat for the Blue-billed duck and other waterbirds at the reserve.

The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation provided a letter of support to allow access to non-powered watercraft. On-water access to the community started on 2 December 2017.

Ramsar nomination for the reserve is not being considered at this stage.

Ballarat schools

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I am pleased to hear of Ballarat Secondary College's achievements and the great results of their Victorian Certificate of Education students.

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Andrews Labor Government. This has been demonstrated through our last three State Budgets that delivered the largest ever investment in Victorian school infrastructure, allocating more than \$2.5 billion to build, upgrade and maintain schools across the state. This funding means that 56 new school projects are now in the pipeline which will come online in the next few years.

The Department of Education and Training's statewide school planning process involves regular and ongoing assessment of the capacity of existing schools to accommodate growth in demand within local school networks to determine the need for new schools. This includes regular consultation with local councils and planning agencies to accurately forecast growth at a local level. This process of regular monitoring and review will ensure that consideration is given to the impact of proposed new schools on existing schools and on the community as a whole.

I am aware that there is residential development underway in the Ballarat area and that the population is expected to grow in the future. I share Ms Juliana Addison's enthusiasm about additional government schools being provided to cater for the expected growth of the Ballarat community in the coming years. I thank the Member for Eastern Victoria for noting the investment by the Andrews Labor Government into Ballarat Secondary College — there was certainly nothing he could note about the previous Liberal Government's investment in this College.

Regarding the provision of a new school in Lucas, I am pleased to advise that funding was provided in the 2017-18 State Budget to buy land in the Lucas area for a new primary school — another thing the previous Liberal Party Government failed to do.

The only thing Victorian government schools and school communities have to fear is the return of another Liberal Government with its unrelenting commitment to cuts to our government schools and chronic under-investment in their infrastructure needs.

I'm sure Ms Addison will continue to successfully make this point to the constituents of Wendouree.

South Oakleigh College

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I thank you MLC Ms Crozier, in the other place, for the question regarding school planning in the Bentleigh Electorate. I can confirm that the City of Glen Eira organised a very positive community information forum led by the Victorian Planning Authority regarding the proposed development at Virginia Park.

The Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA) was present at the function and responded to questions from the Community regarding the proposal to plan for a secondary school as part of the Virginia Park development. There was no suggestion that South Oakleigh College would close but rather the Department of Education and Training (DET) considers both the available capacity of existing schools and proximity of travel in a precinct when considering the need for a new school.

Adjournment matters and constituency questions

Raised with: Premier
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

I am advised that this issue has been resolved.

Gippsland public transport

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Shing
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Eastern Victoria for raising this matter, for her ongoing advocacy for her community, and for her support of this important project. The Gippsland line upgrade will provide much needed rail upgrades for the line, as well as delivering 400 jobs.

As you are aware, the Andrews Labor Government is committed to maximising the opportunities for the Victorian community from its infrastructure spend, including supporting jobs through its employment and procurement policies.

Fiskville former training site

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to exploring options for the future use of the former Country Fire Authority (CFA) Training College at Fiskville and bringing employment opportunities and economic benefits to the local community.

The Victorian Government decided to close the Fiskville training facility, after tests showed that firefighters were exposed to dangerous chemicals that likely caused cancer. This confirmed what many firefighters had suspected for decades, and had been exposed in media reports since 2011. Decommissioning works commenced in July 2017.

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) continues to explore the potential use of the former Fiskville site, following the feasibility study commissioned by the Victorian Government.

EMV is working with Regional Development Victoria and other Government stakeholders to examine available options.

The Victorian Budget 2016-17 allocated \$31 million to invest in a new Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre (VEMTC) in the Region. As I announced in May 2017, the Victorian Government has purchased a 35 hectare site in Ballan, near Ingliston Road. Not only will this world-class training facility service the training needs of CFA, SES and other emergency services, its construction will also create new jobs and contribute to economic activity in the local community.

Country Fire Authority Lilydale and Chirnside brigades

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr Leane
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of the Lilydale and Chirnside Park Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community. The Victorian Government recognises the vital work that these volunteers perform as highly trained and skilled service providers and appreciates the commitment of these volunteers dedicated to serving the community.

CFA leadership have discussed this matter with the Captains of both brigades, and assures me the relationship between Lilydale and Chirnside Park CFA Brigades continues to be positive and strong. The brigades remain committed to strengthening that relationship and working together to ensure the safety and well-being of the Victorian community.

Latrobe Valley energy production

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) is responsible for monitoring the supply-demand balance of the National Electricity Market (NEM) and for operating the energy market to maintain energy system security and reliability.

AEMO is taking precautionary actions should extreme conditions risk Victoria's energy security of supply. As part of this, AEMO has sought expressions of interest from energy suppliers to provide temporary standby power in the event of extreme conditions.

In response, Aggreko is supplying 105 diesel-fired generators that are being temporarily installed on land surrounding the former Morwell Power Station in the Latrobe Valley.

There have been community meetings to inform locals about AEMO's plans and the Victorian Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has provided a works approval, ensuring all relevant environmental standards are met and any potential impacts are minimised.

AEMO's plan in contracting Aggreko provides an insurance policy to help manage Victoria's energy security of supply during extreme events, such as severe weather over this summer period, and adds to the work already being done by the Andrews Labor Government to secure supply, bring new energy sources online and drive down electricity prices.

Hume City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

Councillors perform a vital role as civic leaders to their local communities, responsible for participating in the decision-making of the council and representing those communities in their decisions. Councillors also have a clear responsibility in their role, to facilitate communication between the council and the community. I expect that all

councillors will make themselves reasonably available to their constituents in providing effective representation in this regard.

I reiterate my response to the Member for Western Metropolitan's recent Constituency Question raised about this matter, that is, if any person has evidence that a councillor is no longer correctly enrolled on the State roll enabling that councillor to continue in office, there is a process for lodging an objection to that enrolment with the Victorian Electoral Commission.

Black Rock Life Saving Club

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Life Saving Victoria volunteers, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community. The Victorian Government recognises the vital work that the volunteers of the Black Rock Life Saving Club (LSC) perform as highly trained and skilled service providers and appreciates the commitment of these volunteers dedicated to serving the community.

Funding for future capital projects is a matter for State budget consideration.

Sherwood Avenue, Chelsea, drainage

Raised with: Minister for Water
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

I understand the distress and frustration of the residents of Sherwood Avenue, Chelsea who were affected by flooding during the recent heavy rain event in November 2017. Floods are a natural occurrence in the Port Phillip and Westernport region and while these events cannot always be controlled, we can plan to manage the risk and reduce the consequences. Melbourne Water's *Flood Management Strategy — Port Phillip and Westernport* sets out a shared vision for flood management in the region and is aligned with the *Victorian Floodplain Management Strategy*, emergency management arrangements and planning policy.

Most flooding in urban areas occurs because older suburbs were built using different design standards to those that apply today. Suburbs developed before the mid to late 1970s did not need to plan how water would flow overland when the drainage system was full. Most homes in Sherwood Avenue east of Scotch Parade are under a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) in the Kingston Planning Scheme which requires all new development to meet the latest design standards to protect property and occupants and minimise impacts on waterways.

Melbourne Water and Kingston City Council are responsible for stormwater drains in the Chelsea area. Both organisations work closely to identify flood risks and assist with key flood planning and management activities.

Melbourne Water's Centre Swamp Drain runs through Crown land approximately 350 metres from the east end of Sherwood Avenue. The drain is regularly inspected due to known flooding issues in the area and has been confirmed to be in good condition. High intensity, short duration rainfall events can however, cause flash flooding in and around stormwater drains.

Kingston City Council, which owns and manages Bicentennial Park, is aware of issues with flooding and is investigating options in consultation with Melbourne Water. These include drainage infrastructure upgrades, property buy-back and the installation of emergency drainage pumps. I will continue to advocate for a decision to be made that minimises the impact of flooding on the local residents.

Boris and Lana Zaitsen

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Raised by: Ms Dunn
Raised on: 13 December 2017

REPLY:

I am very sorry to hear of the ongoing difficulties experienced by Mr and Mrs Zaitsen in resolving their building dispute.

However, Consumer Affairs Victoria has no direct role in respect of the application of insurance coverage for builders, surveyors, engineers or others. This is a matter generally between the relevant insurer and claimant. In addition, where matters are presently before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal, it would not be appropriate for the Government to make any comment.

The recent establishment by the Andrews Labor Government of a robust conciliation and advice service through Domestic Building Dispute Resolution Victoria demonstrates our strong commitment to ensuring Victorian consumers and builders can resolve their disputes fairly, quickly and at a low cost.

Level crossing removals

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 14 December 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is getting rid of 50 of Victoria's most dangerous and congested level crossings. The Victorian community is very aware that the Liberal Party did not remove level crossings when in Government and remains stridently opposed to their removal.

The report by the Auditor-General found that the Government's level crossing removal program is ahead of schedule. The Auditor-General made a number of recommendations which the Government is currently implementing. The removal of level crossings involves unavoidable disruptions and the Government has an obligation to undertake comprehensive awareness campaigns to inform the community of these disruptions and alternative arrangements. The Auditor-General did not make any recommendations in relation to the Government's awareness campaigns.

Victoria University Sunbury site

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 15 December 2017

REPLY:

I directed the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) to consult with stakeholders and the community to create a master plan for Jacksons Hill to ensure the exquisite heritage buildings continue to be protected and enjoyed into the future. Without a plan the site risks falling into disrepair.

In February, the VPA invited community members and stakeholders to contribute ideas for the site. More than 1200 people participated in engagement for the site, including 180 Sunbury residents who attended a community ideas workshop.

The draft master plan presents an overarching vision for a beautiful heritage precinct, with community at its heart. The plan includes many of the suggestions from community members and stakeholders by proposing nine distinct areas, each with its own character and supported uses. Key proposals include, an education precinct, community and residential areas, a bustling main street, a 'village green' open space at the centre of the site connecting The Heights to Boilerhouse Road, and pedestrian and bike paths throughout.

Since releasing this plan for public comment, around 120 people have attended community information sessions, and more than 1200 people have viewed the interactive map with proposed land uses. Many more people have left comments on this map, contributing feedback on the proposals for the site. It is simply not true to say the master plan was “greeted by horror”. People have expressed a range of views about the plan, with many people enthusiastically embracing it.

Consultation on the draft is open until 11 February 2018. I encourage everyone to visit the VPA’s website to read what people are actually saying about the plan and to contribute to its development by leaving their comments (available at <https://vpa.vic.gov.au/project/jacksons-hill-masterplan/>).

Shepparton Animal Rescue and Rehoming

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 15 December 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is taking action to deliver more support for animal welfare and will establish a dedicated public sector group called Animal Welfare Victoria.

Animal Welfare Victoria will bring together all aspects of the Government’s domestic animal and animal welfare research, policy, education and compliance. It will be overseen by the Minister for Agriculture and will see animal welfare officers continue to operate through the RSPCA, Agriculture Victoria and local government.

As announced on Thursday, 19 October 2017, Animal Welfare Victoria will deliver \$500 000 in animal welfare grants to non-profit community organisations — such as Shepparton Animal Rescue & Rehoming — within its first year of operation.

These reforms build on the work of the Andrews Labor Government to end puppy farming (despite the efforts of the Member and her Liberal Nationals colleagues to keep puppy farming alive and well in Victoria); release the Animal Welfare Action Plan; establish the role of the Ambassador for Animal Welfare; and provide additional funding to RSPCA (Victoria).

I welcome the Member’s belated support for the Labor Government’s efforts.

Freedom of information

Raised with: Special Minister of State

Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert

Raised on: 15 December 2017

REPLY:

Government departments and agencies are committed to processing FOI requests transparently and efficiently and in the spirit of the Act.

The Department of Education and Training provided BRI003493 to you on 29 November 2017.

The Department of Education and Training has confirmed that the brief containing information about a history of contamination is BRI003493.

The Department of Education and Training has confirmed that there is no report relating to contamination.

FOI processing is the responsibility of each individual department. Therefore, any further questions about the department’s handling of a specific FOI request, should be referred to the responsible department and minister.

Dame Phyllis Frost Centre

Raised with: Minister for Corrections
Raised by: Ms Pennicuik
Raised on: 15 December 2017

REPLY:

The use of drugs in prisons presents a real risk to the safety of prisoners and staff as well as the good order and security of the facilities. Strip searching, or searching of a prisoner's body, is one of the necessary and legitimate measures undertaken to control the introduction of drugs into prisons.

However, Corrections Victoria acknowledges that strip searching is an intrusive practice, particularly for women prisoners whose population consists of a high proportion of sexual abuse and family violence victims.

In terms of your request for investigation into alternative technologies, this is already occurring.

Recommendation 6: Detecting Contraband of the Ombudsman's Report states:

The Department of Justice and Regulation strengthen alternative ways to detect contraband, including reviewing the resources of the Prison Intelligence Unit.

This recommendation has been accepted by the Department which noted that it is already underway. The Department's response states:

The Department is actively pursuing appropriate technology to detect contraband in a manner that balances respect and dignity.

I look forward to the Department pursuing this recommendation and reporting their findings to me.

Trafalgar Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 15 December 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises that the Baw Baw Shire is experiencing population growth and development.

The Andrews Government has committed \$70 million between 2015-19 to support local governments and other service providers to invest in early childhood infrastructure. Of this \$70 million, \$10 million was committed to address early years demand in high growth areas, and a further \$10 million to collocate early years infrastructure to school sites. This investment, through the Children's Facilities Capital Program (CFCP), will support the provision of high quality early years programs for children and their families.

The Department of Education and Training is committed to working in partnership with Baw Baw Shire to provide children with access to high quality early years services in the Trafalgar area. I am advised that the Department and Baw Baw Shire met on 7 August 2017 to discuss submitting an application through the Children's Facilities Capital Grant in 2018 for the construction of a new early learning centre collocated on the Trafalgar Primary School site.

The Government believes every child deserves access to an education that prepares them to thrive in the 21st century. I have been advised that there have been preliminary discussions between Trafalgar Primary School and Trafalgar High School, about education provision in the future for their students. Planning and broader community engagement and consultation has not yet commenced as these discussions are still in the early stages.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 7 February 2018

Whittlesea police station

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

As I have previously advised the member, the Government remains firmly committed to ensuring that Victoria Police has adequate resources and infrastructure to reduce harm in the community and keep Victorians safe.

On the matter of resources for the Whittlesea police station, as I have advised the member, the decision on how and where resources are deployed is a matter for Victoria Police. Additional officers have been seconded to ensure appropriate resources are available to the Whittlesea community while two vacancies are filled as soon as possible.

I recently met with Whittlesea police and local community members and I was briefed on how their response zone has become more focussed on Whittlesea and its immediate surrounds due to the opening of Mernda Police Station. The opening of Mernda Police station means Whittlesea police are now responsible for 10 000 people rather than 60 000.

In relation to the matter of station upgrades, the Government takes the advice of Victoria Police on when upgrades to or rebuilding of stations is required.

The local member for Yan Yean Danielle Green has been speaking to myself and police about capital upgrades in addition to the investments previously made in police infrastructure in the Whittlesea community. We are continuing to work with Police on key priorities for capital upgrades and the needs of the Whittlesea community.

We are listening to Victoria Police and the community about what they need, and we will continue to respond through our record investment.

Aboriginal maternal and child health services

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Mr Elasmr
Raised on: 31 October 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

In April 2016, I launched the *Roadmap for Reform: Strong Families, Safe Children* — the Andrews Labor Government's strategy to reform the children, youth and families services system. As part of this reform, the Andrews Government announced a funding package of \$33.9 million to improve access to universal services. The package includes \$1.6 million over two years to work with Aboriginal organisations, the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) sector and local government to provide a service responsive to the needs of all Aboriginal families.

Through a process of co-design with representatives from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and local government, an Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health Service model has been developed. The service model is currently being trialled at nine sites across Victoria. Two sites within the Northern Metropolitan Region have received funding to participate in the trial, the City of Whittlesea and the City of Darebin as well as Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) — Swan Hill, which caters for the Aboriginal community in the

North West of the State. The trial sites will be employing a range of innovative strategies to align with the Aboriginal MCH Initiative (AMCHI) service principles. These five service principles support self-determination and the delivery of a high quality, culturally safe MCH service to all Aboriginal families. The trial commenced in September 2017 and will be fully evaluated after 12 months to inform future improvements to the MCH service.

A range of new approaches to service delivery will be trialled, including the employment of an Aboriginal MCH nurse and Aboriginal health workers, developing an outreach team, cultural safety training for MCH staff and the establishment of partnerships with the Koorie Maternity Service.

As the trial sites were selected through a competitive grants process, it is pleasing to note that the Northern Metropolitan Region is well represented. I look forward to seeing the results of this innovative approach particularly for the Aboriginal families who live and work in this region.

I thank the member for his ongoing interest and advocacy for Aboriginal maternal and child health services.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 8 February 2018

Dairy industry

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 12 December 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government understands the pressures Victorian businesses and farmers are facing from rising gas and electricity prices and is putting in place a range of assistance. Over \$7.2 million has been allocated in 2016-17 and 2017-18 for a range of energy efficiency programs to help small, medium and larger businesses reduce their energy costs. They include the \$6.1 million Boosting Business Productivity program, which supports businesses to access grants, expert advice and support to cut energy and materials costs, reduce greenhouse emissions, and improve energy productivity.

Victorian Energy Upgrades (formerly known as the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target scheme) provides businesses of all sizes with increased incentives to upgrade their facilities and reduce energy costs.

The newly announced \$30 million Agriculture Energy Investment Plan is tailored to the needs of farmers and agricultural businesses. The investment plan includes support for energy assessments and grants for equipment upgrades, as well as on-farm energy efficiency demonstrations and energy information for farmers at field training days and agricultural shows.

The \$200 million Future Industries Fund provides a range of initiatives to assist Victorian manufacturers, including:

- the \$20 million New Energy Jobs Fund, which supports projects that create jobs, reduce emissions, and drive innovation in new energy technologies; and
- the Investment Attraction and Assistance Program, which received an additional \$90 million in the Victorian State Budget for 2017-18, to help create and retain jobs in priority industry sectors such as manufacturing, including by managing the impacts of a volatile national energy market.

My office has contacted United Dairy Farmers of Victoria to arrange a meeting. I regularly meet with peak bodies and I look forward to discussing the above with United Dairy Farmers of Victoria shortly.