



PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES PROGRESS ON INVESTIGATIONS

To 30 April 2006

55th 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).

* * * * *

www.parliament.vic.gov.au

DRUGS AND CRIME PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3541 **Facsimile:** (03) 9651 3603

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

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.

Activity during April 2006

- **Mail out of the Final Report.**

Future Activities

- **Presentation at the Victorian Association of Drink & Drug Driver Service professional development forum**
- **Presentation at the 5th International Conference on Drugs & Young People.**

INQUIRY INTO THE MISUSE/ABUSE OF BENZODIAZEPINES AND OTHER FORMS OF PHARMACEUTICAL DRUGS IN VICTORIA

Referred by Order of the Governor in Council on 17 January 2006, to inquire into, consider and report to Parliament on the misuse/abuse of benzodiazepines and other forms of pharmaceutical drugs in Victoria. In particular, the Committee is required to:

1. Examine the nature, extent and culture of the misuse/abuse of benzodiazepines and other forms of pharmaceutical drugs;
2. Examine the short and long term consequences/harms of the abuse/misuse of benzodiazepines and other forms of pharmaceutical drugs;
3. Examine the relationship between benzodiazepines and other forms of pharmaceutical drugs and other forms of licit and illicit substance use;
4. Review the adequacy of existing strategies for dealing with benzodiazepines and other forms of pharmaceutical drugs misuse/abuse;
5. Recommend best practice strategies to address the issue of benzodiazepines and other forms of pharmaceutical drugs, including regulatory, law enforcement, education and treatment responses;
6. Examine national and international legislation, reports and materials relevant to the issue.

The Committee is to make its final report to Parliament no later than 15 June 2006.

Activities during April 2006

- Invitation for submissions placed in the *Herald Sun* and *The Age* on 1 April 2006
- Letters circulated to relevant organisations inviting submissions
- Preliminary research undertaken
- Plan for Inquiry developed.

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

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3592 **Facsimile:** (03) 9651 3691

Email: edc@parliament.vic.gov.au

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

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: (vacant)

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

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.*

* Terms of Reference extended to 31 March 2006

Activities during April 2006

32 written submissions received to date

Informal briefings held in Melbourne on 13 April 2006 with Australian Taxation Office.

Future Activities

Research and analysis of submissions and transcripts

Drafting chapters for the Standardbred Breeding Industry Report.

Report on the Thoroughbred Breeding Industry previously tabled on 9 February 2006.

COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Inquiry into the Viability of the Victorian Thoroughbred/Standardbred Breeding Industries – Report on the Thoroughbred Breeding Industry - Government response due 9 August 2006.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

Level 3, 157 Spring Street, Melbourne, 3000

Telephone: 9651 8309 Facsimile: 9651 8323

Email: etc@parliament.vic.gov.au

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

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

THE EFFECTS OF TELEVISION AND MULTIMEDIA ON EDUCATION IN VICTORIA

The Minister for Education and Training has requested that the Education and Training Committee investigate and report on how the role of multimedia in student learning and achievement has changed since the Family and Community Development Committee presented its report, *The effects of television and multimedia on children and families in Victoria*, in October 2000. The Committee resolved to undertake this inquiry in accordance with Section 33(3) of the *Parliamentary Committees Act 2003* on 14 March 2006. The Committee will focus on issues identified in Chapter 2, Multimedia and Education, and will report on:

1. the effects of current applications and usage levels of multimedia by young people on learning styles and educational achievement within different age groups and curriculum areas; and
2. whether students' media literacy needs have changed in recent years, in the context of rapidly increasing availability and use of multimedia by young people.

The Committee will report to Parliament by August 2006.

Activities during April 2006

Background briefings were given to the Committee by the Department of Education and Training, Multimedia Victoria and the Learning Federation

The Committee conducted investigations in New Zealand. Meetings were held with key educationalists, multimedia specialists and other experts.

Future Activity

Public hearings and school visits are to be conducted throughout May - July.

COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

**Inquiry into the promotion of mathematics and science education –
Government response due 2 September 2006.**

6. measures to promote the energy efficiency services industry, including the production of data on the performance of various technologies and information to identify and facilitate investment in the energy services industry; and
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 April 2006

- **33 submissions received to date**
- **a public hearing was held on 3 April 2006 in Melbourne with the following witnesses:**
 - **Dr Assad Gargari, Director, EEP Management**
 - **Mr Carlos Ogues, Director, Mr Solar**
 - **Ms Judy Bush, Coordinator, Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action**
- **preparation for upcoming meetings**
- **continued research and analysis of literature, submissions and transcripts**
- **report drafting.**

Future Activities

- **continued report drafting**
- **site visit of sustainable building at 40 Albert Road South Melbourne**
- **meetings scheduled for 1, 15 and 29 May 2006 to consider the draft report.**

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3526 **Facsimile:** (03) 9651 3691

Email: fcdc@parliament.vic.gov.au

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

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

Executive Officer: Mr Paul Bourke

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

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.

Activities during April 2006

- **Committee staff continuing research and further investigation of possible sites for inspection**
- **Identifying witnesses for public hearings**
- **Organisation of Interstate travel.**

LAW REFORM COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3644 **Facsimile:** (03) 9651 3674

Email: VPLRC@parliament.vic.gov.au

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

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 THE CORONER'S ACT 1985

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 June 2006.

Activities during April 2006

- **Committee meeting to consider draft chapters**
- **drafting of final report.**

Future Activity

- **Report drafting.**

INQUIRY INTO THE ADMINISTRATION AND PROBATE ACT 1958

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

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 by June 2006.

Activities during April 2006

- **Committee meetings in Sydney with New South Wales Chief Magistrate of the Local Court, Chief Judge of the District Court, Legal Aid Commission, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and Barrister Roland Bonnici**
- **Public hearings – County Court of Victoria, and Mr Brendan Murphy QC.**

Future Activities

- **Committee meeting to discuss report direction and structure**
- **compilation of data from County Court and statistical analysis**
- **report drafting.**

INQUIRY INTO THE LAW OF CONTEMPT OF COURT

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 REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Inquiry into Warrant Powers and Procedures - response due May 2006

OUTER SUBURBAN/INTERFACE SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Level 3, 157 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 8387 Facsimile: (03) 9651 8323

Email: osisdc@parliament.vic.gov.au

Website: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/osisdc

Members:

(Council) The Hon. L Argondizzo and The Hon. C. Hirsh

(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

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 has sought an extension in its final reporting date to 31 July 2006.

Activities during April 2006

The Committee held a public hearing on the 3 April 2006 which included the following witnesses:

- **Good Shepherd Youth & Family Service**
Ms Angela Palmer, Domestic Violence Program Manager
- **Peninsula Community Health Service,**
Ms Andrea Bowles, MENS Coordinator
- **Windermere Child & Family Services Inc.,**
Ms Jan Donaldson, Victims Assistance Co-ordinator
- **ANZ**
Ms Michelle Commandeur, Manager, Community Development
Mr Michel Vasta, Manager Public Policy, Government & Regulatory Affairs
- **Department for Victorian Communities**
Professor David Adams, Executive Director, Strategic Policy & Research Division
- **Mr Damian Ferrie, Director, Community Strengthening**

The Executive Officer prepared a draft report of the overseas study tour.

Future Activity

The Committee will be undertaking a study tour to New Zealand on 7 - 12 May 2006 as part of its inquiry into Building New Communities.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3551 **Facsimile:** (03) 9651 3552

Email: paec@parliament.vic.gov.au

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

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

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

Activities during April 2006

Draft report considered by the Committee on 3 April 2006 and adopted on 10 April 2006

Report tabled out of sitting on 27 April 2006.

Future Activities

Report distributed to interested stakeholders

Await the government's response to the Committee's recommendations.

2006-07 BUDGET ESTIMATES

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

Activity during April 2006

On 20 April 2006 the Committee considered and amended the PAEC 2006-07 Budget Estimates questionnaire.

Future Activities

On 3 May 2006 the questionnaire to be distributed to all Ministers and departments.

Public hearings scheduled for the following dates:

DATE AND TIME	MINISTER	PORTFOLIO
Monday, 5 June 2006 4.00 pm — 4.35 pm	Hon Steve Bracks	Multicultural Affairs
4.35 pm — 7.00 pm		Veterans' Affairs
Tuesday, 6 June 2006* 3.15 pm — 4.15 pm	Hon John Brumby	State and Regional Development
4.15 pm — 6.15 pm		Innovation
Wednesday, 7 June 2006* 3.15 pm — 6.15 pm	Hon Lynne Kosky	Education and Training
	Ms Jacinta Allan	Education Services
Thursday, 8 June 2006* 3.00 pm — 4.00 pm	Hon. Mary Delahunty	Arts
		Women's Affairs
Friday, 9 June 2006 9.30 am — 12.30 pm	Hon Bronwyn Pike	Health
Friday, 9 June 2006 2.00 pm — 5.00 pm	Hon Peter Batchelor	Transport
Tuesday, 13 June 2006* 3.15 pm — 4.35 pm	Hon Tim Holding	Corrections
4.35 pm — 6.15 pm		Police and Emergency Services
Wednesday, 14 June 2006 * 4.00 pm — 7.00 pm	Hon Sherryl Garbutt	Community Services Children
Thursday, 15 June 2006* 3.00 pm — 4.00 pm 4.30 pm — 5.30 pm	Hon Bob Cameron	Agriculture
Friday, 16 June 2006 9.30 am — 10.30 am	Hon John Pandazopoulos	Tourism
10.30 am — 12.00 noon		Gaming and Racing

* sitting day

DATE AND TIME	MINISTER	PORTFOLIO
Friday, 16 June 2006 2.00 pm — 3.00 pm	Mr John Lenders	Major Projects
3.00 pm — 3.45 pm		WorkCover/TAC
3.45 pm — 5.00 pm		Finance
Monday, 19 June 2006 3.00 pm — 4.30 pm	Hon Andre Haermeyer	Financial Services
4.30 pm — 5.15 pm		Manufacturing and Export Small Business
Tuesday, 20 June 2006 9.30 am — 10.00 am	Hon Rob Hulls	Industrial Relations
10.00 am — 11.00 am		Attorney-General
11.00 am — 12.30 pm		Planning
Tuesday, 20 June 2006 2.00 pm — 3.30 pm	Presiding Officers Hon Monica Gould Mrs Judy Maddigan	Parliamentary Departments
Wednesday, 21 June 2006 9.30 am — 10.15 am	Mr Gavin Jennings	Aboriginal Affairs
10.15 am — 12.00 noon		Aged Care
Wednesday, 21 June 2006 2.00 pm — 2.30 pm	Hon Justin Madden	Sport and Recreation
2.30 pm — 5.00 pm		Commonwealth Games
Tuesday, 4 July 2006 9.30 am — 10.15 am	Hon John Thwaites	Victorian Communities
10.15 am — 12.30 pm		Environment Water
Tuesday, 4 July 2006 2.00 pm — 3.00 pm	Hon Theo Theophanous	Resources
3.00 pm — 4.00 pm		Energy Industries
Wednesday, 5 July 2006 9.30 am — 10.30 am	Hon Marsha Thomson	Information and Communication Technology
10.30 am — 11.30 am		Consumer Affairs

DATE AND TIME	MINISTER	PORTFOLIO
Wednesday, 5 July 2006 2.00 pm — 2.30 pm	Hon Jacinta Allan	Employment
2.30 pm — 3.30 pm		Youth Affairs
Thursday, 6 July 2006 9.30 am — 10.15 am	Ms Candy Broad	Local Government
10.15 am — 11.45 am		Housing

Prepare briefing papers for the estimates hearings

Budget briefing for Members of Parliament and their staff to be held on 1 June 2006.

REVIEW OF AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS

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

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 April 2006

Further work undertaken on the draft report.

Future Activities

Draft report to be considered by the Committee

Report to be tabled in Parliament.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE

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

Activities during April 2006

The Chair and the Deputy Chair of the PAEC appointed to the interview panel for the new Auditor-General of Victoria

On 20 April 2006, the Committee was briefed by the Auditor-General on the VAGO draft budget estimates for 2006-07.

Future Activities

On 4 May 2006, the Committee to forward its response to the VAGO 2006-07 Budget Estimates to the Treasurer and the Presiding Officers of Parliament

On 29 May 2006, the Committee to be briefed by the Auditor-General on the VAGO draft annual plan for 2006-07

The Committee to consider proposed changes to the protocols between the PAEC and the Victorian Auditor-General's Office

On 29 May 2006, a Sub-Committee to discuss with the Auditor-General the draft specifications for the performance audit on health promotion.

AUSTRALASIAN COUNCIL OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEES (ACPAC)

Activity during April 2006

On 27 April 2006, Ms Glenyys Romanes, MLC, a member of PAEC, presented a paper at the mid-term conference of ACPAC.

OTHER MATTERS

Future activities

Committee to be briefed by Mr Simon Ramsey, President of the Victorian Farmers Federation, on a proposal to expand the mandate of the Auditor-General's Office to include scientific environmental audits

The Electoral Commissioner to be invited to meet with the Committee.

COMMITTEE REPORTS TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

**Report on the 2005-06 Budget Estimates
– Response due 30 May 2006.**

**Report on a legislative framework for independent officers of Parliament –
Response due 8 August 2006.**

**Report on the 2004-05 Budget Outcomes
– Response due 27 October 2006**

ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 3634 Facsimile: (03) 9651 3691

Email: rsc@parliament.vic.gov.au

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

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: Mr Richard Willis

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

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 April 2006

Public hearing held on 19 April 2006, evidence received from VicRoads, MUARC and TAC.

Future Activities

Continue review of existing evidence and preliminary drafting of report

Public Hearings in Melbourne scheduled for 1 and 29 May 2006.

INQUIRY INTO DRIVER DISTRACTION

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.

Activities during April 2006

Review of existing evidence and preliminary drafting of report

Approval obtained to travel to Wellington to discuss driver distraction study carried out in New Zealand. Preliminary arrangements put in place.

Future Activities

Continue drafting of report

New Zealand meetings on 15 and 16 May with Ministry of Transport, Land Transport NZ, Automobile Association and other groups and individuals

Possible further evidence to be obtained.

RURAL AND REGIONAL SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: 1300 787 202 / 03 9651 3580

Facsimile: 03 9651 3691

Website: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/rrsdc

Email: rrsdc@parliament.vic.gov.au

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 Naphthine 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.

Activity during April 2006

- **Media monitoring of farm safety issues.**

Future activities

- **The Chairman is to launch a Farmsafe Australia Ripper II: Grow Kids on Farms pilot program by WorkSafe K.I.D.S.**

- **The Committee is to respond to a request to participate in Farmsafe Victoria meetings regarding the recommendations of the Farm Safety report.**

INQUIRY INTO REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BUSINESS

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 31 March 2006.

Activities April 2006

- **Draft Chapters One, Two and Three, for the final report were considered by the Committee**
- **A draft front cover for the final report was considered by the Committee**
- **Drafting of chapters for the report was concluded.**

Future activities

- **Drafting of additional case studies for the report**
- **Drafting of revised material for report, based on members feedback**
- **Drafting of additional material for report, based on environmental changes (federal government actions)**
- **Further consideration by the Committee of draft chapters for the report**
- **Research Officer to attend a briefing on the impact of changes to media ownership laws**
- **Adoption of the Final Report.**

INQUIRY INTO RETAINING YOUNG PEOPLE IN RURAL TOWNS & COMMUNITIES

Referred by Order of the Governor-in-Council on 17 January 2006, for inquiry, consideration and report to Parliament on:

The strategies to encourage and support young people to remain in or return to their rural towns and communities, with a particular regard to the following:

1. identifying and examining the factors that influence young people in deciding to remain in or leave the rural communities in which they reside;
2. identifying and examining the factors that influence young people in deciding whether or not to return to the rural communities in which they have previously resided following the completion of study, travel or other fixed or short term activities in other places, and
3. developing strategies and recommendations on steps that might be taken to increase the number of young people who decide to remain in or return to rural towns and communities.

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

Activities during April 2006

- **Recruitment of a research officer for the Inquiry into Retaining Young People in Rural Towns and Communities**
- **The Executive Officer and Research Officer gave a brief presentation on the Inquiry at the meeting of Chairs of the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLEN)**
- **Continued development of contact database**
- **Organisation of the South East and Western Victoria regional hearings**
- **Organisation of a public hearing in Melbourne**

- **Public Hearings were conducted in Benalla and Alexandra, and witnesses included the following:**

Tuesday 11 April 2006: Benalla Performing Arts & Convention Centre

Rowena Allen, CEO, Cutting Edge Youth Services

John Brown AO, Chairman, Champions of the Bush, Brown Brothers Milawa Vineyard

Elin Ree, Manager Community Services, Strathbogie Shire

Katie Moran, Young Citizen of the Year 2006, Strathbogie Shire

Jane Archbold, Convener, Benalla Youth Providers Network

Stacey Lord, Project Officer, Local Learning & Employment Network

Alan Foster, Manager, Youth Services, Wodonga City Council

David Irving, Youth Services, Wodonga City Council

Glen Stawoski, CEO, North East Support & Action for Youth

Peter Ryan, CEO, Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE

Kerry Ford, Liaison Officer, Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE

Kellie Smith, Student of the Year 2004, Independent youth representatives

Henry Stuart, Former student, Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE

Jennifer Hippisley, Executive Officer, Goulburn Regional Youth Affairs Network, Goulburn Murray LLEN

Wayne Weaire, Chair, Tomorrow: Today Foundation

Barbara Alexander, Executive Officer, Tomorrow: Today Foundation

Cath Marriot, General Member, Australian Women in Agriculture

Wednesday 12 April 2006: The Court Room, CEACA, Alexandra

Cath Kesterton, Project Worker, Alexandra, Berry St Victoria

Anita Pell, Regional Director, Hume Region, Berry St Victoria

David Hall, Team Leader, Berry St Victoria

John O'Meara, Principal, Yea High School

Kate Leadbeater, Former School Captain, Yea High School

Vicki Danby, Vocational Education, Alexandra Secondary College

Louise Hogan, Managed Individual Pathways, Alexandra Secondary College

Dr Dennis O'Brien, Associate Professor, Head of Dookie Campus, Dookie College , Institute of Food and Land Resources

Bill Coppinger, CEO, Central Ranges LLEN

John Settle, Principal, The Kilmore International School

Councillor Leanne Pleash, Community and Customer Service Committee, Murrindindi Shire Council

Future activities

- **Hold the South East regional hearing**
- **Hold a regional hearing in Western Victoria**
- **Organisation of Melbourne public hearing**
- **Collection of statistical information for the Inquiry**
- **Development of a draft plan for the report**
- **Synthesis of submission and transcript material.**

COMMITTEE REPORT TABLED AND AWAITING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Nil

SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Level 8, 35 Spring Street, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: (03) 9651 4008 Facsimile: (03) 9651 3674

Website: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/sarc

Email: andrew.homer@parliament.vic.gov.au (Scrutiny of Bills)
helen.mason@parliament.vic.gov.au (Scrutiny of Regulations)
simon.dinsbergs@parliament.vic.gov.au (Administration)

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

Activity during April 2006

The Committee did not meet during April.

SUBCOMMITTEES

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 April 2006

- 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 April 2006

- The Subcommittee did not meet during April.