



Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

Hearing date: 15/09/2025

Questions taken on notice

Directed to: Department of Government Services, Laurel Chidgey

Received date: 29/09/2025

1. P.3 Ryan Batchelor

Question: ...what the largest five, say, consultation topics in 2024 were and how many submissions each of them received, and the top five or top 10? If there are about 200 consultations taking place and about 130,000 submitters, are some of them very large and then it tails off? I am interested in what the top 10 or maybe even what an average and what a median would be for the number of submissions that are received so the committee can get a sense of: are there a limited number of things that are really impactful and really popular, or is it across the board? And particularly any insights you have got about the types or categories of consultation activities that, in your analysis, seem to be generating the most.

Laurel CHIDGEY: We might take that as a question on notice...

Response:

The top ten Engage Victoria consultations in 2024, with the number of submissions and the responsible Department

Consultation	URL	Submissions	Responsible Department
Central Highlands state forests	https://engage.vic.gov.au/central-highlands-forests	18,447	DEECA
Inquiry into Women's Pain Survey	https://engage.vic.gov.au/inquiry-into-womens-pain-survey	16,652	DH
Annual Victoria Police Community Sentiment Survey – 2024	https://engage.vic.gov.au/vicpol-2024	13,072	VicPol
Activity Centres	https://engage.vic.gov.au/activitycentres	9,162	DTP
Shaping the future with Plan for Victoria	https://engage.vic.gov.au/shape-our-victoria	6,454	DTP
Proposed changes to social media age limits	https://engage.vic.gov.au/SafeSocials	3,565	DPC
Parks Victoria booking system	https://engage.vic.gov.au/parks-booking-system	2,592	Parks Vic

Parliament of Victoria

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Minimum Standards for Rental Properties and Rooming houses	https://engage.vic.gov.au/new-minimum-standards-for-rental-properties-and-rooming-houses	2,559	DGS
The 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan	https://engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan	2,388	DEECA
Victorian cat management strategy	https://engage.vic.gov.au/cat-management-strategy	1,946	DEECA

Average number of Engage Victoria submissions launched per month in 2024

Month	Consultations	Submissions	Average
Jan-24	7	4,317	617
Feb-24	25	5,073	202
Mar-24	16	6,000	375
Apr-24	12	22,977	1,914
May-24	14	28,416	2,029
Jun-24	16	11,495	718
Jul-24	18	14,648	813
Aug-24	20	9,799	489
Sep-24	17	10,434	613
Oct-24	15	8,920	594
Nov-24	25	10,421	416
Dec-24	12	5,560	463
Total	197	138,060	770

2. P.3 Ryan Batchelor

Question: ...in reading the public service's *Public Engagement Framework*, which was released about four or five years ago, it had in it an evaluation framework that looked at two domains, one of which looked at how the public was being informed and the second was looking at how the public sector itself was changing the way it behaves. If there was any sort of reporting or any analysis of the extent to which the outcomes that were sought through that framework, the *Public Engagement Framework 2021–2025*, were being measured, that would be useful for the committee to receive. I am not sure if that is something that you have, but maybe you could take on notice for us looking for whether there has been any measurement of the effectiveness of the engagement framework that the government set out in the last five years.

Laurel CHIDGEY: ...so we will try and take on notice the question on effectiveness of the evaluation framework but note that the DGS does not administer that framework.

Ryan BATCHELOR: Who does, do you know?

Laurel CHIDGEY: We will have to take that on notice and confirm.

Response:

The Public Engagement Framework was created in response to a [VAGO recommendation](#) allocated to the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) in 2017. DPC funded and delivered the Framework in 2021.

3. P.6 Wendy Lovell - Engage Victoria

Wendy LOVELL: ...are you saying that there is an ability on your platform to publish information as it is submitted?

Philippa NIHILL: ...there are definitely a range of things – for instance, the surveys – that are not currently set up so that you can see the real-time submission of those and content of those real-time submissions.

Wendy LOVELL: Would it be possible to set it up to do that?

Laurel CHIDGEY: We would have to take that as a question on notice in terms of the possibility.

Response:

The Engage Victoria platform provides a suite of participation tools to support public engagement. Some of these, like pins on a map, can and do publish information as it is submitted. Where any of the submissions from those tools have used a free text field, the responses must be moderated to ensure compliance with the platform moderation policy and the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) under the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic).

The Engage Victoria moderation policy can be found at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/moderation>

4. P.8 Sarah Mansfield

Question: Do you have any sense of what the uptake is like in different engagements of those different tools? Is it something that then is routinely adopted, from what you are aware of?

Laurel CHIDGEY: In terms of the use of the different features that are available?

Sarah MANSFIELD: Yes.

Laurel CHIDGEY: I think we would have to take that as a question on notice.

Response:

Participation tool usage based on total consultations and public responses in 2024

Tools	Consultations	Public Responses
Surveys	347	124,946

Map surveys	30	10,915
Ideas	45	1,088
Questions	11	1,029
Polls	0	0
Discussions	0	0

5. P.11 Gaelle Broad

Question: How much does it cost a department to actually run a consultation through Engage Victoria? What is the lowest rate and what is the highest rate?

Laurel CHIDGEY: I have not got that data in front of me right now, so we would have to take that on notice.

Response:

Engage Victoria does not charge a fee per consultation. Instead, it uses a tiered pricing model that reflects usage as set out below. Departments pay an annual base fee to maintain the core platform, plus departments and agencies pay a usage-based fee.

Commented [JB1]: @Jo de Morton (DGS) I lost your comment but reworded this section

Commented [Jd2R1]: Better thanks

Rate type	2024/25 (12 months)
Dept. base fee	\$56,500
Dept. tier 1 (>10 projects)	\$56,500
Dept. tier 2 (5 – 10 projects)	\$28,250
Dept. tier 3 (1 – 4 projects)	\$14,125
Agency tier 1 (>20 projects)	\$113,000
Agency tier 2 (10 – 20 projects)	\$56,500
Agency tier 3 (5 – 9 projects)	\$28,250
Agency tier 4 (<5 projects)	\$14,125

6. P. 12 Gaelle Broad

Question: ... is the capacity for each website to have the total number of submissions received publicly shared on the website page?

Laurel CHIDGEY: In terms of the total number of submissions that have been submitted?

Gaelle BROAD: For that individual consultation, yes.

Laurel CHIDGEY: As in shared out to the community? ...

Gaelle BROAD: ... we have had questions raised ... by the Riddells Creek community ...They found a big difference with what the government first advised as far as submissions received. When they raised concerns – because

they knew that they had put in a lot more than that – there were over a thousand extra that were found, so they asked for an independent review. They just sort of undertook an internal review and said it was working as it should, but clearly there was a big difference there.

Laurel CHIDGEY: We will have to take that one on notice.

Response:

Departments and agencies leading consultations may choose to publish the number of submissions received once they have validated the number of unique submissions.