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# **PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES PROGRESS ON INVESTIGATIONS**

**To 31 October 2005**

**55<sup>th</sup> Parliament**

*Issued by Authority of the President of the Legislative Council  
and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly*

The Parliamentary Committees of the Victorian Parliament are appointed pursuant to the ***Parliamentary Committees Act 2003***.

The functions of the **Joint Investigatory Committees** are detailed in sections 7 to 17 of the Act which, by section 33, also makes the following provisions regarding their role, sources of references and priorities in considering references:

- (1) A Joint Investigatory Committee must inquire into, consider and report to the Parliament on any proposal, matter or thing that is relevant to its functions and has been referred to the Committee-
  - (a) by resolution of the Council or the Assembly; or
  - (b) by Order of the Governor in Council published in the Government Gazette.
- (2) A resolution of the Council or the Assembly referred to in sub-section (1)(a) may specify a period of time within which the Joint Investigatory Committee must make a final report to the Parliament on the proposal, matter or thing.
- (3) A Joint Investigatory Committee may inquire into, consider and report to the Parliament on any annual report or other document relevant to the functions of the Committee that is laid before either House of the Parliament in accordance with an Act.
- (4) In carrying out its functions, a Joint Investigatory Committee must –
  - (a) give priority before all other proposals, matters or things being inquired into or being considered by the Committee-
    - (i) first to those proposals, matters or things referred to it by resolution of the Council or the Assembly; and
    - (ii) second, to those proposals, matters or things referred to it by Order of the Governor in Council published in the Government Gazette; and
  - (b) comply with any limitation of time specified under sub-section (2).

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**[www.parliament.vic.gov.au](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au)**

# **DRUGS AND CRIME PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

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**Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000**

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**Email:**        dcpc@parliament.vic.gov.au

**Website:**    <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/dcpc>

## **Members:**

**(Council)**            *Mr J Scheffer and The Hon S M Nguyen.*

**(Assembly)**        *Hon R Cooper, Ms K Marshall, Mr Ian Maxfield,  
Dr B Sykes and Mr K Wells.*

**Chair:**                Mr J Scheffer, MLC

**Executive Officer:** Sandy Cook

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## **INQUIRY INTO STRATEGIES TO REDUCE HARMFUL ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION**

Referred by Order of the Governor in Council on 6 May 2003, to inquire into, consider and report to Parliament on strategies to reduce harmful alcohol consumption. In particular the Committee is required to:

1. Investigate the nature, extent and culture of alcohol consumption on the Victorian community and the associated costs to the community.
2. Examine the role of alcohol advertising including its influence on harmful alcohol consumption and high-risk groups such as young people and Kooris.
3. Review the adequacy of existing strategies for reducing harmful alcohol consumption.
4. Recommend best practice strategies to address the issue of harmful alcohol consumption, including regulatory, law enforcement, education and treatment responses.
5. Examine national and international legislation, reports and material relevant to this issue.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 November, 2005.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

- **Discussion Paper continued to be circulated**
- **Ongoing analysis of literature, submissions and evidence gathered from Public Hearings**
- **Drafting of Final Report continued**
- **Public Hearing held on 17 October 2005 with Mr Andrew Demetriou, Chief Executive Officer Australian Football League (AFL) and Mr Tony Peek, Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer, AFL**

- The Executive Officer together with the Research Officer met with Ms Sonia Berton, Chief Executive Officer ARBIAS and Mr Glen Hardy, Manager Research and Development, ARBIAS on 19 October 2005.

### ***Future Activity***

- Drafting of Final Report continued.

## **INQUIRY INTO VIOLENCE ASSOCIATED WITH MOTOR VEHICLE USE**

Referred by the Legislative Assembly on 3 June 2003 for inquiry, consideration and report on:

1. the incidence, prevalence, severity, cost and impact of violence associated with motor vehicle use;
2. a review of Victorian, national and international research into violence associated with motor vehicle use;
3. the effectiveness of strategies and initiatives relating to violence associated with motor vehicle use; and
4. the need for policy and legislative reform to reduce violence associated with the motor vehicle use at the state level.

The Committee tabled the Report on April 20 2005.

### ***Activity during October 2005***

- Circulation of Final Report on request.

## **COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE RECEIVED**

Report Into Violence Associated With Motor Vehicle Use tabled 20 April 2005 — Response tabled 19 October 2005.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

Inquiry into Crime Trends — Fifth Report — Response due April 2003

Inquiry into Fraud and Electronic Commerce - *Interim response tabled 15 September 2004*

# **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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**Members:**

**(Assembly)**        *Mr. H.F. Delahunty, Mr. B.J. Jenkins, Ms M. Morand and  
Mr. T.G. Robinson*

**(Council)**         *The Hons B.N. Atkinson, R.H. Bowden and N. Pullen*

**Chairman:**        Mr. Tony Robinson, MP

**Executive Officer:** Dr. Russell Solomon

## **INQUIRY INTO THE VIABILITY OF THE VICTORIAN THOROUGHbred/STANDARDbred BREEDING INDUSTRIES**

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Referred by Order of the Governor in Council, on 1 February 2005 to inquire into and report to Parliament on the Viability of the Victorian Thoroughbred/Standardbred Breeding Industries with a particular regard to the following:

1. the strength of the Victorian thoroughbred/standardbred breeding industries compared to other Australian states;
2. the role of overseas breeding interests and the influence that they are having on the Victorian industry;
3. the extent to which the Victorian industries are being integrated at a national and international level;
4. the extent to which the Victorian industries have adopted international best practice;
5. employment and investment opportunities and patterns with particular emphasis in regional Victoria; and
6. the development of skills within the industries.

with a view to making recommendations on how the industries may be further developed.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 September 2005.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

**30 written submissions received as at 31 October 2005.**

## **2 October 2005 – Informal Meetings, Gold Coast**

- **Magic Millions**

## **Informal briefings held in Melbourne**

**10 October 2005**

- **Victoria Racing Club**

**17 October 2005**

- **Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development**

**24 October 2005**

- **Thoroughbred Breeders Victoria**
- **Racing Victoria Limited**

## **Public Hearings held in Melbourne**

**17 October 2005 –**

- **Federation Bloodstock Agents Australia**
- **Standardbred Breeders and Studmasters Association**

**24 October 2005 –**

- **Alabar Stud.**

## ***Future Activity***

**Consideration of draft chapters.**

# EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

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**Level 3, 157 Spring Street, Melbourne, 3000**

**Telephone:** 9651 8309      **Facsimile:** 9651 8323

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## **Members:**

**(Council)**            *The Hons Helen Buckingham and Peter Hall*  
**(Assembly)**        *Ms Anne Eckstein, Mr Steve Herbert, Mr Nicholas Kotsiras, Ms Janice Munt and Mr Victor Pertou.*

**Chair:**                Steve Herbert MP

**Executive Officer:** Karen Ellingford

## **PROMOTION OF MATHS AND SCIENCE EDUCATION**

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Referred by Order of the Governor in Council on 27 July 2004 to inquire into and report on opportunities to promote maths and science in Victorian education.

In particular, the Committee is requested to:

1. Determine which factors will support high quality teaching and learning of mathematics and science including teaching method and environment, subject knowledge, pedagogy, and teaching expertise.
2. Examine national and international trends and report on innovative initiatives that promote the teaching and learning of maths and science.
3. Determine how best practice in teaching of maths and science can be shared among schools and other education communities and identify other opportunities for cross government action.
4. Determine how new business, industry and research applications of mathematics and science can be integrated into schools and learning communities.
5. Examine the potential for greater cross-sectoral links between industry, tertiary and training institutions and schools in the promotion of mathematics and science education.
6. Examine gender issues in the teaching and learning of mathematics and science education.
7. Consider ways of promoting greater interest by suitably qualified people to undertake mathematics and/or science teaching careers.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by September 2005.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

**The Committee had a deliberative meeting to discuss the structure and content of the draft report. Staff continued to draft chapters of the report**

**The Research Officer met with representatives of La Trobe University (Bendigo campus) on issues relevant to the terms of reference, and visited maths and science classrooms at Kangaroo Flat Secondary College and Eaglehawk Primary School.**

### ***Future Activity***

**The Committee to continue deliberating on its evidence and drafting its final report.**



7. the roles of State Government and Federal bodies in developing and regulating an energy efficiency services industry, including the impact that a future greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme might have.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 15 June 2006.

#### ***Activities during October 2005***

- 20 submissions received to date
- Research Officer appointed
- Acting Executive Officer vacancy filled
- internal briefing paper on energy services industry reference forwarded to Committee members
- Research Officer attended the Mandated Renewable Energy Target and Renewable Energy Certificates Update 2005 seminar at the Business Council for Sustainable Energy on 20 October 2005
- public hearings and meeting schedule finalised
- arrangements for DoI and DSE briefings on 2 November 2005 made.

#### ***Future Activities***

- DoI and DSE to brief Committee on the energy services industry reference on 2 November 2005
- Executive Officer and Research Officer to attend Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources Energy Efficiency Opportunities information session on 8 November 2005
- public hearing scheduled for 14 November 2005
- Committee staff and two Committee members to attend Business Council for Sustainable Energy Energy Efficiency Conference in Melbourne on 22 and 23 November 2005
- finalise arrangements for public hearings and site visit in December.

### **COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

Inquiry into Sustainable Communities - Response due 14 December 2005.

# FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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## **Members:**

**(Council)**            *The Hon D Davis, Mr R Smith*

**(Assembly)**        *Ms H McTaggart, Ms L Neville, Mrs E J Powell, Mrs H Shardey, and Mr D Wilson*

**Chairman:**         Mr R Smith, MLC

**Acting Executive Officer:** Ms Iona Annett

## **INQUIRY INTO THE REGULATION OF THE FUNERAL INDUSTRY**

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Referred by Order of the Governor in Council on 20 January 2004, to inquire into, consider and report to Parliament on:

The current regulatory framework, including self-regulatory mechanisms, that is relevant to the funeral industry and assess its adequacy, where necessary identifying options for industry and government to improve practices in the industry.

In particular the Committee is required to:

1. Identify all existing regulation and self-regulatory arrangements applying to the funeral industry in Victoria, including those covering practices associated with planning, health, employee safety and consumer protection.
2. Examine the adequacy of the current regulatory framework, taking into account:
  - the quantity and severity of complaints;
  - community perceptions of ethical standards;
  - public and environmental health concerns;
  - occupational and employee health and safety issues; and
  - consumer protection and fair trading issues.
3. Assess the nature and extent of problems in the industry and, if necessary, consider options to address these. Options could include, but not be limited to:
  - Standards of the conduct of funerals, including storage, transportation and physical treatment of deceased persons that protect public health and safety and ensure dignity and respect for the dead;
  - Standards of employee training and workplace support;
  - Planning requirements regarding the establishment of funeral parlours; and
  - Extending coverage and enforcement of fair-trading laws.
4. Identify the form any intervention should take and whether government agencies, industry bodies or a combination of the two would best undertake it. In particular consider non-legislative options such as the development of codes of conduct, accreditation schemes, education and training programs and the development of information products.

In considering this reference, the Committee should take into account:

Community experiences of the industry and the nature and extent of community concerns;

The level of consumer complaints;

Employee complaints and compensation claims within the industry;

Pricing practices;

The costs and benefits to the community of different approaches to regulation; and

Regulation and other activities being undertaken in other jurisdictions.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 April 2005.

### ***Activity during October***

**The Committee has completed its review of possible recommendations and is preparing to adopt the Report into Regulation of the Funeral Industry.**

## **IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF URBAN DESIGN AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC ART IN VICTORIA**

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Referred by Order of the Governor in Council on 6 May 2003, to inquire into, consider, and make recommendations on options to improve the quality of urban design and increase opportunities for public art in development in Victoria and, in particular to report on:

1. Mechanisms and good practice for the delivery of urban art outcomes, both by the public and private sectors, either as integral parts of development or as contributions to art works in the public realm.
2. The adequacy of existing programs and funding mechanisms for the delivery of and support of urban design and public art, and make recommendations for cost-effective improvement in these programs and mechanisms.
3. Recommendations for mechanisms to increase funding for urban design and public art, and in particular ways to forge partnerships between the public and private sectors for that purpose.
4. Recommendations to improve community understanding of, access to and active participation in urban design and public art.
5. The need for change to legislation or statutory requirements to implement any recommendations made as a result of the Inquiry.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 December 2005.

### ***Activity during October***

**The Committee continued planning for inquiry overseas, including witnesses and site visits. The Secretariat has begun its research for the Inquiry, including briefings on proposed objects of study both in Australia and overseas.**

# LAW REFORM COMMITTEE

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## Members:

(Council) *Ms D. G. Hadden, the Hons R.A. Dalla-Riva, J.G. Hilton and D Koch.*

(Assembly) *Ms D.A. Beard, Ms E.J. Beattie, Mr R. Hudson, Mr A. G. Lupton and Mr N. J. Maughan.*

Chairman: Mr R. Hudson, MP

Executive Officer: Ms M. L. Mason

## INQUIRY INTO WARRANT POWERS AND PROCEDURES

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Referred by Order in Council on 3 June 2003.

To inquire into, consider and report to Parliament on:

1. Victoria's existing warrant powers and procedures, including arrest warrants, warrants to seize property and search warrants; and
2. whether the existing laws should be amended, and in what way, having particular regard to the need to promote fairness, consistency and efficiency.

The Committee was initially required to report to Parliament by 31 March 2004. An extension has been granted with the report now required by 31 October 2005.

### *Activities during October 2005*

- editing of final report
- adoption of final report.

### *Future Activity*

- report tabling.

## INQUIRY INTO THE CORONER'S ACT 1985

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Referred by Order in Council on 7 December 2004

To inquire into and report to Parliament on the effectiveness of the Coroner's Act 1985 (the Act) and to consider whether the Act (excluding Part 9) provides an appropriate legislative framework for:

- (a) the independent investigation of deaths and fires in Victoria;
- (b) the making of recommendations to:
  - (i) prevent deaths and fires in Victoria; and
  - (ii) improve the safety of Victorians; and
- (c) the provision of support for the families, friends and others associated with a deceased person who is the subject of a coronial inquiry.

In particular, the Committee is required to recommend any areas where the Act should be amended or modernised to better meet the needs of the Community.

In making its inquiry the Committee should examine equivalent legislation and its operation in other jurisdictions.

The Committee was initially required to report to Parliament by 31 December 2005. An extension has been granted with the report now required by 1 June 2006.

#### ***Activities during October 2005***

- **research project participants finalised**
- **continuing research**
- **organisation of further public hearings.**

#### ***Future Activity***

- **further public hearings to be held on 28 November and 5 December 2005.**

### **INQUIRY INTO THE ADMINISTRATION AND PROBATE ACT 1958**

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Referred by Order in Council on 3 June 2003.

To inquire into, consider and report to Parliament on:

The **Administration and Probate Act 1958** and in particular to have regard to issues including, but not limited to:

1. the desirability of new legislation and procedures to deal with the administration of a deceased person's estate.
2. whether the act should be amended to provide alternative mechanisms for the resolution of disputes that involve small estates;
3. whether the Magistrates Court and the County Court should also be given jurisdiction to deal with grants of probate and administration and deal with disputes relating to wills; and
4. whether amendments are necessary in relation to the charges and commissions of solicitors who also act as executors.

The Committee was originally required to report to Parliament by 30 September 2004. An extension has been granted to the last sitting day of the Spring sittings 2006. The commencement of this inquiry has been delayed to await the final report of the National Committee for Uniform Succession Laws.

**Inquiry has not yet commenced.**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE COUNTY COURT APPEALS**

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Referred by Order in Council on 22 September 2005.

Inquire into and report to Parliament on:

County Court Appeals with a particular regard to the following:

1. the historical justifications for appeals from the Magistrate's Court to the County Court being heard de novo and whether such justifications continue to exist;
2. the effects of the 1999 changes to County Court Appeals and the extent to which the procedures are applied in practice;
3. the desirability or otherwise of any change having regard to any changes to the seriousness of offences heard by the Magistrates Court;
4. the effect on the number of appeals should the current rights of appeal be changed;
5. if that number would be reduced, the savings to the County Court which would follow;
6. whether any proposed change would affect the way in which hearings in the Magistrates Court are conducted;
7. if so, whether any anticipated gains in the County Court from the proposed change would be outweighed by additional costs in the Magistrates Court;
8. in general, how the Magistrates Court and the County Court operate as one system, and what if any changes to that system will produce the best outcomes for the justice system.

This will be with a view to making recommendations on whether appeals from the Magistrate's Court to the County Court should continue to be hearings de novo, or whether they should be heard in some other way, and if so, what.

The Committee is to make its final report to Parliament no later than 31 March 2006.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

- **inquiry advertised and call for submissions**
- **letters to stakeholders**
- **advertise for legal research officer.**

### ***Future Activity***

- **recruitment of legal research officer.**

## **INQUIRY INTO THE LAW OF CONTEMPT OF COURT**

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Referred by Order in Council on 22 September 2005.

Inquire into and report to Parliament on:

the law of Contempt of Court with particular regard to the following:

1. what are the aims of the law of Contempt of Court;
2. what conduct amounts, under the existing law, to Contempt of Court;
3. what are the features of the law of Contempt of Court which distinguish it from other laws;
4. where such features exist, is there a clear justification for them;
5. are the principles of the law of Contempt of Court sufficiently certain, or can criticism justifiably be made that they are inappropriately vague;
6. are the procedures currently adopted in relation to allegations of Contempt of Court fair, and do they comply with internationally recognised standards of fairness for such proceedings;
7. are the provisions of the law of Contempt of Court effective in achieving their ostensible aims.

This will be with a view to making recommendations on whether the existing law of Contempt of Court is adequate or whether any reform is required, and if so, what.

The Committee is to make its final report to Parliament no later than the last sitting day of Spring 2006.

**Inquiry has not yet commenced.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

**Nil.**

# OUTER SUBURBAN/INTERFACE SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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## Members:

**(Council)** The Hons L Argondizzo and A K Somyurek

**(Assembly)** Mr E N Baillieu, Ms R Buchanan, Mr M F Dixon,  
Mr D A Nardella and Hon K M Smith

**Chairman:** Mr Don Nardella MP

**Executive Officer:** Mr Sean Coley

## INQUIRY INTO BUILDING NEW COMMUNITIES

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Terms of reference – received by Order in Council on 18 January 2005.

To inquire into and report to Parliament on issues relating to strengthening communities through improved community engagement in outer urban areas, including both developing and established communities.

In particular, the Committee is requested to:

1. Investigate existing forms of community engagement and recommend ways to strengthen and empower communities and build social capital;
2. Examine the role of community groups and all levels of government in promoting community engagement, with a view to strengthening outer suburban communities;
3. Investigate the role of new forms of communication, including the Internet and associated technologies, in supporting and enhancing community engagement;
4. Identify opportunities for increasing community engagement between Melbourne's outer suburban municipalities and communities;
5. Identify barriers to participate in various forms of community engagement and ways to overcome these barriers;
6. Investigate and report into how life-long learning, neighbourhood houses and other organisations can strengthen local communities;
7. Investigate and report on options for engaging, with a culturally diverse community, older persons, people with a disability and youth in the local community;
8. The role of volunteers and volunteer organisations in strengthening local communities;
9. The role of mentoring in the outer suburbs;
10. Examine national and international initiatives relevant to these issues; and
11. Investigate the implications of building new outer urban communities, on community cohesion in nearby rural communities, particularly during the transition period from rural to urban.

The Committee is to make its final report to Parliament no later than 31 March 2006.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

**The Committee held a public forum at Kinglake on 12 October which included the following witnesses:**

**Mrs. B. Wheeler, Mrs. A. Leadbeater, Mrs S. Hyde,  
Mr E. Gill, Ms. K. Cherry, Middle Kinglake Primary School  
Mr. C. French, Mrs. N. Styles, Ms T. Hardidge, Mrs. J. Beales,  
Mr. D. Taylor, Ms. L. Bentley, Mrs S. Sibernaler,  
Mrs. V. Ruhr, Secretary, KANDO  
Mr R. Buchanan, Mrs. M. French, Mr. S. Wood, Mrs. L. King,  
Mr. S. Szetey, Cr L. Gunter, Ms C. Phillips,  
Mr. P. Szepe, Kinross Farm,  
Mr. C. Morris, Mr. R. Cook and Mr C. Griffiths**

**The Committee held a public forum at Warragul on 14 October which included the following witnesses:**

**Mr Stephen Chapple, Director Community Development Services  
Ms. Janiene Ayre, Manager Business, Events, Culture and Tourism  
Mr. Kerry Irwin, Sport & Recreation Manager  
Ms. Leslie Smith, Community Development Officer  
Baw Baw Shire Council  
Trafalgar Community Development Association  
Hill End Community Study Group  
Mr Mark Cockerell, Chief Executive Officer  
Gippsland Field Days  
Mr Alf Rizetti, Drouin Restaurant**

**The Committee also commenced an International Study Tour on 28 October, and heard briefings in Los Angeles and Vancouver.**

### ***Future Activity***

**The Committee continues the International Study Tour, returning on 14 November 2005.**

# **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE**

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Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

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Website: <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/paec/default.htm>

## **Members:**

**(Council)** *The Hons B Baxter, B Forwood (Deputy Chair), G K Rich-Phillips, Ms G D Romanes and Mr A Somyurek.*

**(Assembly)** *Ms C Campbell, Mr R W Clark, Ms D Green and Mr J Merlino.*

**Chair:** Hon C. Campbell, MP

**Executive Officer:** Ms M Cornwell

## **2004-05 BUDGET OUTCOMES**

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Source of reference: *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, section 33(3)

### ***Activity during October 2005***

**Work commenced on preparing the 2004-05 budget outcomes questionnaire.**

### ***Future Activities***

**Draft questionnaires to be considered by the Committee on 14 November 2005.**

**Questionnaires to be distributed to departments.**

## **2005-06 BUDGET ESTIMATES**

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Source of reference: *Parliamentary Committees Act 1968*, section 4F (1) (b).

### ***Activities during October 2005***

**On 10 and 17 October 2005 the Committee considered and amended several chapters of the draft report on the 2005-06 Budget Estimates**

**Various chapters revised**

### ***Future Activities***

**On 3 and 7 November 2005, the Committee to continue reviewing the draft report**

**Report to be adopted by the Committee and tabled in Parliament.**

## **REVIEW OF AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS**

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Source of reference: *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, section 33(3).

### ***Activity during October 2005***

**Background research undertaken on potential follow-up reviews of the Auditor-General's reports.**

### ***Future Activity***

**The Auditor-General to brief the Committee on a number of VAGO reports.**

## **PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

Source of reference: *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, section 33(3).

### ***Activity during October 2005***

**Further research undertaken.**

### ***Future Activities***

**Draft report to be updated and reviewed**

**Draft report to be considered by the Committee.**

## **STATUTORY INDEPENDENT OFFICERS OF PARLIAMENT LEGISLATION**

Source of reference: *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, section 33(3).

### ***Activity during October 2005***

**Draft report further revised.**

### ***Future Activities***

**On 21 November 2005, revised report to be considered by the Committee and adopted**

**Report to be tabled in Parliament.**

Source of reference: *Audit Act 1994*, sections 17(1) and 19(2).

### ***Activities during October 2005***

**On 5 October 2005, the Committee received comments from the Auditor-General on the recommendations and suggestions contained in the Independent Performance Auditor's report**

**On 20 October 2005, the Committee was briefed on the draft report on the review of the performance audit of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office.**

### ***Future Activities***

**On 14 November 2005, the Committee to meet with the Auditor-General to discuss his response to the Independent Performance Auditor's report**

**On 14 December 2005, a Sub-Committee to meet with the Auditor-General and officials from the Victorian Auditor-General's Office to discuss the draft specifications for several proposed performance audits**

**Draft report on the review of the performance audit of the Victorian Auditor-General's Office to be further considered by the Committee on 6 February 2006**

**Report to be tabled in Parliament.**

## **OTHER MATTERS**

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### ***Activities during October 2005***

**During 3 to 5 October 2005, the Chair of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee attended the African Association of Public Accounts Committees conference in Sun City, South Africa and presented a paper on *Strengthening and completing the oversight and accountability loop : current constraints***

**On 6 October 2005, Ms D Green, MP, a member of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee, briefed the WA Estimates and Financial Operations Committee on the Victorian estimates process**

**During 6 to 8 October 2005, Ms D Green, MP, represented the Committee at the annual conference of the Australasian Study of Parliament Group. The theme of the conference was Parliamentary Accountability in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: The role of parliamentary oversight committees**

**On 7 October 2005, the Committee's Executive Officer briefed senior government officials from Indonesia on the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's work on governance and accountability matters**

**On 10 October 2005, officials from the Department of Treasury and Finance briefed the Committee on exposure draft 142 on financial reporting of general government sectors by governments**

**On 10 October 2005, the Committee met with Members of the WA Public Accounts Committee to discuss issues relating to local government accountability**

**On 17 October 2005, the Committee considered and amended the draft 2004-05 annual report for the PAEC. Report revised**

**Papers prepared for the Chair to present at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association 16<sup>th</sup> Australian and Pacific Regional Seminar in the Cook Islands.**

### ***Future Activities***

**On 3 November 2005, the Deputy Chair to brief a delegation from the Parliament of Ghana on the work of the Committee**

**On 7 November 2005, the Committee to consider a draft submission to the Australian Accounting Standards Board on issues raised in exposure draft 142 on financial reporting of general government sectors by governments**

**The Committee to consider a draft submission to CPA Australia about the grant administration and accountability manual for not-for-profit organisations**

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee's 2004-05 annual report to be further considered by the Committee on 14 November 2005 and adopted**

**Report to be tabled in Parliament.**

**COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE RECEIVED**

**Report on the 2003-04 Budget Outcomes – Response tabled 5 October 2005.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSES**

**Report on Corporate Governance in the Victorian Public Sector – Response due November 2005.**

**Report on parliamentary control and management of appropriations – Response due March 2006.**

# ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

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## Members:

**(Council)** *The Hon Barry Bishop, The Hon John Eren and The Hon Graeme Stoney, MLC.*

**(Assembly)** *Mr Alistair Harkness, Mr Craig Langdon, Mr Terry Mulder and Mr Ian Trezise, MP.*

**Chair:** Mr Ian Trezise, MP

**Executive Officer:** Ms A Douglas

## REVIEW OF THE INQUIRY INTO THE INCIDENCE AND PREVENTION OF PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENTS

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On 7 March 2005, the Road Safety Committee resolved pursuant to Section 33 (3) of the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, to review the recommendations made on pedestrian safety and report to Parliament on:

- (1) The Road Safety Committee's report on *Walking Safety, Inquiry into the Incidence and Prevention of Pedestrian Accidents*, tabled in Parliament, June 1999; and
- (2) The Government Response to the report tabled in Parliament, May 2000.

In particular the Committee shall examine:

- (a) The implementation of the recommendations accepted and supported by Government;
- (b) The recommendation not supported by Government and whether this recommendation needs to be re-presented in original or modified form;
- (c) New countermeasures to reduce pedestrian trauma, and
- (d) Any other issues relevant to this Inquiry.

### ***Activity during October 2005***

**The Committee will recruit a Research Officer for six months to undertake the research and draft report writing for this inquiry.**

### ***Future Activity***

**A Research Officer will be procured to work on the inquiry.**

## **INQUIRY INTO DRIVER DISTRACTION**

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The Governor in Council, under section 33 of the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003*, has referred an Inquiry into Driver Distraction to the Road Safety Committee.

The Committee is required to inquire, consider and make recommendations on the role of driver distraction in causing crashes and, in particular to report on to Parliament on:

1. the prevalence of mobile telephone use by drivers and its impact on crash causes;
2. the prevalence of in-car video devices, their effect on drivers and impact on crash causes;
3. the types of other devices and activities, both inside and outside the vehicle, that may distract a driver's attention from the driving task and lead to unsafe driving;
4. the suitability and enforceability of existing laws concerning the use of mobile telephones and other electronic devices by drivers; and
5. the possible need for change to legislation or statutory requirements to implement any recommendations made as a result of the inquiry.

In conducting its inquiry, the Committee is requested to seek information from the manufacturers and distributors of mobile telephones and other electronic devices with in-car applications, research organisations, Government and non-government agencies, motoring organisations and the community.

In particular, the measures adopted to address the issue of driver distraction in other jurisdictions and countries should be examined.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 June 2006.

### ***Activity during October 2005***

**Submissions closed on 28 October 2005. A number of key stakeholders have requested, and been granted, an extension to the deadline. To date, 30 submissions have been received.**

### ***Future Activity***

**Public Hearings are being organised for 5 – 6 December 2005. Those appearing before the Committee will include: VicRoads, Victoria Police, Transport Accident Commission and the Accident Research Centre, Monash University.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND GOVERNMENT RESPONSE RECEIVED**

**Report on Crashes Involving Roadside Objects – Response tabled 18 October 2005.**

## **COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

**Report on the Country Road Toll – Response due November 2005.**

# **RURAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

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## **Members:-**

**(Council)** *The Honourables J M McQuilten and R G Mitchell*

**(Assembly)** *Mr M Crutchfield, Mr B P Hardman, Mr C Ingram,  
Hon Dr D N Naphine and Mr P L Walsh*

**Chair:** Mr Ben Hardman MP

**Executive Officer:** Ms Lilian Topic

## **INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE OF FATALITY AND INJURY ON VICTORIAN FARMS**

Referred by Order of the Governor-in-Council on 6 May 2003 (amended 3 June 2003, further amended 16 December 2003 and 31 August 2004), for inquiry, consideration and report to Parliament on:

1. The main causes of fatality and injury on Victorian farms compared to other jurisdictions.
2. The matter and type of injuries on Victorian farms compared to other industries and jurisdictions.
3. Current programs and initiatives designed to improve occupational health and safety on Victorian farms.
4. Any impediments to sustaining improvements in farm safety.
5. The financial and social cost of death and injury on Victorian farms.
6. The need for further strategies to reduce the incidence of injury and fatality on Victorian farms, what form the strategy should take and whether they are best developed by government agencies, industry bodies, worker representatives or a combination of these. In particular the committee should consider the creation of further codes of practice or education and training programs.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 June 2005.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

- **The Chair and Executive Officer met with representatives of Work Safe Kids to discuss issues surrounding kids and farm safety, and the Committee's discussion of that issue in the report**
- **Responded to inquiries regarding the Report on the Inquiry into the Cause of Fatality and Injury on Victorian Farms, tabled on 9 August 2005.**

## **INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BUSINESS**

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Referred by Order of the Governor-in-Council on 3 June 2003, for inquiry, consideration and report to Parliament on:

The potential benefits to Victorian regional businesses from improved access to telecommunications infrastructure and services, in particular broadband infrastructure and services, and highlight any impediments that may stop businesses realising this potential. To this end, the Committee should consider the core issues of the:

1. current availability of telecommunication services at affordable prices for businesses in Victorian regional areas;
2. current availability of adequate telecommunications infrastructure for businesses in Victorian regional areas;
3. current level of competition in both the retail and wholesale telecommunications markets in Victorian regional areas;
4. current level of utilisation of available telecommunication infrastructure in regional Victoria;
5. effect that competition, in both the retail and wholesale telecommunications markets, has on the provision of telecommunication services to businesses in Victorian regional areas; and
6. effect that the current regulatory environment has on competition, in both the retail and wholesale telecommunications markets, in Victorian regional areas;

To make recommendations on any necessary or desirable actions that could be taken to assist Victorian regional businesses to be able to take advantage of any benefits from improved access to telecommunications infrastructure and services that may be identified.

The Committee should have regard to other reports that examine this matter in Victoria and other jurisdictions as well as on a national level and in particular:

1. The Telecommunications Services Inquiry 2000 (Besley);
2. The Regional Telecommunications Inquiry 2002 (Estens); and
3. "Australia's Broadband Connectivity" 2003 (Broadband Advisory Group).

This Inquiry has been proposed to examine the above matters with a focus on identifying growth opportunities for Victorian regional businesses through improving access to telecommunication services and infrastructure by improving the Victorian regional telecommunication market environment.

The Committee is required to report to Parliament by 30 September 2004.

### ***Activities during October 2005***

- **The Committee discussed drafts of a report entitled 'Telecommunications Inquiry Investigations' which provided a detailed account of the overseas visit**
- **The report 'Telecommunications Inquiry Investigations' was submitted to the Speaker and the President**

- A public hearing was held on 17 October in Melbourne. The following witnesses appeared:

**Mr John Burton, Australian Telecommunications Users Group.**

**Ms Cathy Knezevic, Corporate Affairs Manager, Austar Entertainment.**

**Mr Ilker Atakan, Business Development Manager, Enterprise Group, Ericsson.**

**Ms Tanya Stoianoff, Executive Director, Mobile Carriers Forum.**

**Mr Lawrence Paratz, Managing Director, Victoria, Telstra Country Wide,**

**Mr Tony Nielson, Group Regulatory Manager, Telstra Country Wide,**

**Mr Grant Wiltshire, Area General Manager, South West Victoria, Telstra Country Wide.**

- A regional hearing was organised for 8 and 9 November to take place in Torquay and Warrnambool.

#### ***Future activities***

- A literature and submission review to be completed
- A public hearing in Melbourne is being organised for 28 November
- A site visit to the Telstra Research and Development Centre is being organised
- Regional hearings are being organised for Bendigo, Shepparton and Broadford for 7 and 8 December
- An advertisement will be placed for a Research Officer
- Recommendations for the report into Regional Telecommunications are being drafted
- Planning for the final report.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE**

**Inquiry into the Cause of Fatality and Injury on Victorian Farms - Response due February 2006.**



# SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

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## Members:

**(Council)** *The Hons. L. Argondizzo, A. Brideson*  
**(Assembly)** *Ms L. D'Ambrosio (Chair), Mr K. S. Jasper, Mr M. A. Leighton, Mr P. J. Lockwood, Mr A. J. McIntosh, Mr J. Perera and Mr M. H. Thompson (Deputy Chair).*

**Chair:** Ms Lily D'Ambrosio MP

**Executive Officer:** Andrew Homer

## FULL COMMITTEE

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### *Activity during October 2005*

- The Committee met on 3 and 17 October 2005, where it considered and adopted Alert Digest Nos. 11 and 12 of 2005 concerning the following Bills:

#### Alert Digest No. 11

**Defamation Bill**

**Fair Trading (Telephone Marketing) Bill**

**Land Tax Bill**

**Primary Industries Acts (Further Amendment) Bill**

**Property (Co-ownership) Bill**

**Serious Offenders Monitoring Bill**

**Statute Law Revision Bill**

**Treasury Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill**

**Treasury Legislation (Repeal) Bill**

**Working with Children Bill**

#### Alert Digest No. 12

**Child Wellbeing and Safety Bill**

**Children, Youth and Families Bill**

**Congestion Levy Bill**

**Crimes (Homicide) Bill**

**Environment Effects (Amendment) Bill**

**Firearms (Further Amendment) Bill**

**Major Events (Crowd Management) and Commonwealth Games Arrangements Acts (Crowd Safety Amendment) Bill**  
**Mineral Resources Development (Brown Coal Royalties) Bill**  
**Mines (Aluminium Agreement) (Brown Coal Royalties) Bill**  
**Motor Car Traders and Fair Trading Acts (Amendment) Bill**  
**Prisoners (Interstate Transfer) (Amendment) Bill**  
**Rail Safety Bill**  
**Retail Leases (Amendment) Bill**  
**Transport Legislation (Safety Investigations) Bill**  
**Veterans Bill**  
**Water (Resource Management) Bill**

- The Executive Officer, Mr Andrew Homer and Legal Adviser, Ms Helen Mason attended the Australasian Study of Parliament Group Annual Conference in Sydney concerning “Parliament and Accountability in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Role of Parliamentary Oversight Committees”, as Committee representatives.

## **SUBCOMMITTEES**

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### **Redundant Legislation**

**Mr Murray Thompson MP (Chair)**  
**Hon. Lidia Argondizzo MLC**  
**Ms Lily D’Ambrosio MP**  
**Mr Michael Leighton MP**  
**Mr Andrew McIntosh MP**

#### ***Activity during October 2005***

- The Subcommittee has completed its references and currently has no inquiry before it.

### **Regulation Review**

**Mr Peter Lockwood MP (Chair)**  
**Ms Lily D’Ambrosio MP**  
**Mr Ken Jasper MP**  
**Hon. Andrew Brideson MLC**  
**Mr Jude Perera MP**

#### ***Activity during October 2005***

- The Subcommittee did not meet during October.
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