

**Responses to Questions on Notice or further information agreed to be  
supplied at the hearings**

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Roma Britnell
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**Question:**

How many redundancies were there in 2024–25 in the Premier’s office and the ministerial offices?

**Transcript extract:**

Roma BRITNELL: Thank you. And how many redundancies were there in 2024–25 in the Premier’s office and the ministerial offices, please?

*Members interjecting.*

Roma BRITNELL: Thank you, Secretary. I am asking the question.

Jeremi MOULE: Deputy Chair, I may need to take that on notice. I do not have the specific number in front of me.

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**Answer:**

There were 62 FTE redundancies in Ministerial and Parliamentary Services in 2024–25, including:

- Premier’s office — 8 FTE
- Other ministers’ offices — 47 FTE
- Opposition offices — 7 FTE.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Roma Britnell
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**Question:**

How many WorkCover claims were made by staff in the Premier's office and ministerial offices in 2024–25?

**Transcript extract:**

Roma BRITNELL: Okay. How many WorkCover claims were made by staff in the Premier's office and ministerial offices in 2024–25?

Jeremi MOULE: We are not aware of any. There are not any in our data. I am prepared to check that for you, Deputy Chair, but we are not aware of any.

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**Answer:**

There have been no WorkCover claims lodged by staff in the Premier's office and ministerial offices in the 2024–25 reporting period.

<b>Witness</b>	Deputy Secretary Jason Loos
<b>Committee member</b>	Richard Welch / Roma Britnell
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**Question:**

Can we have a copy of that consultation? A list of the industries and the businesses.

**Transcript extract:**

Richard WELCH: Thank you, Chair. Mr Moule, on the growth statement, on page 1 it says DPC leads the whole-of-government economic policy delivery, and on page 1 of the growth statement it says the policy is the ‘result of collaboration across government, business and industry’. What businesses were consulted with in the growth statement?

Jeremi MOULE: In the development of the Economic Growth Statement? I might ask Mr Loos to go to the details of that, although I would say from the outset that the bulk of that engagement, although we may have been involved, would have been led by the by the department of jobs and industries. While we might have had some visibility, they would have led on that work. I will ask Mr Loos to answer.

Jason LOOS: Thanks, Secretary. DPC played a coordination role in pulling together the Economic Growth Statement, so that included across a number of departments given the broad nature.

Richard WELCH: What businesses were consulted with?

Jason LOOS: In terms of businesses, it was predominantly, as the Secretary said, through other departments talking to their business units.

Richard WELCH: So you are not aware of which businesses?

Jason LOOS: No.

Richard WELCH: Which industries were consulted with?

Jason LOOS: Traditionally we would do a range of business sectors to pull together a statement like that.

Richard WELCH: What form would that take?

Jason LOOS: As part of that you might know that the Premier had her Premier’s Business Council, and that was a range of businesses, and discussions through that mechanism came through. We have got a few parallel forums where we get information from business.

Richard WELCH: So a bit of consultation, a bit of feedback. Can we have a copy of that consultation?

Roma BRITNELL: A list of the industries and the businesses.

Jason LOOS: Yes, we can provide some information in terms of the types of businesses.

**Answer:**

Development of the *Economic Growth Statement* involved over 20 business and industry roundtables held between June and November 2024.

Roundtables were hosted by the then Treasurer, Minister for Jobs and Industry, Minister for Employment, Minister for Regional Development, and Parliamentary Secretaries, with departmental support provided by the Department of Treasury and Finance predominantly for gathering stakeholders' views.

A range of sectors were covered in the roundtables, such as manufacturing, digital technology, energy, retail, Aboriginal economic development, regional development and social enterprise.

Some of those consulted included:

- Business Council of Australia
- Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Australian Industry Group
- Committee for Economic Development of Australia
- Yuma Yirramboi Council
- Australian China Business Council Victoria
- Hanwha Defence Australia
- Jayco
- Coles
- Bunnings
- George Weston Foods
- Pact Group
- Monash University.

The role of the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) was to support and help coordinate work across the Victorian Government.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Roma Britnell
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**Question:**

Can you provide that on notice, if you are going to go back and have a look?

**Transcript extract:**

Richard WELCH: Now, we have seen in the last year that actually the state went backwards by 0.8 per cent GSP per capita. Has the department conducted any modelling of how this will affect wages or living standards in Victoria?

Jeremi MOULE: I think that is a question best directed to the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Richard WELCH: So you have not done any modelling?

Jeremi MOULE: The Department of Premier and Cabinet has not done any modelling on that matter.

Richard WELCH: Any modelling on it? No. Has the Premier been briefed on this pretty concerning outcome? Have you briefed the Premier?

Jeremi MOULE: Mr Welch, on major data releases, including from the ABS and including that single data point that you are referring to, that would have been part of routine briefing that we provide on major dataset releases.

Richard WELCH: So the Premier has been briefed on this? Yes?

Jeremi MOULE: The extent to which we went to that specific single data point that you are referring to, as important as that is –

Richard WELCH: Well, it is not a trivial point, Secretary.

Jeremi MOULE: Please allow me to finish my sentence – what we included in a briefing to the Premier on the full release of that dataset, which included a lot of other important data as well, I would need to go back and have a look and see whether we can provide that advice.

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**Answer:**

DPC briefs the Premier on fiscal and economic parameters through Cabinet and relevant sub-committees. These Cabinet and sub-committee briefings cover major data releases including the GSP per capita indicator where relevant.

<b>Witness</b>	Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Richard Welch
<b>Page of transcript</b>	9

**Question:**

Interdepartmental meetings: Can a copy of the minutes be provided to this committee?

**Transcript extract:**

Richard WELCH: Thank you, Secretary. In November last year, addressing the committee, you said DPC and DTF have regular interdepartmental meetings in relation to the SRL and other matters. Have these meetings continued?

Jeremi MOULE: Yes, they have.

Richard WELCH: Can a copy of the minutes be provided to this committee?

Jeremi MOULE: I can take that question on notice, Mr Welch.

Richard WELCH: Is there a reason why it could not?

Jeremi MOULE: Aspects of the minutes which are periodically FOI-ed by a few sources, including the opposition, are subject to some FOI-related exemptions, particularly some of the material that is considered at that IDC that is on a pathway to cabinet or committee consideration. It is almost certainly the case that we will be able to provide those to you, but with some redactions.

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**Answer:**

Interdepartmental minutes are created for internal use and include advice to government on commercial and Cabinet matters. They also only reflect a point in time discussion. Release of all of these documents may impact Cabinet and commercial discussions.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
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**Question:**

How many meetings were there with the Premier's advisory committee?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Thank you, Chair. A couple of questions going back to the Premier's advisory council. How many meetings were there with the Premier's advisory committee?

Jeremi MOULE: We think about six, but we could check that figure for you. In the 2024–25 period — they have obviously continued to meet throughout this financial year, but in the reporting period we would say about half a dozen.

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**Answer:**

The Premier's Business Council, made up of leading Victorian businesspeople, was announced through the *Economic Growth Statement* to provide direct advice to the Premier. It has met seven times since its establishment, including four times in 2024–25 and three times in 2025–26.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
<b>Page of transcript</b>	14

**Question:**

On the Economic Growth Statement, could you please provide some consultation, feedback or correspondence regarding the Economic Growth Statement from the Business Council of Australia and VCCI? Do you have any of that consultation feedback from BCA and VCCI?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Okay, great. If you could provide that, that would be great. On the *Economic Growth Statement*, could you please provide some consultation, feedback or correspondence regarding the *Economic Growth Statement* from the Business Council of Australia and VCCI? Do you have any of that consultation feedback from BCA and VCCI?

Jason LOOS: In terms of the *Economic Growth Statement*?

Jeremi MOULE: Ms Benham, I am not precisely sure what product you are asking for.

Jade BENHAM: Have the Business Council of Australia or VCCI —

Jeremi MOULE: Have they written to us?

Jade BENHAM: Yes. Has there been any feedback on the consultation that your department has done on the *Economic Growth Statement*?

Jeremi MOULE: Feedback in terms of content that they wanted to feed into the *Economic Growth Statement*?

Jade BENHAM: Yes.

Jeremi MOULE: We can see what they provided us, yes.

Jade BENHAM: Then you will provide that to us?

Jeremi MOULE: If we are able to, yes.

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**Answer:**

Representatives from the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) and the Business Council of Australia (BCA) attended roundtable discussions that supported the development of the *Economic Growth Statement*. VCCI and BCA did not provide any written submissions.



**Witness**

Deputy Secretary Jason Loos

**Committee member**

Jade Benham

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**Question:**

Could you please provide a list of businesses with whom the department consulted in relation to the *Economic Growth Statement*?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Great. Thank you. Could you please provide a list of businesses with whom the department consulted in relation to the *Economic Growth Statement*?

Jason LOOS: Yes, I can provide that.

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**Answer:**

Please see the response to the similar question on pages 3–4.

<b>Witness</b>	Acting Deputy Secretary Dannii de Kretser
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
<b>Page of transcript</b>	18–19

**Question:**

Premier's Diwali event

- What was the total cost of the Premier's Diwali event on 8 October 2025?
- What was the total cost of the event last year, including the venue hire and catering?
- What was the cost per head for this year's Diwali?
- Can the Secretary outline the internal processes that led to the decision to restrict the parliamentary invitations for the Premier's Diwali reception to Labor government MPs and their guests, while providing only one invitation to the opposition?
- Who approved that approach?
- Did the department undertake any assessment of whether using taxpayer funds for an event with such an uneven and politically selective invitation list was appropriate? And what, if any, advice was prepared warning of the risk of the event being perceived as partisan?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Okay. Thank you. Moving on to the Premier's Diwali event, which was 8 October this year, what was the total cost? And there was also the event at the Melbourne exhibition centre last year, so this has been going on for several years. What was the total cost of the event last year, including the venue hire and catering, which was the centrepiece at Melbourne Park?

Dannii de KRETSEER: I do not have the figures for last year's Diwali. I have the attendance rate of this year's Diwali, but we are happy to take that on notice.

Jeremi MOULE: We are happy to take that question on notice, Ms Benham.

Jade BENHAM: Okay, great. So the attendance rate, and can I also get the cost per head, please.

Jeremi MOULE: Yes. We will tell you how many people came and how much it cost.

Jade BENHAM: I understand that the government members of this committee think this line of questioning is a joke, and that probably illustrates why Victoria is in the state that it is in. Can the Secretary outline the internal processes that led to the decision to restrict the parliamentary invitations for the Premier's Diwali reception to Labor government MPs and their guests, while providing only one invitation to the opposition, and who approved that approach?

Dannii de KRETSEER: We can absolutely provide something on notice around how the process was orchestrated. Sorry, I was not in the chair at the time, but I am happy to do so on notice.

Jade BENHAM: So there was no obvious process that was gone through to make sure that Labor MPs had tables available to them while the opposition had one?

Jeremi MOULE: Ms Benham, we are happy to take that question on notice. Neither of us are immediately familiar with the process for developing the guest list for last year's Diwali.

Jade BENHAM: Okay, thank you. Assessment of appropriateness and impartiality – did the department undertake any assessment of whether using taxpayer funds for an event with such an uneven and politically selective invitation list was appropriate? And what, if any, advice was prepared warning of the risk of the event being perceived as partisan?

Jeremi MOULE: We will also take that question on notice.

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**Answer:**

**a. What was the total cost of the Premier's Diwali event on 8 October 2025?**

The total cost of the 2025 Premier's Diwali State Reception held at Centrepiece cost \$348,736 (ex GST).

**b. What was the total cost of the event last year, including the venue hire and catering?**

The total cost of the 2024 Premier's Diwali State Reception held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre was \$313,322 (ex. GST).

**c. What was the cost per head for this year's Diwali?**

The indicative cost per head for the 2024 Premier's Diwali State Reception was approximately \$260 (ex. GST) which covered catering, venue hire, entertainment and event production.

**d. Can the Secretary outline the internal processes that led to the decision to restrict the parliamentary invitations for the Premier's Diwali reception to Labor government MPs and their guests, while providing only one invitation to the opposition?**

The Premier's Diwali State Reception receives significant interest each year, and attendance is limited by the venue capacity of up to 1,200 guests.

To ensure representation across the many communities that celebrate Diwali in Victoria, DPC develops a draft guest list in consultation with the Victorian Multicultural Commission. This focuses on key organisations, community representatives and leaders for the guest list.

It is standard protocol to invite the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Greens and the Leader of the Nationals — each with an accompanying guest — to major state events. Where the leader is unable to attend, they may nominate a representative.

The final guest list and allocation of invitations to other Members of Parliament is determined by the Premier's office and relevant Ministers' offices.

**e. Who approved that approach?**

DPC follows a standard process when developing guest lists for events delivered on behalf of the Victorian Government. This includes working closely with relevant stakeholders to develop a draft invite list for relevant Ministerial offices to consider and approve.

- f. Did the department undertake any assessment of whether using taxpayer funds for an event with such an uneven and politically selective invitation list was appropriate? And what, if any, advice was prepared warning of the risk of the event being perceived as partisan?**

The Premier's Diwali State Reception is an annual event, funded under the 'Delivering Commitments for Victoria's Multicultural Communities initiative', that brings together Victorians to celebrate Diwali, the Festival of Lights. The event is delivered by DPC on behalf of the Victorian Government.

<b>Witness</b>	Acting Deputy Secretary Dannii de Kretser
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
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**Questions:**

Premier's multicultural gala dinner:

- What was the total cost of the event, of the Premier's multicultural gala dinner, including venue hire and catering?
- Who made the decision to rename the gala dinner? Were there any concerns within the department about renaming from 'the VMC' to 'the Premier's multicultural gala dinner'?
- The opposition was afforded the equivalent of one table at that dinner also, whereas correspondence received via FOI found that every Labor government MP and minister was invited and afforded to bring guests. Why?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Thank you. I am going to move on, because I do not know that I am going to get a question for that one as well. Let us talk about the Premier's multicultural gala dinner. What was the total cost of the event, of the Premier's multicultural gala dinner, including venue hire and catering?

Dannii de KRETSEER: Are you referring to the Victorian Multicultural Commission's gala dinner? Is that the one?

Jade BENHAM: It is called the Premier's now. Yes, the Victorian multicultural gala.

Dannii de KRETSEER: For 2024–25? I will have to take that on notice and come back to you.

Jade BENHAM: You do not have the figure in front of you?

Dannii de KRETSEER: I do not have the figure in front of me, sorry.

Jade BENHAM: Okay. For the first time ever this year the longstanding event was renamed from 'the Victorian multicultural gala dinner' to 'the Premier's multicultural gala dinner'. Who made that decision?

Dannii de KRETSEER: As you can tell from my questioning, I will have to take that on notice and let you know who made that decision.

Jade BENHAM: Great, thank you. Were there any concerns within the department about renaming from 'the VMC' to 'the Premier's multicultural gala dinner'?

Dannii de KRETSEER: I cannot comment on that. I will take it on notice, though, and answer both your questions.

Jade BENHAM: We can add to that. The opposition was afforded the equivalent of one table at that dinner also, whereas correspondence received via FOI found that every Labor government MP and minister was invited and afforded to bring guests. Why?

Dannii de KRETZER: Again, I will be able to advise and will take it on notice. I will have a look at what the decision-making process was.

Jade BENHAM: So you are not concerned about the politicisation of these events? And is the department offering advice to government that these events, using taxpayer money, could be perceived as politicised – completely politicised?

Jeremi MOULE: Ms Benham, I absolutely understand your question. Ms de Kretzer and I are not immediately familiar with the detail, and we are very happy to answer those questions on notice.

Jade BENHAM: That sort of advice is surely not cabinet in confidence.

Jeremi MOULE: I have acknowledged that we are happy to answer those questions. There is no issue. We are happy to answer those questions on notice; we just do not have that information immediately available to either of us.

#### Answer:

**a. What was the total cost of the event, of the Premier's multicultural gala dinner, including venue hire and catering?**

The total cost of the 2025 Premier's Multicultural Gala Dinner was \$438,063.

**b. Who made that decision to rename? Were there any concerns about renaming the VMC to Premier's multicultural dinner?**

Between 2002 and 2019 the event was called the 'Premier's Gala Dinner'.

The event was not held between 2020 and 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was then held again from 2023 to 2024 as the 'Victorian Multicultural Gala Dinner'.

In 2025, based on a recommendation from the Victorian Multicultural Commission, the Government reverted the title of the event to the 'Premier's Multicultural Gala Dinner' to reflect its historical title and to reflect precedent and acknowledge the Premier's central role in celebrating Victoria's diverse communities.

**c. The opposition was afforded the equivalent of one table at that dinner also, whereas correspondence received via FOI found that every Labor government MP and minister was invited and afforded to bring guests. Why?**

The Premier's Multicultural Gala Dinner is a popular event, with limited tickets. Ticket allocations were managed to meet the expectations of a large and diverse range of stakeholders.

Complimentary tickets were offered to:

- the Premier and guests
- Minister for Multicultural Affairs and guests

- Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs
- Opposition Leader, Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs and eight Members of the Opposition
- National Party Leader
- Leader of the Greens.

A further 30 tickets for Members of Parliament (MP) and 118 MP guests were allocated for purchase. Invitations to purchase these tickets were managed by relevant ministerial offices.

<b>Witness</b>	Acting Deputy Secretary Dannii de Kretser
<b>Committee member</b>	Lauren Kathage
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**Question:**

How long will victim survivors have access to the counselling following the hearings?

**Transcript extract:**

**Dannii de KRETSEER:** Thanks, Secretary. Thanks for the question.

The website is live. I know Ms Connors may have had hearings on the 5th and the 6th or early November. Ms Connors is also making herself available to meet with victim-survivors one to one, because it is very, very important that people have the right forum to share their truths about what are abhorrent acts essentially. We also make sure that victim-survivors are able to present anonymously should they wish, and counselling and other supports are wrapped around all victim-survivors in the lead-up and after any of those hearings or interactions with the truth-telling forum. So it is well underway, and I am sure it will reveal significant impacts on victim-survivors as the process unfolds.

Lauren KATHAGE: How long will they have access to the counselling et cetera following the hearings?

Dannii de KRETSEER: The truth-telling commission is slated to run into this financial year, so I would assume we would be quite flexible with that. But I am absolutely happy to take that on notice to give you more specifics if that would be helpful.

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**Answer:**

The *Forum for Truth and Recognition* (the Forum) places significant emphasis on the psychological, cultural and physical safety of people who have experienced child sexual abuse in school. The Forum provides participants with access to immediate mental health and wellbeing support and counselling services, as well as referrals for ongoing support.

Access to government-funded support services for people participating in the Forum was funded in the 2024–25 State Budget. These specific services are funded until the end of the 2025–26 financial year, at which time the Forum is due to finalise and deliver its report to the Premier of Victoria.

In addition to the specific support and counselling services outlined above, participants, or anyone who needs support, can also access a range of free support services at any time, including 1800 RESPECT, 13YARN, Lifeline, Beyond Blue and other sexual assault and survivor networks and hotlines. These free resources are outlined on the support and wellbeing page on the Forum's website:

<https://www.truthandrecognition.vic.gov.au/support-and-wellbeing>



<b>Witness</b>	Acting Deputy Secretary Dannii de Kretser
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
<b>Page of transcript</b>	24

**Question:**

Can you give me perhaps any details on how many government MPs were invited to the regional events and how many opposition MPs may have been invited?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to go back to the VMC and talk about the regional events that you mentioned in the last session. Can you give me perhaps any details on how many government MPs were invited to those events and how many opposition MPs may have been invited as well?

Dannii de KRETSEER: I would be happy to take on notice the guest list. I do not have that information and they are run by organisations, so I will have to check what we hold. But I absolutely can do that.

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**Answer:**

The Regional Multicultural Festivals and Events Fund allocated funding to organisations to deliver regional events in 2024–25, as outlined in the 2024–25 DPC Annual Report. Grants were awarded through an open and competitive process which requires that all events must be open and accessible to the general public. Decisions about who is invited to these events, including Members of Parliament, rests solely with the funded organisations. DPC does not hold this information.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
<b>Page of transcript</b>	24

**Question:**

Treaty: Has there been costs for legal advice for other than to the Solicitor-General?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Great. Thank you very much. Moving on to treaty and the total amount that the department did spend on legal advice relating to establishing treaty –

Jeremi MOULE: Yes, Ms Benham. I should have that here. Sorry, it is a subset of our totals. Let me just –

Jade BENHAM: That is okay.

Jeremi MOULE: Thank you. So the legal expenditure for the 2024–25 financial year was \$1.22 million. Just to be very clear about that figure, there may be a small lag in some invoices that we have received. So that is the expenditure figure. My advice is that it will not change significantly, but it might be like tens of thousands more.

Jade BENHAM: That is fine. Which law firms provided this advice?

Jeremi MOULE: Primarily that advice has been sought from the solicitor-general.

Jade BENHAM: From the solicitor-general.

Jeremi MOULE: You will appreciate the complexity and novel nature of the work that is being done here, and the intersection with the Victorian constitution, and also making sure that the work that is done here protects the eminence of the Parliament. So it has been necessary to make sure we had legal advice of the highest order.

Jade BENHAM: So there is a cost associated with that?

Jeremi MOULE: With the legal advice? That is the figure that I just –

Jade BENHAM: That is all to the solicitor-general? There has been no outside legal advice?

Jeremi MOULE: I would have to check that. But if there was other legal advice, it would be a small amount relative to the VGSO and the solicitor-general.

**Answer:**

The Solicitor-General does not invoice the State for legal costs, however Victorian Government Solicitor's Office (VGSO) costs were incurred for preparing briefs for the Solicitor-General, and providing advice to DPC. Treaty Counsel fees were incurred for joint advice they gave with the Solicitor-General, or for their standalone advice.

Most of the legal fees described for the 2024–25 financial year were for the VGSO and external counsel who have provided Treaty advice.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Roma Britnell
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**Question:**

Why did a single employee have to enter a non-disclosure agreement with DPC?

**Transcript extract:**

Roma BRITNELL: Why did a single employee have to enter a non-disclosure agreement with DPC?

Jeremi MOULE: In terms of the single individual, I am not certain. I do not have that at hand. I am also not certain whether, even if I did, I would be legally allowed to disclose that. But I think also as part of that FOI response, which was to the opposition, we made it clear that the department did not enter into any non-disclosure or confidentiality agreements related to sexual or other harassment, so that was clear in the response to the FOI.

Roma BRITNELL: Okay. Are you able to provide on notice the reason for that individual?

Jeremi MOULE: If I am legally permitted to. Given that is a non-disclosure agreement, there may be some limitations, Ms Britnell.

Roma BRITNELL: I am sure you can give us an understanding of the theme, like you said before – not sexual, but perhaps something else.

Jeremi MOULE: I am happy to respond in the way that we are able to, yes.

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**Answer:**

DPC is unable to provide further details due to privacy and the terms of the agreement.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Roma Britnell
<b>Page of transcript</b>	25

**Question:**

How many non-disclosure/confidentiality deeds have been entered into by DPC to date in 2025?

**Transcript extract:**

Roma BRITNELL: How many non-disclosure/confidentiality deeds have been entered into by DPC to date in 2025?

Jeremi MOULE: I think the reporting period of 2024–25 is complete in terms of the – no, that is the FOI number, sorry. I can provide that answer on notice.

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**Answer:**

DPC entered into two non-disclosure agreements in 2024–25.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
<b>Page of transcript</b>	26

**Question:**

Is DPC aware of what polling surveys or market research, if no external consultants were used, the department undertook during the reporting period to measure public awareness in support of Treaty?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: That is okay. I will refer them to that. Can we just go back to treaty for a moment and talk about the external consultation that went on. Is DPC aware of what polling surveys or market research, if no external consultants were used, the department undertook during the reporting period to measure public awareness in support of treaty?

Jeremi MOULE: Ms Benham, I am not aware that we did any market research in the way that you have characterised it to get public sentiment or views on treaty. I am happy to take that on notice to make sure that that is correct, but neither the Deputy Secretary nor I recall anything directly.

Terry GARWOOD: Well, if we did it, I was not aware of it, because we have not had it.

Jade BENHAM: That is okay.

Jeremi MOULE: Yes, it seems unlikely, but I am certainly happy to check.

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**Answer:**

No polling surveys, research or external consultants were engaged by DPC in regard to measuring public support for Treaty during 2024–25.

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
<b>Page of transcript</b>	26

**Question:**

How many FTE staff were dedicated to supporting the Treaty negotiations within DPC, and what was the total cost of those staff?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Great. No, that is fine. How many FTE staff were dedicated to supporting the treaty negotiations within DPC, and what was the total cost of those staff?

Jeremi MOULE: There is a dedicated treaty negotiations and strategy team in the Department of Premier and Cabinet that is on a fixed-term funding profile. That team reports to me. I would need to get the accurate FTE and cost number, but is in the order of 30 to 35 FTE. I am happy to provide that in more detail, but that gives you a sense of the size.

Jade BENHAM: Yes, and the cost within that detail.

Jeremi MOULE: Absolutely.

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**Answer:**

The total FTE for DPC's Treaty Negotiations and Strategy branch as at 30 June 2025 was 31.3. The total cost of employee related expenses for 2024–25 was \$6,111,193.

<b>Witness</b>	Deputy Secretary Terry Garwood
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
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**Question:**

Can you explain who was paid to write the first principles review of the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* and why it is not being published?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Yes, great. Thank you. About the questionnaire, it lists a review commission called the interim scoping commission on compensation issues. Given this review cost taxpayers \$150,000 and it is clearly public interest, can you explain who was paid to write it and why it is not being published?

Jeremi MOULE: Ms Benham, I am sorry, do you have a page number to assist us?

Jade BENHAM: Yes, the questionnaire, section H, page 70.

Jeremi MOULE: Thank you. Ms Benham, just to be clear, so we are all looking at the same thing, this is the first principles review of the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act*?

Jade BENHAM: Yes.

Jeremi MOULE: Is that the item, yes? Thank you. Mr Garwood will catch up with his paperwork, but I will ask him to respond to that.

Terry GARWOOD: I will try and just find the relevant section. The background of this work is the High Court's Timber Creek decision of 2019. As a result of that Timber Creek decision, the compensation arrangements that are payable under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* have to take account of the findings of the High Court – those findings adjust the compensation payments – and also come to grips with impact on culture. As part of the process, the government has instituted a first principles review of the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* on the basis that it wanted to see what improvements could be made to the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* both from a government perspective and from the perspective of the traditional owners as well. That was the first principles review, which sought to come to grips with the High Court's decision around the native titles around Timber Creek. As part of that we had to come to grips with this cultural loss question and what that looks like and how we can come to grips with it. As a consequence of that we brought some consultants in to look at compensation issues et cetera. I do not think there is any reason why that could not be made available to you, because it is a document that seeks to come to grips with the compensation outcomes of the High Court's Timber Creek decision.

Jade BENHAM: Great. If that could be supplied to the committee, that would be great.



**Answer:**

A copy of the report is supplied.

<b>Witness</b>	Deputy Secretary Terry Garwood
<b>Committee member</b>	Jade Benham
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**Question:**

Can the department provide the average waiting time and the average cost charge to applicants to provide the information they will require for their CHMPs for 2023–24 and 2024–25?

**Transcript extract:**

Jade BENHAM: Great. Okay. Can we talk about how, quickly, as referenced in the questionnaire, the department funds and supports RAPs, registered Aboriginal parties, and holds oversight of the cultural heritage management plans.

Terry GARWOOD: Yes.

Jade BENHAM: The committee has previously asked for the average waiting time and cost of the CHMPs undertaken by each RAP. The question was taken on notice last year, but no response was provided, apparently. Can the department now provide the average waiting time and the average cost charge to applicants to provide the information they will require for their CHMPs?

Terry GARWOOD: I apologise if that information has not been provided previously, and I will seek to provide the information. I will take it on –

Jade BENHAM: Yes, if we could get that for 2023–24 and 2024–25, that would be terrific. Thank you very much.

Terry GARWOOD: Yes, will do.

Jeremi MOULE: Ms Benham, just on that point, there will be a question as to whether or not the department holds the data or has access to the data. I recall in responding to questions on notice previously that we had to try to work through that. We actually did not have the data because it is for the specific issues of those that are dealt with by the RAPs themselves.

Jade BENHAM: So the RAPs do not share that data with the department?

Jeremi MOULE: We did not have a dataset. There may be some specific matters that they consider where the department becomes involved, but otherwise they are matters that are worked through by the RAPs in question, and they do not. In terms of us responding to this committee's request, we do not necessarily hold that data. We will take your question on notice and respond to it again, but I do recall that the last time when we had a similar question, we had to try to work through that issue.

**Answer:**

DPC does not keep data on waiting times or costs to complete Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs) undertaken by Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs).

<b>Witness</b>	Secretary Jeremi Moule
<b>Committee member</b>	Richard Welch
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**Question:**

Could we have a copy of the Grant recipient contract template that is used for grant recipients?

**Transcript extract:**

Richard WELCH: Is there a template copy of the NDA that grant recipients are required to sign?

Jeremi MOULE: Sorry, could you repeat that?

Richard WELCH: Could we have a copy of the NDA template that is used for grant recipients?

Jeremi MOULE: The grant recipients did not receive an NDA. There is a confidentiality clause in the agreement, Mr Welch, which you would expect to see in every legal document that ever gets received.

Richard WELCH: That is fine. Is there a template version of that?

Jeremi MOULE: There is a template grant recipient contract, which we are happy to provide to the committee.

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**Answer:**

Victorian Common Funding Agreement templates are used for grants agreements. The templates are publicly available through vic.gov.au:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/victorian-common-funding-agreement-forms-and-templates>

The terms and conditions of the funding agreement templates are also available on the website.

**Witness** Secretary Jeremi Moule

**Committee member** Aiv Puglielli

**Page of transcript** 34

**Question:**

Can the department data where you would see that disaggregation geographically of where we are seeing the sharpest increases in racist incidents be provided to the committee?

**Transcript extract:**

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Thank you, Chair. Good morning. Just looking at budget paper 3, output initiatives on page 73, 'Anti-discrimination measures'. Can I ask: has the department analysed whether certain regions or suburbs in our state have experienced particular increases in racist or racially motivated incidents over the budget period?

Jeremi MOULE: I am just trying to reflect on the work that was done in preparation for the strategy development. I think there was work done to understand, in a geographical sense, where reported incidents of racism were prevalent, in part to understand where best government might be able to direct its support services, particularly through various community organisations that do such good work in those communities to combat racism. I am not sure, Ms de Kretser, if you have any further detail that you might be able to add?

Dannii de KRETSEER: Sure. It is a really important part, how you identify it locally. Partly what the grants that I mentioned earlier that are going to 30 organisations seek to do is actually have registers where particular communities can report acts as well, and then they link in to the relevant authorities. So that is something that we are looking to strengthen. I do have data on statewide trends of antisemitism and Islamophobia, but what we will be seeking to do out of the LARI work, or the work that is about anti-racism, is actually seeking to wrap our arms around how things are going locally, and that is what some of these initiatives get to.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Okay. Just to just make sure I have understood perfectly, the department does have data where you would see that disaggregation geographically of where we are seeing the sharpest increases in racist incidents. Is that correct?

Jeremi MOULE: Yes. The two bits to our answers go together. One is that, yes, we do have some data, certainly, whether that is data that directly comes to us from service providers or other parts of government, or in fact when you read about incidents in media reporting and so on. Part of the investment that we are making in the racism strategy is actually to give people a place where they can consistently report incidents of racism, so that government, with an overarching view, can have a better understanding of both prevalence and where you might see emerging issues and the specific nature of those issues as well, because it has been a pretty disparate manner in which we have been able to capture aspects of that data. But we by no means have all of it.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: The data you do have though – can that be provided to the committee?

Jeremi MOULE: I think that the most relevant material will be what we might have had access to in supporting the development of the strategy, because we would have depended on that for some of the initiatives that are in there. Yes, we can take that on notice.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Particularly geographically disaggregated material, where you can provide it, would be much appreciated.

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**Answer:**

DPC accesses and uses data on local experiences of racism and faith-based discrimination. Data used by DPC to inform *Victoria's anti-racism strategy* and related initiatives is drawn from a range of government, non-government and community sources, including:

- **The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)** - collects data and produces an annual report which highlights key sectors and locations in which racism is prevalent. VEOHRC also collects and publishes separate data on complaints by First Peoples. Of the 49 complaints made by First Peoples in 2024-25, just under half (44 per cent) occurred in regional and rural Victoria, while 56 per cent occurred in Greater Melbourne and Geelong.
- **Victoria Police** - collects data on prejudice-motivated incidents across Victoria.
- **The Victorian Population Health Survey** - provides insights into regions (metropolitan Melbourne versus regional Victoria) and local government areas where Victorians are more likely to report experiencing racism.
- **Jewish Community Council of Victoria and the Community Security Group** - collects data on incidents of antisemitism across Victoria by local government area and suburb. In 2024, they reported that incidents centred around areas with high Jewish populations such as Glen Eira, Port Phillip and Stonnington.
- **The Islamophobia Register Australia** - collects data on Islamophobic incidents in Victoria, and across Australia. This includes data at the local government area level.

In addition, a small number of organisations funded through the Local Anti-Racism Initiatives Grants Program 2024-26 will be establishing community reporting pathways. Some organisations have agreed to share de-identified reporting data with DPC when this is available.

<b>Witness</b>	Acting Deputy Secretary Dannii de Kretser
<b>Committee member</b>	Aiv Puglielli
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**Question:**

Has the department developed any baseline indicators to measure racism and discrimination as they occur in this state to support monitoring of the effectiveness of that strategy? What data is being recorded for the anti-racism strategy?

**Transcript extract:**

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Okay. Thank you. Just on another matter, I might come back to the anti-racism strategy. Can I ask: has the department developed any baseline indicators to measure racism and discrimination as they occur in this state to support monitoring of the effectiveness of that strategy?

Jeremi MOULE: As we were discussing earlier, a mechanism that is funded in the strategy is actually being able to capture that data more accurately and more holistically, so that it is not just individual or small clusters of incidents that might come to our attention through general reporting across government or media reporting or other stakeholders bringing those to our attention but in fact trying to build a dataset that allows you to more holistically, across the state, better understand incidents and then respond to those, whether that is through the nature of the grants that we provide to community organisations or otherwise. Ms de Kretser, you look like you have got something to add.

Dannii de KRETSE: I think one of the fundamental actions in the strategy is also about establishing a monitoring and evaluation framework, which is work that the team has underway. That is where we hope to bring home the indicators that you are seeking to look at in a more systemic way. A key part of the strategy is using data better, and that is something that my team is turning its mind to right now.

Aiv PUGLIELLI: Okay. And at this stage, what data is being recorded, given that that is still underway?

Dannii de KRETSE: I am happy to take that question on notice. We will look to provide you with also a geographic lens of everything that we have got, as well as the information we have got on particular forms of rising incidents of racism and hate that we are seeing.

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**Answer:**

In partnership with the Anti-Racism Taskforce, DPC has created an outcomes framework to measure progress under *Victoria's anti-racism strategy*, with key outcomes and indicators to guide data collection.

The framework draws on public and program data collected by portfolios across government, such as the Victorian Health Population Survey, to assess the broad impact of the strategy's vision for a Victoria free from racism. In addition, the indicators and measures will be used internally to guide actions under each of the strategy's four goals, so to measure progress across all levels and settings.

DPC will collect and record data through the strategy's flagship funded actions:

- **Local Anti-Racism Initiatives Grants Program** will deliver grassroots activities to tackle racism at the local level and support those who experience racism. The program will collect data on the experiences of racism and vilification and participation numbers in anti-racism initiatives.
- **Victoria Police Human rights capability uplift program 2025–26** will build the capacity of frontline police to take human-rights centred approaches when engaging with First Peoples and multicultural communities. The program will collect participation data.
- **Anti-Racism Sport Campaign** aims to combat racism in community sport. The program will collect data on changes in attitudes and behaviours and the number of sports organisations practising anti-racism activities.
- **Anti-Racism Tick Scheme** will embed anti-racist practices within some Victorian workplaces. The initiative will collect data on participation levels as well as the number of Victorian organisations embedding anti-racist best practices.



<b>Witness</b>	Acting Deputy Secretary Dannii de Kretser
<b>Committee member</b>	Matthew Hilakari
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**Question:**

*Victorian African Communities Action Plan:* What are the mental health organisations and what sort of work are they up to?

**Transcript extract:**

Mathew HILAKARI: And we are finding that community of practice is working well, and they are sharing good ideas and learning from each other?

Dannii de KRETSEER: Absolutely. It is amazing when you get providers around the table. You are sort of motivated by the energy of your craft, and we see that with these.

Mathew HILAKARI: Fantastic. I just thought I would ask about the mental health organisations through this program. What are the organisations, and what sort of work are they up to?

Dannii de KRETSEER: There is a lot of focus in the west. I would have to get back to you on the precise names of those organisations. I am happy to do that on notice, if that is helpful.

Mathew HILAKARI: Great. Thank you so much.

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**Answer:**

Organisations receiving funding through the *Victorian African Communities Action Plan* Mental Health initiative are:

- **Nas Recovery Centre** — delivering community capacity building initiatives on psychoeducation, alongside clinical-based mental health supports for Victorians of African heritage who are homeless or sleeping rough.
- **Program auspiced by Foundation House in collaboration with the charity basketball association Shooters Shoot** — delivering a program to strengthen mental health outcomes for young African Victorians through sport, including school holiday wellbeing programs, basketball and mindfulness programs.
- **African Youth Alliance** — delivering activities which increase mental health literacy through tailored workshops, an online resource hub and an exhibition celebrating African mental health practices.