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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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**FIRST SESSION**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**10 and 11 June 2008**

**(Extract from book 8)**

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**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.  
 Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Assembly.  
 Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.  
 The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

**Tuesday, 10 June 2008**

**Environment and climate change: Sustainability and Environment — annual report**

- 40.** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Community Development (for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change) with reference to disputes not covered by insurance detailed in the Department of Sustainability and Environment Annual Report 2005–06 note 5, expenses on page 143 —
- (1) How many disputes arose that were not covered by insurance in 2005–06.
  - (2) What were the reasons for the disputes.
  - (3) What were the individual amounts paid to settle those disputes in 2005–06.
  - (4) What were the individual amounts in legal fees to settle those disputes in 2005–06.
  - (5) What was the total amount of the legal settlement to the private operator of the former Seal Rocks Sea Life Centre.
  - (6) What was the total amount paid in legal fees paid by the Department in the settlement to the private operator the former Seal Rocks Sea Life Centre.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

With reference to the figures given in Note 5 (expenses) page 143 of the Department of Sustainability and Environment 2005–06 Annual Report relating to disputes not covered by insurance:

- (1) The records of the Department of Sustainability and Environment indicate that there were 36 disputes which resulted in payments during the 2005-06 financial year that were not covered by insurance.
- (2) The majority of the disputes were with the Registrar of Titles and related to claims for compensation under the system for the guarantee of land title and sections 109 to 111 of the *Transfer of Land Act 1958*.  
  
The other disputes related to a land valuation matter under the Valuation of Land Act 1960, property damage caused by a fuel reduction burn and a lease of Crown land.
- (3) It would not be appropriate to provide details of settlement amounts for a number of litigated cases because of confidentiality clauses contained in deeds of settlement. The settlement costs of the 31 unlitigated matters ranged from \$13.20 to approximately \$35,000.
- (4) Two disputes incurred legal fees of \$20,195.05 and \$53,500 respectively during the 2005-06 financial year.
- (5) The total amount awarded by the arbitrator to the private operator of the former Seal Rocks Sea Life Centre was \$37.3m and was published on page 68 of the *Report of the Auditor General on the Finances of the State of Victoria 2002-03*.
- (6) The total amount in legal fees paid by the Department of Sustainability and Environment to the private operator of the Seal Rocks Sea Life Centre was approximately \$7.05 million.

**Water: Growth Solutions Group**

**250(al).** **Mr THOMPSON** (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Water with reference to contracts entered into by the Minister's department with Growth Solutions Group since 1 January 2000 —

- (1) What contracts have been entered into.
- (2) What was the cost of each contract.
- (3) What was the cost of any contract extensions, variations or renewals.
- (4) Which contracts were offered for public tender.
- (5) What are the reasons given for any contracts not offered for public tender.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Between December 2002, when the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) was created, and 17 July 2007, DSE entered into three contracts with the Growth Solutions Group for independent consultancy services.

The total values of each of these contracts were \$25,000, \$62,370 and \$86,240.

There were no extensions, variations or renewals in relation to any of the contracts.

Given the value of the contracts, and in compliance with Victorian Government Purchasing Board policies, none were offered for public tender.

**Corrections: prisoners — viruses**

**296.** **Ms WOOLDRIDGE** to ask the Minister for Corrections with reference to blood-borne viruses among the prison population —

- (1) When did the Government last carry out a review or study to determine rates of the Hepatitis C virus and HIV/AIDS among prisoners.
- (2) How was the most recent Government study on the rates of Hepatitis C virus and HIV/AIDS among prisoners carried out.
- (3) What percentage of prisoners have tested positive for the Hepatitis C virus.
- (4) What percentage of prisoners have tested positive for HIV/AIDS.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

- (1) The Victorian Prisoner Health Study was conducted in 2002.
- (2) Participation in the study was on a voluntary basis.
- (3) Of the prisoners in the study 57.5% were HCV antibody positive.
- (4) In the Victorian Prisoner Health Study three of 297 prisoners tested positive for HIV.

**Police and emergency services: Nepean Highway–Bay Road, Cheltenham — red light camera**

**374(a).** **Mr THOMPSON** (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services with reference to the red light camera monitoring south bound traffic turning right from the Nepean Highway in an easterly direction into Bay Road —

- (1) When was the camera first installed.
- (2) For each month since the installation of the camera how many infringement notices have been issued to motorists completing the turn.
- (3) Due to the angle and width of the turn, have the additional time and slower speed required been taken into account when issuing infringement notices.
- (4) Due to the physical characteristics of the intersection is there any plan to adjust the time allowance at which a fine is imposed.
- (5) How does the number of fines issued compare with comparable intersections.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

- (1) The Fixed Digital Safety Camera became operational on 5 February 2007.
- (2) I am advised that it would be an unreasonable diversion of the Department's resources to provide this information.
- (3) The only relevant consideration in the issuing of a red light infringement is whether the vehicle in question has entered the intersection after the light (in this case, a turn arrow) has turned red.
- (4) See question (3) above. No fine is issued where a vehicle enters the intersection before the relevant light turns red, therefore the physical characteristics of the intersection are not relevant.
- (5) The number of infringements issued by each fixed digital camera across the network vary according to differing traffic flows, conditions and driver behaviour.

NOTE: The Fixed Digital Safety Camera referred to in the question monitor south bound traffic turning right from the Nepean Highway in a westerly direction into Bay Road.

**Police and emergency services: police — transit safety division**

**563.** **Mr MULDER** to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services with reference to the Transit Safety Division of the Victoria Police — as at 30 June 2007, 31 July 2007, 31 August 2007, 30 September 2007 and 31 October 2007 —

- (1) How many sworn Victoria Police members were allocated to the division.
- (2) How many unsworn Victoria Police members were allocated to the division.
- (3) How many —
  - (a) sworn members —
    - (i) worked a shift;
    - (ii) were rostered to take the day off but were not on recreation, sick, long service, maternity, paternity, study or WorkCover related leave;
  - (b) unsworn members —
    - (i) worked a shift;
    - (ii) were rostered to take the day off but were not on recreation, sick, long service, maternity, paternity, study or WorkCover related leave.
- (4) How many —
  - (a) sworn members had, during the previous month, taken —
    - (i) sick leave;
    - (ii) recreation leave;

- (iii) long service leave;
  - (iv) WorkCover leave;
  - (v) maternity leave;
  - (vi) paternity leave;
  - (vii) study leave;
- (b) unsworn members had, during the previous month, taken —
- (i) sick leave;
  - (ii) recreation leave;
  - (iii) long service leave;
  - (iv) WorkCover leave;
  - (v) maternity leave;
  - (vi) paternity leave;
  - (vii) study leave.
- (5) What was the total number of days in the previous month —
- (a) sworn members had taken for —
- (i) sick leave;
  - (ii) recreation leave;
  - (iii) long service leave;
  - (iv) WorkCover leave;
  - (v) maternity leave;
  - (vi) paternity leave;
  - (vii) study leave;
- (b) unsworn members had taken for —
- (i) sick leave;
  - (ii) recreation leave;
  - (iii) long service leave;
  - (iv) WorkCover leave;
  - (v) maternity leave;
  - (vi) paternity leave;
  - (vii) study leave.
- (6) What was the agreed full time equivalent establishment for —
- (a) sworn members;
  - (b) unsworn members.
- (7) What was the actual number of full time equivalent —
- (a) sworn members;
  - (b) unsworn members.
- (8) Were any shifts unfilled during the previous month; if so, how many were for —
- (a) sworn members;
  - (b) unsworn members.
- (9) What was the total number of hours spent, during the previous month, patrolling public transport services, stations, stops or facilities.
- (10) What was the total number of hours spent, during the previous month, patrolling —

- (a) railway stations or trains;
  - (b) trams or tram stops;
  - (c) metropolitan buses or bus stops;
  - (d) V/Line trains or stations;
  - (e) V/Line Coaches or coach stops.
- (11) At what locations were —
- (a) sworn members stationed;
  - (b) unsworn members stationed.
- (12) How many —
- (a) sworn members were stationed at each location;
  - (b) unsworn members were stationed at each location.
- (13) How many reports of gangs or groups congregating at railway stations were, during the previous month, —
- (a) received by members;
  - (b) physically attended by members.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

Since coming to office, the State Government has increased the number of police by over 1400. With the increase in the number of front-line police in every policing area across the State, the capacity of operational members to assist with incidents that take place on the transit system has increased.

The Government's additional support for Victoria Police is showing good results. Victoria's overall crime rate has fallen 23.5 per cent since 2000-01 and the crime rate for offences on public transport has fallen by 30.9 per cent.

Victoria Police advise that, over the period June to October 2007, an average of 192 sworn members and seven unsworn staff were allocated to the Transit Safety Division of Victoria Police. It is important to note that regular uniformed and undercover police also have a responsibility for policing on public transport, along with transit police, and this happens regularly.

**Police and emergency services: speed cameras**

**564(b).** Mr MULDER to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

With reference to highway fixed, intersection fixed, analogue red light, fixed digital red light, Hume Freeway point-to-point, West Gate Freeway highway fixed, Western Ring Road highway fixed and CityLink highway fixed speed cameras — in each of July 2007, August 2007, September 2007 and October 2007 —

- (1) Were all cameras operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week; if not —
  - (a) for what periods on what days was each camera inoperable;
  - (b) for what reasons was each inoperable camera turned off.
- (2) How much per hour on average did each camera generate in revenue.
- (3) How many infringement notices were issued per hour on average by each camera.
- (4) How many infringement notices were withdrawn and for what reasons.
- (5) What were the locations of the top 20 revenue generating cameras.
- (6) How much revenue was generated by each of the top 20 revenue generating cameras.

- (7) How many faults were —
  - (a) reported for each type of camera;
  - (b) identified with each type of camera.
- (8) How many requests for withdrawal of infringement notices were received.
- (9) Where is it expected that new fixed digital, point to point or red light cameras will be installed between October 2007 and 30 June 2008.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

It would be an unreasonable diversion of the Department's resources to provide this information.

**Community services: disability services — disability support register**

**647.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services with reference to the Disability Support Register as at 30 June 2007 —

- (1) How many individuals had lodged applications on the Register.
- (2) How many individuals who had lodged applications on the Register have intellectual disabilities.
- (3) In total, how many individuals were registered.
- (4) Of the total individuals registered, how many were recommended for priority status.
- (5) How many individuals were registered for —
  - (a) support to move from Disability Services supported accommodation;
  - (b) support to move to non-Disability Services supported accommodation;
  - (c) support to continue to live in non-Disability Services supported accommodation;
  - (d) family support options;
  - (e) support to achieve personal goals (non-housing);
  - (f) part-time activities;
  - (g) part-time activities with flexible support;
  - (h) full-time activities;
  - (i) full-time activities with flexible support;
  - (j) Disability Services supported accommodation;
  - (k) Disability Services supported accommodation with part-time activities;
  - (l) Disability Services supported accommodation with full-time activities;
  - (m) Disability Services supported accommodation with information service providers.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) The requested information is not a standard data set reported by the Disability Services Division.
- (2) The requested information is not a standard data set reported by the Disability Services Division.
- (3) The number of individuals on the Disability Support Register for 2007 is available and published on the Disability Services Division website.
- (4) The requested information is not a standard data set reported by the Disability Services Division.
- (5) The requested information is not a standard data set reported by the Disability Services Division.

**Police and emergency services: police — station staffing**

**900.** **Mr SMITH** (*Warrandyte*) to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services — with reference to Ringwood Police Station and Warrandyte Police Station — will a relieving police officer be made available to each station when an officer is absent from duties for an extended period due to maternity leave, sick leave, annual leave, long service leave or injury leave.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

The Brumby Government is committed to providing safe streets and homes for Victorians by ensuring Victoria Police is highly professional and well resourced.

Since coming to office, the State Government has increased the number of police by over 1,400. Further, we have increased funding to Victoria Police to a record budget of more than \$1.6 billion in 2007-08, and funded the construction and refurbishment of 149 police stations across the state.

The Government's additional support to Victoria Police is showing good results. Victoria's crime rate has fallen 23.5 per cent since 2000-01, with Victoria now having the lowest crime rate in Australia.

However, the fight against crime is ongoing. That is why at the last election the Government committed to a further increase of 350 sworn police by 2010, as well as an additional 50 forensic and specialist investigators. In addition to this, the Government committed to providing additional resources and equipment to assist police in their work, including an extra 100 police cars.

Decisions on the placement of police throughout the state are operational matters and are made by police command on the basis of assessed need. It is important that this process is not subject to political interference. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner of Police that the level of policing across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective Regional Command Officers, with a view to maintaining optimum policing effectiveness.

I am also advised that Victoria Police deploys first response police across its 56 Police Service Areas using a sophisticated resource allocation model incorporating 12 characteristics of the local community that are used to predict levels of crime and road trauma; the population of an area is just one of these. Victoria Police uses this model to ensure that police resources are distributed equitably and according to demonstrated operational need. It should be noted that, since 1999, the number of front-line police officers has increased in all police regions across Victoria.

**Consumer affairs: Landmark Education Corporation**

**913(k).** **Mr THOMPSON** (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Consumer Affairs with reference to courses conducted by Landmark Education Corporation —

- (1) How many staff from the Minister's department have attended courses.
- (2) Have any government funds been paid for courses.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

In relation to my portfolio responsibilities:

- (1) None.
- (2) No.

**Gaming: Landmark Education Corporation**

**913(q).** Mr THOMPSON (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Gaming with reference to courses conducted by Landmark Education Corporation —

- (1) How many staff from the Minister's department have attended courses.
- (2) Have any government funds been paid for courses.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

In relation to my portfolio responsibilities:

- (1) None.
- (2) No.

**Police and emergency services: Landmark Education Corporation**

**913(x).** Mr THOMPSON (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services with reference to courses conducted by Landmark Education Corporation —

- (1) How many staff from the Minister's department have attended courses.
- (2) Have any government funds been paid for courses.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

In relation to my portfolio responsibilities:

- (1) No Department of Justice staff have attended courses.
- (2) No.

**Racing: Landmark Education Corporation**

**913(aa).** Mr THOMPSON (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Racing with reference to courses conducted by Landmark Education Corporation —

- (1) How many staff from the Minister's department have attended courses.
- (2) Have any government funds been paid for courses.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

In relation to my portfolio responsibilities:

- (1) None.
- (2) No.

**Community services: child protection services — funding**

**927.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services — with reference to \$1 million worth of funding to child protection services in rural areas for expansion of after-hours services promised in the 2000–01 budget —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in 2001–02.
- (2) Which services were expanded and by how many hours.
- (3) Has the use of the funds been evaluated; if so, what were the results of the evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) \$1M.
- (2) All five regional office child protection teams were expanded.
- (3) No.

**Consumer affairs: fair payments policy**

**958(g).** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Consumer Affairs with reference to penalty interest paid by the Minister’s department since the 2002 election as result of the Government’s Fair Payments Policy which requires a Government department or agency to pay invoices for work done by small businesses within 30 days or pay penalty interest —

- (1) On how many occasions has penalty interest been paid.
- (2) How many small businesses received penalty interest.
- (3) What is the total amount of original bills received on which penalty interest was paid.
- (4) What is the total amount of penalty interest paid.
- (5) If penalty interest has been paid, on what date was the first payment made.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

Questions relating to the Department of Justice as a whole are the responsibility of the Attorney-General.

**Gaming: fair payments policy**

**958(l).** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Gaming with reference to penalty interest paid by the Minister’s department since the 2002 election as result of the Government’s Fair Payments Policy which requires a Government department or agency to pay invoices for work done by small businesses within 30 days or pay penalty interest —

- (1) On how many occasions has penalty interest been paid.
- (2) How many small businesses received penalty interest.
- (3) What is the total amount of original bills received on which penalty interest was paid.
- (4) What is the total amount of penalty interest paid.
- (5) If penalty interest has been paid, on what date was the first payment made.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

Questions relating to the Department of Justice as a whole are the responsibility of the Attorney-General.

**Health: fair payments policy**

**958(m).** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Health with reference to penalty interest paid by the Minister's department since the 2002 election as result of the Government's Fair Payments Policy which requires a Government department or agency to pay invoices for work done by small businesses within 30 days or pay penalty interest —

- (1) On how many occasions has penalty interest been paid.
- (2) How many small businesses received penalty interest.
- (3) What is the total amount of original bills received on which penalty interest was paid.
- (4) What is the total amount of penalty interest paid.
- (5) If penalty interest has been paid, on what date was the first payment made.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) Penalty interest has been claimed and paid on two (2) occasions.
- (2) Two (2) small businesses have claimed and received penalty interest payments.
- (3) The total amount of bills received on which penalty interest has been paid is \$3,737.30.
- (4) The total amount of penalty interest paid equals \$64.01.
- (5) The first penalty interest payment was made on October 6, 2005.
- (6) All my department's contracts and purchase orders contain clear advice to small businesses about the Governments Fair Trading conditions, including penalty interest where applicable. The Department takes these responsibilities seriously.

**Regional and rural development: fair payments policy**

**958(u).** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Regional and Rural Development with reference to penalty interest paid by the Minister's department since the 2002 election as result of the Government's Fair Payments Policy which requires a Government department or agency to pay invoices for work done by small businesses within 30 days or pay penalty interest —

- (1) On how many occasions has penalty interest been paid.
- (2) How many small businesses received penalty interest.
- (3) What is the total amount of original bills received on which penalty interest was paid.
- (4) What is the total amount of penalty interest paid.
- (5) If penalty interest has been paid, on what date was the first payment made.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government is committed to promoting a fair and competitive environment for small to medium sized businesses. To improve the cash flow certainty for these businesses, the Government introduced the “fair payment clause” for contracts.

From 1 November 2004, Government Departments are required to pay suppliers within 30 days upon receipt of correctly rendered invoice (or within any other payment period as agreed between the Department and the supplier, which may be shorter). This policy applies to new contracts for goods and services valued less than \$3 million.

If an invoice is not paid within 30 days from the date of receipt (or other payment period), and there is no dispute regarding the invoice or the provision of goods and services, the supplier may make a claim for penalty interest on outstanding debt.

Since 2002 the Department has not received any application for penalty interest payment in relation to the fair payments policy.

Accordingly no penalty interest payments have been made.

### **Small business: fair payments policy**

**958(z).** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Small Business with reference to penalty interest paid by the Minister’s department since the 2002 election as result of the Government’s Fair Payments Policy which requires a Government department or agency to pay invoices for work done by small businesses within 30 days or pay penalty interest —

- (1) On how many occasions has penalty interest been paid.
- (2) How many small businesses received penalty interest.
- (3) What is the total amount of original bills received on which penalty interest was paid.
- (4) What is the total amount of penalty interest paid.
- (5) If penalty interest has been paid, on what date was the first payment made.

### **ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government is committed to promoting a fair and competitive environment for small to medium sized businesses. To improve the cash flow certainty for these businesses, the Government introduced the “fair payment clause” for contracts.

From 1 November 2004, Government Departments are required to pay suppliers within 30 days upon receipt of correctly rendered invoice (or within any other payment period as agreed between the Department and the supplier, which may be shorter). This policy applies to new contracts for goods and services valued less than \$3 million.

If an invoice is not paid within 30 days from the date of receipt (or other payment period), and there is no dispute regarding the invoice or the provision of goods and services, the supplier may make a claim for penalty interest on outstanding debt.

Since 2002 the Department has not received any application for penalty interest payment in relation to the fair payments policy.

Accordingly no penalty interest payments have been made.

### **Community services: Wilka Kwe program**

**972.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services with reference to \$224,000 worth of funding for the Wilka Kwe program announced on 9 May 2001 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended —
  - (a) in 2001–02;
  - (b) by 30 June 2004.
- (2) Has the use of the funds been evaluated; if so, what were the results of the evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) (a & b) all of the allocated funding was expended.
- (2) No.

**Community services: intensive therapeutic community for young people**

**980.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services with reference to \$5 million worth of funding to establish an intensive therapeutic community for young people promised in the 2002–03 budget —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in 2002–03.
- (2) Has the use of the funds been evaluated; if so what were the results of the evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

\$5 million was not provided to establish an intensive therapeutic community for young people in the 02/03 budget.

**Community services: Parkville and Malmsbury juvenile justice centres — redevelopment**

**985.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services with reference to \$14.85 million worth of funding for redevelopments at the Parkville and Malmsbury Juvenile Justice Centres promised in the 2002–03 budget —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2004.
- (2) Has the use of the funds been evaluated; if so, what were the results of the evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) \$7.889M was expended by 30 June 2004.
- (2) No, as these projects do not fit within the criteria for evaluation.

**Community services: Aboriginal-specific services — funding**

**1014.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services does the Government support the Victorian Council of Social Services' budget submission recommending that the Government resource Aboriginal-specific early intervention, Child FIRST, counselling and family violence services —

- (1) If so, how much extra funding will the Government commit in the 2008–09 budget.
- (2) If not, what are the Government's reasons for opposing the recommendation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) The Government has carefully considered all of the proposed budget submissions, the outcomes of which are conveyed in the announcement of the 2008-09 State Budget.

**Community services: family support services — funding**

**1015.** **Ms WOOLDRIDGE** to ask the Minister for Community Services does the Government support the Victorian Council of Social Services' budget submission recommending that the Government increase investment in both early intervention and secondary family support services, including counselling services, particularly in regional and rural areas and provided additional funding to Child FIRST services —

- (1) If so, how much extra funding will the Government commit in the 2008–09 budget.
- (2) If not, what are the Government's reasons for opposing the recommendation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

The Government has carefully considered all of the proposed budget submissions, the outcomes of which are conveyed in the announcement of the 2008-09 State Budget.

**Police and emergency services: police — Sandringham station staffing**

**1038.** **Mr THOMPSON** (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services with reference to Sandringham Police Station, how many unfilled vacancies were there in —

- (1) July 2007.
- (2) August 2007.
- (3) September 2007.
- (4) October 2007.
- (5) November 2007.
- (6) December 2007.
- (7) January 2008.
- (8) February 2008.
- (9) March 2008.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

The level of policing across Victoria is continuously monitored by the Regional Command Officers, with a view to maintaining optimum policing effectiveness. Decisions on the placement of police throughout the state are operational matters and are made by police command on the basis of assessed need. It is important that this process is not subject to political interference.

The Brumby Government is committed to providing safe streets and homes for all Victorians by ensuring Victoria Police are highly professional and well resourced.

Since coming to office, the State Government has increased the number of police by over 1,400. Further, we have increased funding to Victoria Police to a record budget of more than \$1.75 billion in 2008-09, and funded the construction and refurbishment of over 150 police stations across the state.

The Government's additional support to Victoria Police is showing good results. Victoria's crime rate has fallen 23.5 per cent since 2000-01, with Victoria now having the lowest crime rate in Australia.

However, the fight against crime is ongoing. That is why at the last election the Government committed to a further increase of 350 sworn police by 2010, as well as an additional 50 forensic and specialist investigators. In addition to this, the Government committed to providing additional resources and equipment to assist police in their work, including an extra 100 police cars.

Decisions on the placement of police throughout the state are operational matters and are made by police command on the basis of assessed need. It is important that this process is not subject to political interference. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner of Police that the level of policing across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective Regional Command Officers, with a view to maintaining optimum policing effectiveness.

I am also advised that Victoria Police deploys first response police across its 56 Police Service Areas using a sophisticated resource allocation model incorporating 12 characteristics of the local community that are used to predict levels of crime and road trauma; the population of an area is just one of these. Victoria Police uses this model to ensure that police resources are distributed equitably and according to demonstrated operational need. It should be noted that, since 1999, the number of first response officers has increased in all police regions across Victoria.

You would be pleased to know that since 2000/01 crime in the Mornington Peninsula Police Service Area (which includes Sandringham) has fallen 27.5%.

### **Police and emergency services: police — Hastings station staffing**

**1039. Mr BURGESS** to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services with reference to Hastings Police Station, how many unfilled vacancies were there in —

- (1) July 2007.
- (2) August 2007.
- (3) September 2007.
- (4) October 2007.
- (5) November 2007.
- (6) December 2007.
- (7) January 2008.
- (8) February 2008.
- (9) March 2008.

#### **ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

The level of policing across Victoria is continuously monitored by the Regional Command Officers, with a view to maintaining optimum policing effectiveness. Decisions on the placement of police throughout the state are operational matters and are made by police command on the basis of assessed need. It is important that this process is not subject to political interference.

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The Government's additional support to Victoria Police is showing good results. Victoria's crime rate has fallen 23.5 per cent since 2000-01, with Victoria now having the lowest crime rate in Australia.

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Decisions on the placement of police throughout the state are operational matters and are made by police command on the basis of assessed need. It is important that this process is not subject to political interference. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner of Police that the level of policing across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective Regional Command Officers, with a view to maintaining optimum policing effectiveness.

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You would be pleased to know that since 2000/01 crime in the Mornington Peninsula Police Service Area (which includes Hastings) has fallen 25.7%.

### Local government: Crown land — Kilsyth

**1044(h).** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Local Government with reference to Crown-owned land relating to the Minister's portfolio in the electorate of Kilsyth —

- (1) What is the description of and addresses (where available) of the land.
- (2) Does the Government intend to sell any of the land or acquire any new land in the electorate.

#### ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Under the portfolio of Local Government, I do not have responsibility for the management of Crown Land, or for the sale and acquisition of land.

### Women's affairs: low-income families

**1088.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$16 million worth of funding to provide an additional fee subsidy of \$150 for all four year olds from low income families announced on 8 May 2000 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2004.
- (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

#### ANSWER:

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: community-based child care**

**1089.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$3.75 million worth of funding to provide capital grants to community-based child-care services for major upgrades to existing services and the establishment of new services in growth corridors announced on 8 May 2000 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2003.
- (2) How many existing community-based child care services received funding for a major upgrade.
- (3) How many new services in growth corridors were funded.
- (4) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: community-based child-care centres and out-of-school-hours programs**

**1090.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$8 million worth of funding to provide to community-owned, not-for-profit child-care centres and community-based out of school hours programs announced on 8 May 2000 —

- (1) What were the expected outcomes of the program.
- (2) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2004.
- (3) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: Women's Health and Wellbeing strategy**

**1092.** MS WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$4.4 million worth of funding for the Women's Health and Wellbeing Strategy announced on 12 May 2002 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2006.
- (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: Best Start project**

**1093.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$7.6 million worth of funding for the *Best Start* project announced on 12 May 2002 —

- (1) How much of this funding was expended by 30 June 2005.

- (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: free breast screening program**

**1094.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$5.7 million worth of funding for the free breast screening program announced on 12 May 2002 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2006.  
 (2) How many screens were conducted each year as a result of the funding.  
 (3) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: private brokerage program**

**1096.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$1.8 million worth of funding to provide a private rental brokerage program for women announced on 4 June 2002 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2005.  
 (2) How many women accessed the program.  
 (3) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: Women's Information and Referral Exchange and Women's Information Centre**

**1099.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$400,000 worth of funding to support WIRE and its Women's Information Centre announced on 2 August 2002 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2003.  
 (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

All of the \$400,000 funding to Women's Information and Referral Exchange (WIRE) was expended by 30 June 2003.

WIRE was required to report quarterly to the Office of Women's Policy against key performance indicators as part of its funding and service agreement, which were met.

**Women's affairs: Queen Victoria Women's Centre**

- 1100.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$363,000 worth of funding to revitalise the Queen Victoria Women's Centre announced on 31 October 2002 —
- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2006.
  - (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

The Queen Victoria Women's Centre (QVWC) received a grant from the Community Support Fund to establish a Capacity Builder and Information Hub. The total grant was \$363,662 and all of these funds were expended by 30 June 2006.

The project was independently evaluated. The key achievements of the project were the:

- establishment of three cluster groups to develop the website content;
- development of the website; and
- cabling of the building for phone and data systems.

**Women's affairs: maternity and adoption leave — payroll tax exemption**

- 1101.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$1 million worth of forgone revenue to provide a payroll tax exemption for up to 14 weeks of paid maternity and adoption leave for Victorian employers announced on 27 February 2003 —
- (1) How much revenue has been forgone as a result of the exemption for each year since 1 January 2003.
  - (2) Has the impact of the exemption been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that/as follows:

This initiative is not my portfolio responsibility.

**Women's affairs: community leadership grants**

- 1102.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$90,000 worth of funding for the Government's women's community leadership grants announced on 12 May 2002 —
- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2003.
  - (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The announcement of the Women's Community Leadership Grants on 12 May 2002 was a call for applications with a total of \$90,000 to be awarded. The successful grant recipients were announced on 25 October 2002. Given the high calibre of the applications a total of \$111,111 was actually awarded.

By 30 June 2003, all of the \$111,111 funding had been expended.

An internal review of the Women's Community Leadership Grants was undertaken in 2005. The results were that:

- the grants have provided a significant benefit to a number of women, especially disadvantaged women;
- the benefits of the grants have had a lasting legacy with many programs continuing beyond the period of the funding from the initial grant;
- the benefits gained from the grants extends beyond the participants to include the flow on effect to other women who either undertake subsequent programs or are mentored by the original women; and
- the skills gained from undertaking funded programs have enabled a number of women to help their communities and other women.

### **Women's affairs: community leadership program**

**1103.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Women's Affairs with reference to the \$111,111 worth of funding for the women's community leadership program announced on 25 October 2002 —

- (1) How much of the funding was expended by 30 June 2003.
- (2) Has the use of the funding been evaluated; if so, what were the results of that evaluation.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The announcement of the Women's Community Leadership Grants on 12 May 2002 was a call for applications with a total of \$90,000 to be awarded. The successful grant recipients were announced on 25 October 2002. Given the high calibre of the applications a total of \$111,111 was actually awarded.

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- the benefits gained from the grants extends beyond the participants to include the flow on effect to other women who either undertake subsequent programs or are mentored by the original women; and
- the skills gained from undertaking funded programs have enabled a number of women to help their communities and other women.



**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.  
Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Assembly.  
Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.  
The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

**Wednesday, 11 June 2008****Premier: fair payments policy**

- 958(a).** Ms ASHER to ask the Premier with reference to penalty interest paid by the Minister's department since the 2002 election as result of the Government's Fair Payments Policy which requires a Government department or agency to pay invoices for work done by small businesses within 30 days or pay penalty interest —
- (1) On how many occasions has penalty interest been paid.
  - (2) How many small businesses received penalty interest.
  - (3) What is the total amount of original bills received on which penalty interest was paid.
  - (4) What is the total amount of penalty interest paid.
  - (5) If penalty interest has been paid, on what date was the first payment made.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

The Victorian Government is committed to promoting a fair and competitive environment for small to medium-sized businesses. To improve the cash flow certainty for these businesses, the Government introduced the 'fair payment clause' for contracts.

From 1 November 2004, Government Departments are required to pay suppliers within 30 days upon receipt of a correctly rendered invoice (or within any other payment period as agreed between the Department and the supplier, which may be shorter). This policy applies to new contracts for goods and services valued less than \$3 million.

If an invoice is not paid within 30 days from the date of receipt (or other payment period), and there is no dispute regarding the invoice or the provision of goods and services, the supplier may make a claim for penalty interest on the outstanding debt.

No claim for late payment has been received by DPC from any vendor and therefore no penalty interest has been paid.

