

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**Tuesday, 10 March 2009**

**(Extract from book 3)**

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## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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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 March 2009**

**Major projects: adjournment debate responses**

**1180(x).** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Public Transport for the Minister for Major Projects — what is the usual length of time taken for the Minister to respond to matters raised during the adjournment debate in the House.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The adjournment debates in the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council play an important role where members raise matters for Ministers which they consider require attention.

The time taken to respond varies according to the length and complexity of the matter or matters raised in the Adjournment debate.

**Multicultural affairs: Victorian Multicultural Commission**

**1509.** Mr KOTSIRAS to ask the Minister for Multicultural Affairs — how many full time equivalent staff, part time staff and casual staff were employed by the Victorian Multicultural Commission as at 7 October 2008.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

As at 7 October 2008, the VMC employed 28 full time equivalent staff, 4 part time staff and 1 casual staff member.

**Innovation: consultants**

**1511.** Mr KOTSIRAS to ask the Minister for Regional and Rural Development for the Minister for Innovation — with reference to the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development and each agency and authority within the Minister's administration — what are the details of each consultancy commissioned since 1 January 2007 including date, cost, purpose, name and address of consultant, recommendation made and action taken in response to any recommendations.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The details of all DIIRD consultancies over \$100,000 are published on the Government's Contracts Publishing System available through the website of the Victorian Government Purchasing Board.

All details of consultancies as requested are not held centrally and therefore cannot be reported without an unreasonable diversion of my Department's resources.

**Planning: I-view**

**1642.** Mr SMITH (Warrandyte) to ask the Minister for Community Development for the Minister for Planning — has the Department of Planning and Community Development engaged the services of data collection agency I-view since 1 July 2007; if so, for what purpose.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The Department of Planning and Community Development has not engaged the services of data collection agency I-view for the period since 1 July 2007.

**Planning: Chirnside Park major activity centre**

**1749.** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Community Development for the Minister for Planning — with reference to the submission made by the Shire of Yarra Ranges to the 2009–10 State Budget —

- (1) Has the Minister read the submission.
- (2) Will the Government include \$150,000 worth of funding per annum for a period of two years to assist the Shire to appoint a suitable qualified Town Centre Officer to liaise between developers in the Chirnside park major activity centre and complete relevant planning scheme amendments to give effect to the structure plan that has been developed in the 2009–10 Budget.

**ANSWER:**

This question refers to a submission made to the 2009–10 State Budget. I am not able to pre-empt the outcomes of the 2009/10 Budget. I do note that the Chirnside Park Major Activity Centre is a targeted centre under the Expert Assistance Program (EAP). Funding of \$117,000 has already been committed through the Expert Assistance Program to assist in the implementation of the Chirnside Park activity centre structure plan.

**Housing: Yarra Ranges**

**1750.** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Housing — with reference to the submission made by the Shire of Yarra Ranges to the 2009–10 State Budget —

- (1) Has the Minister read the submission.
- (2) Will the Government commit to using well-located surplus Government land for new affordable housing developments.

**ANSWER:**

Thank you for the opportunity to answer this question on notice.

- (1) I have had the opportunity to read the Shire of Yarra Ranges submission to the 2009–10 State Budget, and I commend Mr Hodgett and the Shire of Yarra Ranges for their interest in increasing the supply of affordable housing for lower income Victorians.
- (2) The Government can, and will continue, to utilise well located surplus government land for new affordable housing developments.

A key mechanism to increase affordable housing is the registration and regulation of community managed housing. Registered housing associations, of which there are now eight, are expected to grow social housing by leveraging government funding and existing property portfolios, including State and council owned land.

I would encourage the Shire of Yarra Ranges to make contact with one or more Housing Associations to discuss the potential for a housing development in the Yarra Ranges.

**Housing: eligibility criteria**

**1754.** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Housing — does the Government use any criteria when allocating public housing; if so, what criteria; if not, how does Government determine the allocation of public housing.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) Eligibility to receive public housing assistance in Victoria is currently determined on the basis of income and asset limits and a number of other specific criteria.
- (2) Depending on needs and circumstances, eligible applicants are placed in one of the following 4 waiting list segments in date order. When allocating vacancies, the highest priority is accorded to Segment 1.
  - **Segment 1: Recurring Homelessness**  
For people who can demonstrate they are experiencing recurring homelessness or at risk of sustained homelessness.
  - **Segment 2: Supported Housing**  
For people who can demonstrate they have significant support needs or who need modified housing.
  - **Segment 3: Special Housing Needs**  
For people who can demonstrate that their current housing is unsuitable eg severely overcrowded.
  - **Segment 4: Wait Turn**  
For people who are on a low income.
- (3) Specific income and asset limits, apply to each of the segments.
- (4) Applicants must also meet a number of other general criteria, for example, applicants must be permanent residents of Australia and living in Victoria, they must not own property and they must repay any outstanding debt to Office of Housing.

**Housing: youth homelessness**

**1789.** Mr DELAHUNTY to ask the Minister Housing — with reference to the Government’s election commitment to reduce long term youth homelessness through new approaches and early intervention —

- (1) What new approaches resulting from the commitment have been introduced.
- (2) What published benchmark measures does the Government use to measure the level of youth homelessness in Melbourne and in regional Victoria and what do these measures show regarding the trends in the levels of youth homelessness since 1999–2000.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) The Youth Homelessness Action Plan (YHAP), is a significant commitment by the Victorian Government to reduce youth homelessness.

YHAP 1 launched in 2004 provided new funding of \$8.8 million over four years to a series of initiatives that focused on delivering preventative programs to better respond to the needs of young people.

The second stage (Creating Connections) launched in 2006, provided funding of \$28.7 million over four years to develop more strategic approaches to service delivery.

This has included the establishment of Youth transitions hubs, designed to provide a suite of coordinated services in each DHS region. Youth hubs work with young people providing them with access to intensive case management and support, family reconciliation services and life skills programs. Hub services also assist young people to link into the private rental market and other long term housing options.

In 2007, Creating Connections funding has been used to assist in excess of 1,400 young people.

- (2) Assistance to clients of homelessness agencies is measured through the Victorian Homelessness Assistance Data Collection conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Current reporting reflects the increased levels of funding to youth homelessness responses. Whilst current data reflects an increase in young people seeking assistance, the ABS Census data is a more accurate indicator of the rates of youth homelessness in Victoria. This data indicates that from 2001 to 2006 the rate of youth homelessness decreased by 5%.