

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE
PAEC Inquiry into the 2025-26 Budget Estimates – Minister for Finance
Hearing Wednesday 4 June 2025

1. **Do you know the quantum of last year and the quantum proposed for this year?** (*Asked by Nick McGowan, Page 12 of the transcript*)

Transcript extract:

Nick McGOWAN: When did the government last make a contribution to the unfunded superannuation?

Chris BARRETT: I think we would have made one last financial year. Yes – last financial year, and we will make another one this year for this financial year.

Nick McGOWAN: Do you know the quantum of last year and the quantum proposed for this year?

Chris BARRETT: I would have to take that on notice, Mr McGowan. Do you have it?

Camille KINGSTON: I do not have this year's number, but if you take a look at budget paper 5, page 30, which is 'Reconciliation of the fair value of superannuation plan assets', and then if you take a look at the line item 'Employer contributions', that represents the amount of top-up payments that are budgeted for in the state budget.

Response

Based on the estimates in the *2025-26 Budget*, top-up payments totalling \$580 974 000 are budgeted to be paid in 2024-25 to support the State's objective of fully funding the unfunded liabilities of the State Superannuation Fund by 2035. In 2023-24, \$139 397 000 top-up payments were made.

2. **Secretary, can I ask: what was the gross amount of bank fees charged to the Victorian government and related entities for their accounts kept with Westpac, NAB and the Commonwealth Bank?** (*Asked by Aiv Puglielli, Page 14 of the transcript*)

Transcript extract:

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon. I might start with the department. Secretary, can I ask: what was the gross amount of bank fees charged to the Victorian government and related entities for their accounts kept with Westpac, NAB and the Commonwealth Bank?

Chris BARRETT: I would not have that number to hand, Mr Puglielli. I would need to examine and see if I can provide further information.

Response

The Victorian Government pays bank fees in accordance with the Banking and Financial Services State Purchasing Contract (SPC). Under this arrangement, fees are paid to the three panel banks for services including transactional banking, payment processing and collection activities. The SPC includes confidentiality provisions which, together with commercial-in-confidence considerations, restrict the disclosure of information regarding the specific fees paid.

3. When speaking about risk exposure and management, does the Victorian government invest in gold? (Asked by Aiv Puglielli, Page 14 of the transcript)

Transcript extract:

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Thank you. That is much appreciated. I might move on to considering – when speaking about risk exposure and management, does the Victorian government invest in gold?

Danny PEARSON: Are you asking me?

Aiv PUGLIELLI: To the Secretary if that is easy.

Chris BARRETT: I do not believe we do, Mr Puglielli, but I can check that for you. If it were to happen, it would be the Victorian Funds Management Corporation, and I am pretty sure they do not have any direct investments in gold. But let me examine and see if there is more info I can provide on that. I do not think so.

Response

The Victorian Government does not invest in gold. The Victorian Funds Management Corporation sometimes uses futures in assets like gold to diversify their investments and reduce overall risk without trading in the physical metal.

4. And maybe just to follow on – it is probably going to the same source – do we invest in cryptocurrency?

Transcript extract:

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Thank you. And maybe just to follow on – it is probably going to the same source – do we invest in cryptocurrency?

Chris BARRETT: Likewise, I would need to check.

Response

The Victorian Government does not invest in cryptocurrency, nor does the Victorian Funds Management Corporation.