

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

**WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
WITHOUT NOTICE**

23 February to 8 March 2018

(Extract from book 3)

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

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 |
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| Minister for Trade and Investment, Minister for Innovation and the Digital Economy, and Minister for Small Business | The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC |
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| 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 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 Elasmr, Mr Melhem, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, #Dr Ratnam, Ms Shing, #Ms Symes, Ms Truong and Mr Young.

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

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

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

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

Joint committees

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Council*): Ms Patten, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing. (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward.

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

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Ms Bridget Noonan

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

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

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Deputy President:

Mr K. EIDEH

Acting Presidents:

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Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

Leader of The Nationals:

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 ⁸ | Eastern Victoria | Nats |
| Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel ³ | Western Metropolitan | AC | O'Donohue, Mr Edward John | Eastern Victoria | LP |
| Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary | Southern Metropolitan | LP | Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip | Northern Metropolitan | LP |
| Dalidakis, Mr Philip | Southern Metropolitan | ALP | O'Sullivan, Luke Bartholomew ⁹ | Northern Victoria | Nats |
| Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon | Eastern Metropolitan | LP | Patten, Ms Fiona ¹⁰ | Northern Metropolitan | RV |
| 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 |
| Elasmr, Mr Nazih | Northern Metropolitan | ALP | Ramsay, Mr Simon | Western Victoria | LP |
| Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C. | Western Metropolitan | LP | Ratnam, Dr Samantha Shantini ¹¹ | Northern Metropolitan | Greens |
| Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret | Southern Metropolitan | LP | Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth | South Eastern Metropolitan | LP |
| Gepp, Mr Mark ⁵ | Northern Victoria | ALP | Shing, Ms Harriet | Eastern Victoria | ALP |
| Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred ⁷ | Western Metropolitan | Greens | Somyurek, Mr Adem | South Eastern Metropolitan | ALP |
| Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph ⁶ | Northern Victoria | ALP | Springle, Ms Nina | South Eastern Metropolitan | Greens |
| Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne | South Eastern Metropolitan | ALP | Symes, Ms Jaclyn | Northern Victoria | ALP |
| Leane, Mr Shaun Leo | Eastern Metropolitan | ALP | Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne | Western Victoria | ALP |
| Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann | Northern Victoria | LP | Truong, Ms Huong ¹² | Western Metropolitan | Greens |
| Melhem, Mr Cesar | Western Metropolitan | ALP | Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling | Eastern Metropolitan | LP |
| | | | Young, Mr Daniel | Northern Victoria | SFFP |

¹ Resigned 28 September 2017

² Appointed 15 April 2015

³ DLP until 26 June 2017

⁴ Resigned 27 May 2016

⁵ Appointed 7 June 2017

⁶ Resigned 6 April 2017

⁷ Resigned 9 February 2018

⁸ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁹ Appointed 12 October 2016

¹⁰ ASP until 16 January 2018

¹¹ Appointed 18 October 2017

¹² Appointed 21 February 2018

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

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

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WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Responses have been incorporated in the form provided to Hansard and received in the period shown.

23 February to 8 March 2018**Eureka Stadium**

Question asked by: Mr Morris
Directed to: Minister for Regional Development
Asked on: 7 February 2018

RESPONSE:

Crown land leases, licences and permits support a wide range of amenities and uses. Crown land is typically leased by the responsible minister, a delegate of the responsible minister, the Governor in Council or a delegated land manager.

I understand that the Member refers to a lease with the North Ballarat Football Club, which, I am advised, is still in place.

Further detail on matters of crown land leases, licences or permits should be sought from the responsible minister: the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change.

Ballarat cycling infrastructure

Question asked by: Mr Morris
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 20 February 2018

RESPONSE:

I am advised that:

This joint City of Ballarat and VicRoads project received \$9.3 million in funding.

A significant component of this funding is predominantly for infrastructure on local roads or public land, which the City of Ballarat would ultimately be responsible for. The final figure that the City of Ballarat receives is dependent on aspects of the arterial roads component that Council may wish to deliver, on the State's behalf.

The figure stated in the Council report is therefore indicative and does not include other costs such as survey, design and investigation to date, community and stakeholder engagement activities and other project related overheads for the entire project.

Victorian certificate of education

Question asked by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 21 February 2018

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

Thank you for your question to the Minister for Education regarding a book being used as a Victorian Certificate of Education text in high schools.

I am advised by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) that schools are able to choose the texts they set for study at all year levels from Year 7-11. This includes at Unit 1 and 2 level of the VCE.

The only level at which texts are prescribed at Unit 3 and 4, which is generally undertaken in Year 12.

Even where texts are prescribed, a list is provided from which schools are able to select texts. The text lists are determined by the VCAA in consultation with an experienced panel.

The texts set for Unit 3 and 4 study are determined according to the following criteria that are set by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and ensures that each text will:

- have literary merit and be worthy of close study
- be an excellent example of form and genre
- sustain intensive study, raising interesting issues and providing challenging ideas
- be appropriate for both male and female students
- be appropriate for the age and development of students and, in that context, reflect current community standards and expectations.

I note that *Foreign Soil* is an award winning novel, winning the following awards:

- Winner of ABIA Literary Fiction of the Year Award 2015
- Winner of the Indie Book Award for Debut Fiction 2015
- Winner of the Victorian Premier’s Unpublished Manuscript Award 2013

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

I am advised that if some particular circumstances prevent a student from being able to engage meaningfully with a particular text that is set by the school, schools can make arrangements for the study of an alternative text.

Early childhood education

Question asked by: Ms Wooldridge
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 21 February 2018

RESPONSE:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to giving Victorians the skills they need for the job they want.

In line with the Government’s commitment to improve the quality of government funded training in Victoria, the Department of Education and Training has undertaken a fair and rigorous assessment of each application in accordance with the published criteria in the relevant Call for Expressions of interest (EOI) documentation.

As part of the EOI process, Program Delivery Plans submitted by Training Providers, were assessed in conjunction with the 2018 Regional Jobs and Training Needs Reports. The sources of data in these reports include a range of Victorian Government data and other data, but do not include data from other governments. Through this process the Department determined that training delivery proposed in some qualifications in 2018 was in excess of jobs and training needs forecasts in Victoria.

To reduce the risk of students undertaking government subsidised training in qualifications that would not lead to a job or improved employment outcomes, and to reflect the economic needs of the Victorian economy, funding in some qualifications across the State has been primarily targeted to traineeship delivery.

Training delivery in Victoria in 2018 is being kept under active review by the Department.

GOTAFE

Question asked by: Mr O'Sullivan
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 21 February 2018

RESPONSE:

As an inquiry is currently underway at GOTAFE it would not be appropriate to comment on individual issues.

Victorian training guarantee

Question asked by: Ms Bath
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 22 February 2018

RESPONSE:

I note that these and other detailed matters relating to the Victorian Training Guarantee were raised by the Member for Gippsland South at the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Inquiry into 2016-17 Financial Performance Outcomes, and the Department of Education and Training has taken these matters on notice for a response to the Committee.

FURTHER RESPONSE:

The Andrews Labor Government is investing over \$2.43 billion in 2017-18 — through the Training, Higher Education and Workforce Development budget output — to support Victorians to get the skills they need for the job they want.

In January 2017, the Government overhauled Victoria's training and TAFE system through Skills First to ensure training sets a high training quality benchmark and delivers programs that lead to jobs.

This means that the Government's investment supports not only a subsidised training market but also has a number of other components, including targeted funding streams and other initiatives designed to strengthen TAFE, support workforce development and lead to a job.

Small business assets

Question asked by: Mr Davis
Directed to: Minister for Small Business
Asked on: 22 February 2018

RESPONSE:

I refer to my answer originally provided to the House that I do not deal in hypotheticals and therefore not in a position to answer that question.

Waste management

Question asked by: Ms Springle
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 22 February 2018

RESPONSE:

The Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan does not project a population increase of 63% from 2015 to 2042. It instead references *Victoria in Future 2015*, the official state government projection of population and households. *Victoria in 2015* projected that the population of metropolitan Melbourne will increase

to 7.8 million people by 2051. More recent projections contained in *Victoria in Future 2016* are for a population of 8 million people by 2051.

The Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan does however project that waste volumes, without new interventions, will grow by 63% by 2042 as a result of population growth. While projections assume per person waste generation will remain relatively constant, the first objective of the plan is to increase resource recovery and reduce the amount of that waste that ends up in landfill.

The amount of waste going to landfill is actually decreasing. Victorian landfills received 4.1 million tonnes of waste in 2014, down 18 per cent from 5 million tonnes in 2005, despite steady population growth during this time.

The last two state budgets have included a total of \$53.4 million over 5 years in strategic investments in Victoria's waste and recycling system. Total new spending from the Sustainability Fund in the 2017-18 budget was \$419 million over five years.

When the Coalition was in government last time, less than \$15 million in new Sustainability Fund spending was approved.

Metropolitan Fire Brigade enterprise bargaining agreement

Question asked by: Ms Wooldridge
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 6 March 2018

RESPONSE:

The Department of Justice and Regulation (DJR) and the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB) are responsible for developing the costing analysis in respect of the proposed MFB Operational Staff Agreement (proposed Agreement). DTF's role is to verify these costings.

The cost of the proposed Agreement cannot be finalised until it has been approved by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) and there is certainty regarding the commencement date (seven days after the proposed Agreement has been approved by the FWC).

Based on current parameters, the estimated cost of the proposed Agreement is considered to be no more than previously indicated by the Minister for Emergency Services.

Fire services equity and diversity review

Question asked by: Ms Fitzherbert
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 6 March 2018

RESPONSE:

Senior executives from Emergency Management Victoria, the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Country Fire Authority and Metropolitan Fire Brigade were briefed on the report by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.

The Minister for Emergency Services, the Hon James Merlino, MP and representatives from his office have had high level meetings and discussions with representatives of VHREOC. Neither the Minister, nor his office have seen the report.

The Attorney-General and his staff have had discussions with representatives of VHREOC regarding the conduct of ongoing court matters. As part of those discussions the Attorney-General has been apprised of general themes in the report. Neither the Attorney-General, nor his office have seen the report.

Melbourne Metro rail project

Question asked by: Mr Ondarchie
Directed to: Minister for Trade and Investment
Asked on: 6 March 2018

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting small businesses which are directly impacted by the property acquisitions required to deliver the urgently needed Metro Tunnel Project.

In accordance with the Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986, each business impacted by the acquisition of land for the Metro Tunnel Project needs to be separately assessed for the purposes of determining elements of compensation. The Valuer-General Victoria has an important role in overseeing valuations for State Government property transactions and is required to certify certain payments made to property and business owners to ensure transparency in relation to such compensation.

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

To assist the Valuer-General Victoria undertake this role, the Valuer-General Victoria has procured Pitcher Partners to provide advice on the assessment of individual businesses directly impacted by the acquisition of land. This advice is for the express purpose of informing assessments relating to acquisition and it is not appropriate for it to be forwarded to other parties.

The greatest threat to business is the commitment from the Liberal Opposition to renegotiate the project's contract which would delay the project by at least two years, prolonging the disruption to businesses.

Melbourne Metro rail project

Question asked by: Ms Wooldridge
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 6 March 2018

RESPONSE:

The Metro Tunnel station at Parkville will connect this world renowned medical, research and education precinct to the train network for the first time.

Underground works in the Parkville precinct have so far been limited to service relocations.

Surgeries and medical appointments have not been cancelled. No compensation claims have been received from hospitals in the Parkville precinct.

Parkville has a number of special considerations for the project due to the sensitive nature of the work carried out and equipment used in the precinct.

Potential effects on sensitive equipment was raised during the project's extensive Environment Effects Statement (EES), and the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority and its contractors have been working closely with the hospitals and other institutions to appropriately manage any potential construction impacts.

A Precinct Reference Group consisting of all these local institutions has been established since August 2016 to work through these issues.

Similar tunnel projects all around the world manage the effects of tunnelling and vibration.

The greatest threat to this project is the commitment from the Liberal Opposition to renegotiate the contract which would delay the project by at least two years, prolonging disruption to all of Melbourne, including the Parkville hospitals and University.

Public service social media policy

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 6 March 2018

RESPONSE:

All Victorian public sector employees are required to comply with the Code of Conduct, which is underpinned by the Public Administration Act 2004 (Vic) (PAA). The Code of Conduct not only applies to their performance of public duties but also imposes values and standards of behaviour that continue to apply outside of the workplace, including:

- ensuring public comments do not compromise their capacity to perform their public sector role;
- building and maintaining a high level of trust with the Government, community and other public sector employees;
- avoiding conduct that may adversely affect their standing as a public official or which may bring their public sector employer or the public sector into disrepute;
- using work resources and equipment efficiently and only for appropriate and authorised purposes;
- being fair, objective and courteous in their dealings with Government, community and other public sector employees and following the laws relating to discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation; and
- modelling the public sector values and at all times acting in an ethical manner.

A failure to follow the provisions of the Code of Conduct may give rise to a breach of the PAA, a finding of misconduct and disciplinary consequences for the public servant including termination of their employment. Departments and agencies have their own internal procedures for responding to complaints of this nature, including conducting necessary investigations.

Acceptable standards of behaviour for public servants are also addressed by Departments in the staff induction process at the commencement of employment. Furthermore, prior to engaging VPS employees, reference checks, including police record searches and other searches applicable to the role (such as working with children check) are undertaken at departmental level as part of the appointment due diligence process.

The evolution of technology, in particular the prevalence of social media, has blurred the distinction of conduct occurring inside and outside of the workplace. Employees are entitled to a personal life and freedom of expression outside of the workplace and their employment, however, accepting employment as a public official imposes higher standards which may extend to life outside of the workplace. I am confident there is a strong awareness and appreciation of the Code of Conduct obligations amongst Victorian public servants in this regard.

Departments also publish their own social media and electronic communication policies, which address these concerns around acceptable online use and transparency, including in their personal capacity. The Victorian Public Sector Commission has also released 'Guidance for the use of social media in the Victorian Public Sector' which complements the Code of Conduct and includes provisions such as:

- Whether using social media, for official use, or in a private capacity, staff must not do anything that may adversely affect their standing as a public official or which could bring themselves or the public sector into disrepute. The nature of social media increases the risk of reputational damage through private activities such as:
- posting images, information or links to images or information
 - disclosing one's own and others' personal information
 - engaging in a heated debate or argument

I expect that the recently publicised incidents are isolated in nature, are reflective of broader tensions currently faced by all employers and are not indicative of a wider problem within the VPS. These incidents ought to have reinforced to all Victorian public servants that unacceptable behaviour, such as online trolling, is not compatible with the VPS values or the Code of Conduct and will be swiftly addressed.

Men's sheds

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

RESPONSE:

The Andrews Labor Government is a proud supporter of men's sheds across Victoria and we recognise the important role they play in bringing communities together.

Men's sheds are places where men can get together, work on common projects, form friendships and give back to their community. We also know that men's sheds are great for the health and wellbeing of men, especially in rural communities.

There are currently more than 360 communities across Victoria enjoying the benefits of having a local men's shed and around 15,000 people attend a shed in Victoria each day.

As Minister, I am proud that since coming to government in November 2014, we have provided funding to build or refurbish 70 men's sheds across the state.

The government provides funding of \$114,000 per annum to the Victorian Men's Shed Association (VMSA) for the provision of sector leadership and capacity building to Victorian men's sheds. The VMSA represents men and women who participate and work in Men's Sheds across Victoria. A stated goal of the Victorian Men's Sheds Association is to promote and publicise men's sheds within the Victorian community.

In 2017-18, additional one-off funding of \$105,000 has been provided to enable the Victorian Men's Shed Association to provide even stronger guidance and support to men's sheds in the areas of governance, occupational health and safety, insurance coverage and community engagement. One of the outcomes of this funding is the development of a resource bank of information and guidelines to assist men's sheds across Victoria with areas such as healthy ageing, partnerships, community engagement and relationship building.

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

Men's sheds are a wonderful part of the Victorian landscape — and we're building and upgrading more of them so more Victorians can benefit.

Duck hunting season

Question asked by: Ms Pennicuik
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 7 March 2018

RESPONSE:

Most hunters do the right thing. But last year a small number of hunters acted illegally and irresponsibly.

This year the they are on notice — that behaviour won't be tolerated.

We've taken significant steps to boost our compliance capacity this year and have put in place new regulations to make it easier for officers to detect any hunters doing the wrong thing.

Most of the in-field compliance personnel are from agencies other than the GMA. Surge capacity from Victoria Police, DELWP, DEDJTR, and Parks Victoria has been boosted for the 2018 season.

Hunters will see more Game, Wildlife, Police and Water Police officers out in force during this year's season.

Compliance and enforcement strategies follow a risk-based, intelligence-led approach to delivering safe, consistent, effective and efficient compliance services. The strong enforcement presence will be strategically deployed over the opening weekend to ensure enforcement efforts and resources are targeted to areas of highest risk.

Community correction orders

Question asked by: Mr O'Donohue
Directed to: Minister for Corrections
Asked on: 7 March 2018

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

As at 28 February 2018, 38.6% of offenders on a Community Correction Order were classified as high risk.

The tool by which Corrections Victoria assesses offenders was introduced under the Labor Government in 2015, enabling those offenders that pose higher risk to be more closely supervised by more senior Corrections staff with smaller caseloads.

Prior to this under the previous Coalition Government, high risk offenders weren't properly identified and were managed alongside other low risk offenders by staff with caseloads that were unworkable.

This approach both failed to manage high risk offenders and in doing so failed to keep the community safe.

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

The recidivism rate is a nationally agreed measure which counts offenders returning to corrections which may be Community Correctional Services, within two years of completing a community corrections episode.

As such, it is not possible to provide data on the recidivism rate for those who were on a Community Correction Order in the 16-17 financial year.

Youth justice system

Question asked by: Ms Crozier
Directed to: Minister for Families and Children
Asked on: 7 March 2018

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

I am advised that:

While it is inappropriate for me to comment on individual young people and associated operational matters, I am advised by my department that your question conflates a number of young people and incidents and is incorrect.

What I can say is that violent behaviour, assaults and anti-social behaviour by young people in custody is absolutely unacceptable and is not tolerated in youth justice centres.

That is why in 2017 the Government introduced stronger consequences for young people who commit crimes while in custody, as part of the Children and Justice Legislation Amendment (Youth Justice Reform) Act 2017 — legislation you tried to scuttle.

Under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005, the independent Youth Parole Board decides whether a young person aged 16 or over may be transferred from a youth justice centre to adult prison.

Whilst there have been transfers of young people to adult prison during my time as Minister, when this has occurred the Liberal Party has been fit to criticise. Depending on what day of the week it is the Liberal Party wants show young offenders compassion, let them out of remand onto the streets or transfer them to adult prison. Can you be consistent for at least one week?

Youth justice system

Question asked by: Ms Fitzherbert
Directed to: Minister for Families and Children
Asked on: 7 March 2018

RESPONSE:

I am advised that it is not appropriate to attribute the level of reported Category 1 assaults to a single factor of young people sharing rooms. As the member should be well aware, there are a number of small shared rooms at both Parkville and Malmsbury Youth Justice Precincts. Some young people, particularly Koori young people, in fact prefer to share a room. Careful risk assessment is taken prior to young offenders sharing a room.

The Government's decision to gazette the Grevillea Unit at Barwon Prison, following serious incidents at Parkville Youth Justice Precinct in late 2016 sought to ensure both community safety and the safety of young people. Had we listened to the Human Rights Law Centre and others and kept young people in existing facilities, we would have faced significant overcrowding and double bunking for prolonged periods.

Unlike your Inquiry's report, which failed to make a single recommendation regarding youth justice infrastructure and facilities, the Andrews Labor Government is getting on with rebuilding and strengthening Victoria's youth justice system and fixing the mess left to us by the previous Liberal government.

That is why the Government has invested in more beds and better security to meet growing demand and to keep the community safe. This includes \$72 million in last year's budget to repair, strengthen, fortify and increase intelligence gathering capabilities across Parkville and Malmsbury Youth Justice Precincts. In addition, as part of the Government's response to the Ogloff/Armytage Review, we have implemented a new classification and placement system that reviews the security risk of all young people in custody to ensure they are placed at the appropriate security level.

The Government has committed a further \$79.5 million in additional asset funding for 68 new beds and security infrastructure across Parkville and Malmsbury. This includes upgrades to the secure perimeter fencing at the secure site at Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct.

These works will allow the youth justice system to meet demand until the new \$288 million high security youth justice facility at Cherry Creek comes online in 2021.

This Government has improved transparency by introducing the publication of incident reporting data on a quarterly basis. I note that this data represents allegations and observed incidents. It does not reflect whether an allegation was substantiated.

Your own Inquiry's report made no finding against the Government's current reporting of serious incidents; rather it suggests Ms. Wooldridge's decision to remove Category 3 incident classification and replace it with Significant Incident Case Notes may have reduced public visibility of critical incidents and created a culture of underreporting within the youth justice system.

Robust reporting, review and oversight of incidents provides an important protection to both staff and young people.

Following the move of youth justice to the Department of Justice and Regulation, there has been a general increase in the reporting of incidents due to an increased focus on ensuring that all incidents are appropriately reported and categorised:

There has been a focus on ensuring the impact on young people and staff is appropriately considered when categorising incidents, resulting in a greater number of incidents categorised as Category One.

Previously, assaults were only classified as Category One if they resulted in admission to hospital. It has been reinforced with staff that the, potential for harm and the seriousness of the intent can also meet the threshold for a Category One incident.

Youth justice centres

Question asked by: Ms Crozier
Directed to: Minister for Families and Children
Asked on: 7 March 2018

RESPONSE:

I am advised that:

We are getting on with rebuilding and strengthening Victoria's youth justice system and fixing the mess left to us by the previous Liberal government. As Minister, I have acted in accordance with my responsibilities to address your mess.

As you are aware, the Government commissioned an independent review of this incident by former Police Commissioner, Mr Neil Comrie — a review you said was a whitewash.

A summary of the report, which outlines a number of factors which contributed to this incident and eight associated recommendations, is publicly available on my department's website.

The Government has accepted all of the recommendations and has completed or is in the process of completing them. This includes fortifying and strengthening the secure site at Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct. In addition, the Government is now upgrading the secure fencing at the site.

It is telling that the Liberal/Green dominated Inquiry into youth justice centres in Victoria failed to seek any documents or reports prior to the November 2014 period, because if it had, it would have found that Mary Wooldridge's gingerbread house of a facility was poorly designed and understaffed. It beggars belief Ms Wooldridge thinks she can be trusted to build another secure facility in the outer suburbs of Melbourne to treat young offenders with drug and alcohol addictions.

The Government has committed a further \$79.5 million in additional asset funding for 68 new beds and security infrastructure across Parkville and Malmsbury. This includes upgrades to the secure perimeter fencing at the secure site at Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct.

These works will allow the youth justice system to meet demand until the new \$288 million high security youth justice facility at Cherry Creek comes online in 2021.

Mr Comrie's review found no evidence of any serious breach of policy or procedures by any staff at the Malmsbury Youth Justice Precinct in relation to that incident. In fact, he recommended the commendation of two staff for their outstanding courage and commitment when placing themselves at significant physical risk to prevent the escape.

Following Mr Comrie's review into the incident, the Government transferred the responsibility of youth justice from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Justice and Regulation where experienced Corrections staff are supporting youth justice operations. This includes Security and Emergency Services Group (SESG) staff based at youth justice centres in Victoria to help manage and respond to dangerous or violent incidents.