

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**18 and 19 September 2007**

**(Extract from book 13)**

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# CONTENTS

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## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### Tuesday, 18 September 2007

126.	Roads and ports: VicRoads numberplates .....	3259
170(b).	Environment and climate change: Garnaut climate change review .....	3261
179.	Community services: Manningham community organisations .....	3261
185.	Health: illicit substance use policy.....	3262
188.	Public transport: illicit substance use policy.....	3263
197.	Corrections: illicit substance use policy....	3264
218.	Public transport: Connex and V/Line service delays.....	3265
259.	Roads and ports: Bass Highway duplication .....	3266
268.	Water: rainwater tank rebates .....	3266
269.	Water: rainwater tank charges .....	3267
271.	Police and emergency services: Mornington fire station.....	3267
312.	Public transport: Mornington Peninsula bus shelters .....	3268
313.	Roads and ports: Dorset Road, Croydon, traffic congestion.....	3269
318.	Agriculture: horticulture industry assistance.....	3269
322.	Public transport: Broadmeadows– Craigieburn electrification extension .....	3270
333.	Attorney-General: Cheltenham courthouse.....	3270

### Wednesday, 19 September 2007

181.	Mental health: drug services funding.....	3273
182.	Mental health: drug services funding.....	3273
183.	Mental health: pharmacotherapy prescribers .....	3274
184.	Mental health: drug services measurements .....	3274
235.	Mental health: pharmacotherapy pharmacies.....	3275
257.	Roads and ports: VicRoads website search engine.....	3275
310.	Public transport: Connex roving safety officers.....	3276
311.	Public transport: Connex roving safety officers.....	3276
317.	Public transport: Lilydale station car park .....	3278



**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, 18 September 2007**

**Roads and ports: VicRoads numberplates**

**126. Mr MULDER** to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports —

- (1) In each of 2004–05, 2005–06 and the period 1 July 2006 to 30 April 2007, how many numberplates were issued that were —
  - (a) personalised;
  - (b) custom;
  - (c) custom mix;
  - (d) signature.
- (2) In each of 2004–05, 2005–06 and the period 1 July 2006 to 30 April 2007, what was the total revenue collected from —
  - (a) personalised numberplates;
  - (b) custom numberplates;
  - (c) custom mix numberplates;
  - (d) signature numberplates.
- (3) In the period 1 July 2006 to 30 April 2007, what unique identifier appears on each of the first 200 plates issued for —
  - (a) personalised numberplates;
  - (b) custom numberplates;
  - (c) custom mix numberplates;
  - (d) signature numberplates.
- (4) How much does it cost to produce —
  - (a) a personalised numberplate;
  - (b) a custom numberplate;
  - (c) a custom mix numberplate;
  - (d) a signature numberplate.
- (5) How are personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates auctioned.
- (6) In each of 2004–05, 2005–06 and the period 1 July 2006 to 30 April 2007 —
  - (a) how many reserved numberplates of each of personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates were incorrectly issued due to mistakes made by VicRoads staff;
  - (b) how many incorrectly issued reserved numberplates of each of personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates were returned to VicRoads;
  - (c) how many incorrectly issued reserved numberplates of each of personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates were not returned to VicRoads;
  - (d) what was the individual value of each incorrectly issued reserved numberplate of each of personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates;

- (e) through which VicRoads office or other premises was each incorrectly made personalised, custom, custom mix and signature set of numberplates issued;
- (f) how many personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates were refused due to the offensive nature of the plates and why was each request refused;
- (g) on how many occasions have incorrectly issued numberplates of each personalised, custom, custom mix and signature numberplates resulted in VicRoads refusing to register a vehicle.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Units Sold</b>	
2004/05	2005/06	1 July 2006– 30 April 2007
<b>23,357</b>	<b>31,672</b>	<b>28,114</b>

<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	
2004/05	2005/06	1 July 2006– 30 April 2007
<b>\$6.655m</b>	<b>\$11.777m</b>	<b>\$12.650m</b>

**Question 3 Identifiers**

There are no unique identifiers associated with these Custom Plates products. Each Personalised, Custom, Custom Mix and Signature plate is, in itself, a unique combination.

Personalised plates must be combinations of 2 letters with 3 or 4 numbers.

Custom Plates must have between 3 and 6 characters for cars.

Custom Mix plates must have 4, 5 or 6 characters. Numbers and letters can be mixed and must begin with a letter and cannot contain the number '0'.

Signature plates are available in combinations displaying 2 letters only, 2 letters with 1 number, or 2 letters with 2 numbers.

<b>Question 4</b>	<b>Cost of Production</b>
<b>Personalised plate</b>	<b>\$ 19.34 per pair</b>
<b>Custom Plate</b>	<b>\$ 19.34 per pair</b>
<b>Custom Mix plate</b>	<b>\$ 19.30 per pair</b>
<b>Signature plate</b>	<b>\$ 403.00 per pair</b>

**Question 5 Auctions**

VicRoads seeks an independent valuation of the numberplates for auction and uses this to form a reserve price. The auctions are then conducted through a licensed auction house, which provides broad access to the market.

**Question 6:**

I am advised VicRoads is aware that one Signature Plate combination which had been reserved by VicRoads for future auction was incorrectly issued.

VicRoads does not record the number of inappropriate combinations rejected. VicRoads will not release plate combinations which are deemed to be offensive, a risk to security or otherwise inappropriate for public display.

VicRoads continues to strive for greater customer service including for sale of customised plates.

VicRoads sells the physical plate and the display rights to a plate combination. This transaction is separate to the registration process. Upon purchasing a Custom Plate, customers are required to advise VicRoads which vehicle the plates are being assigned to, or alternatively whether they wish to have the plates placed on self-retention.

**Environment and climate change: Garnaut climate change review**

**170(b).** Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Community Development for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change what is the budget allocated for the secretariat support provided by the Government to the Federal Labor Party's Garnaut Climate Change Review.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

As the Office of Climate Change sits within the Department of Premier and Cabinet, this question should be directed to the Premier.

**Community services: Manningham community organisations**

**179.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Health for the Minister for Community Services with reference to funding for Manningham community organisations —

- (1) Which organisations were the recipients of funding made available to provide community transport in —
  - (a) 2005–06;
  - (b) 2006–07.
- (2) What amount of funding was made available to each organisation to provide community transport in —
  - (a) 2005–06;
  - (b) 2006–07.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Volunteer Coordination is an activity funded through the Home and Community Care (HACC) program that enables service providers to meet a range of needs for their clients and local communities, such as assisting clients to attend social support and leisure activities, as well as some allied health and medical appointments.

The Volunteer Coordination activity could include transporting people in the HACC target group with volunteers utilising their own vehicles and being reimbursed some costs associated with the service. It is also possible that, when not engaged in their primary purpose, volunteers will use their vehicles for broader community activities.

Within the municipality of the City of Manningham, two providers are funded for HACC Volunteer Coordination, namely, Manningham Community Health Service (Manningham CHS) and Doncaster Community Care and Counselling Incorporated (Doncare). There is a local level arrangement of partnership between these two organisations.

The following funding was provided to Manningham CHS and Doncare during the period 2005–06 to 2006–07 for Volunteer Coordination:

2005–06	
Manningham CHS	\$106,142
Doncare	\$103,292
2006–07	
Manningham CHS	\$108,387
Doncare	\$105,475

**Health: illicit substance use policy**

**185. Ms WOOLDRIDGE** to ask the Minister for Health with reference to illicit substance use within the Victoria’s public health system —

- (1) Are employees in the public health system subject to a drug policy; if so, what does this drug policy entail for —
  - (a) doctors;
  - (b) nurses;
  - (c) allied health professionals.
- (2) What measures are taken when a doctor, nurse or allied health professional is —
  - (a) caught in possession of an illicit substance;
  - (b) suspected to be under the influence of an illicit substance;
  - (c) proven to be under the influence of an illicit substance.
- (3) Is drug testing ever used by the Department of Human Services in the public health system; if so, when.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Employees within the public health system are subject to the local governance arrangements of their employing health service, as specified in their employment contract and any local policies and procedures. Generally, it is a matter for local agencies as to what policies apply and what steps are taken in the event an employee is caught with, suspected or proven to be under the influence of, illicit drugs. Drug testing is not currently part of DHS employment screening processes.

In dealing with such situations, employers and practitioners must be aware of the obligations imposed by legislation, including the Health Professions Registration Act 2005 (Vic), and the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 (Vic).

The Health Professions Registration Act regulates the conduct and standards of practice of medical practitioners, nurses and other allied health professionals (such as dental care providers, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists and medical radiation practitioners).

The Act imposes mandatory reporting obligations on registered medical practitioners, and also empowers registration boards to deal with practitioners suffering from ill health, including drug or alcohol addiction. For instance, section 36 of the Act imposes a legal obligation on any registered medical practitioner, including those who work in the public health system, to report to the relevant registration board any registered health practitioner they are treating, where they form the opinion the person is suffering from an illness or condition which has seriously impaired or may seriously impair the person’s ability to practise as a registered health practitioner. Section 34 requires a registered practitioner who is committed for trial or convicted or found guilty of an indictable offence, to notify the relevant registration board within 30 days. The Act also provides:

- for any person to make a notification to a registration board about the professional conduct, competence or ill health of a registered practitioner;
- indemnity from civil liability for any registered health practitioner who is in a working or treating relationship with another practitioner and reports that practitioner to the responsible board in the belief the person is suffering from an incapacity;
- powers for the relevant registration board to immediately suspend the registration of a practitioner whose ability to practise is affected because of physical or mental health, incapacity, or alcohol or drug addiction;
- powers to request a practitioner undergo a health assessment or performance assessment;
- powers to refer a practitioner for hearing by a Health Panel, with powers for the panel to suspend the registration of the practitioner.

It is common practice, in the event that the Medical Practitioners Board or Nurses Board is notified of a registrant who is suspected of being under the influence of licit or illicit drugs while at work, to investigate the practitioner, and to immediately suspend the practitioner if necessary, or to negotiate stringent conditions for their continued practice in place of suspension, while the substance abuse matters are addressed through a health assessment, disciplinary or other processes.

Both the Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria and the Nurses Board of Victoria have in place a support, rehabilitation and monitoring program for impaired practitioners including those suffering from drug or alcohol addiction. For some participants, their rehabilitation program may include voluntary drug testing in the workplace. Further information on the Victorian Doctors Health Program is available at the following website: [www.vdhp.org.au](http://www.vdhp.org.au) and information about the Victorian Nurses Health Program is available at [www.vnhp.org.au](http://www.vnhp.org.au)

### **Public transport: illicit substance use policy**

**188.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Public Transport with reference to tram, train and bus drivers and measures within Victoria's public transport system to tackle illicit substance use —

- (1) Are employees subject to a specific drug policy; if so, what does this entail for —
  - (a) tram drivers;
  - (b) train drivers;
  - (c) bus drivers.
- (2) What measures are taken when tram, train or bus driver is —
  - (a) caught in possession of an illicit substance;
  - (b) suspected to be under the influence of an illicit substance;
  - (c) proven to be under the influence of an illicit substance.
- (3) Is drug testing ever used for public transport employees; if so, when.

#### **ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

1 (a & b)

Yes. It is an offence under Part 6 of the *Rail Safety Act 2006* for a rail safety worker (driver, track worker, maintenance engineer, etc.) to be impaired by a drug or to have more than the prescribed concentration of alcohol (which is currently 0.00) in his or her blood or breath, while undertaking rail safety work.

All rail operators have drug and alcohol management policies.

1 (c)

Yes. It is an offence under Section 49 of the *Road Safety Act 1986* for a bus driver to be impaired by a drug or to have more than the prescribed concentration of alcohol (which is currently 0.00) in his or her blood or breath, while driving a bus.

2 (a & c)

Any breach of the drug and alcohol management policies of public transport operators by employees results in disciplinary action.

It is a condition of public transport operator accreditation for trains, trams and buses that the accredited person report to Public Transport Safety Victoria if a driver in charge of a public transport vehicle tests positive for exceeding prescribed quantities of drugs or alcohol.

2 (b)

(Train and Tram)

An Assessing Officer, appointed by Public Transport Safety Victoria, may require a rail safety worker to undergo an initial assessment of drug impairment if the officer believes the worker's behaviour or appearance indicates that he or she may be impaired because of an illicit drug. If this impairment assessment indicates that the worker may be impaired by a drug, the worker may be required to undergo further drug impairment testing as well as blood and/or urine testing.

(Bus)

If a bus driver is suspected to be under the influence of an illicit substance, their employer may take action in accordance with company policies.

3

(Train and Tram)

An Assessing Officer may require a rail safety worker to undergo a preliminary assessment of drug impairment if the officer believes the rail safety worker to be impaired for reasons other than alcohol. Victorian legislation requires that impairment be demonstrated through this assessment of drug impairment before blood/urine testing is undertaken.

(Bus)

Bus drivers are subject to random drug and alcohol testing undertaken by Victoria Police.

All public transport workers will be assessed after irregular incidents or accidents, either by an assessing officer or a member of Victoria Police.

### Corrections: illicit substance use policy

**197.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Corrections with reference to measures within the correction system to tackle illicit substance use —

- (1) Is the corrections system subject to a drug policy; if so, what does this entail for —
  - (a) prisoners;
  - (b) prison staff.
- (2) What measures are taken when a prisoner is —
  - (a) caught in possession of an illicit substance;

- (b) suspected to be under the influence of an illicit substance;
  - (c) proven to be under the influence of an illicit substance.
- (3) What measures are taken when a prison staff member is —
- (a) caught in possession of an illicit substance;
  - (b) suspected to be under the influence of an illicit substance;
  - (c) proven to be under the influence of an illicit substance.
- (4) Is drug testing ever used by the Department of Justice; if so, when.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

With reference to measures within the correction system to tackle illicit substance use —

- (1) The Victorian Prison Drug Strategy provides a comprehensive response to drug and alcohol use in Victoria's prisons. The Strategy's range of initiatives includes drugs detection dogs, Ion scanners, drug testing, drug treatment programs, and health and safety programs for prison staff.
- (2) Prisoners  
Prisoners caught in possession of an illicit substance (including alcohol) or under the influence of an illicit substance will be allocated to the Identified Drug User (IDU) program. Prisoners who are suspected of engaging in drug activity are targeted for drug testing.
- (3) Prison Staff  
The Department of Justice Misconduct Policy and relevant Corrections Victoria's instructions and procedures including referral to Victoria Police, where appropriate, apply to prison staff caught in possession, or under the influence of, illicit substances, while on duty and/or on prison premises.
- (4) The Victorian Prison Drug Strategy provides for the testing of prisoners for drug and alcohol use. This includes random general testing, random IDU testing, and targeted testing of prisoners who are suspected of engaging in drug activity. All prisons conduct random and targeted breath analysis to detect alcohol usage.

**Public transport: Connex and V/Line service delays**

**218.** **Mr MULDER** to ask the Minister for Public Transport with reference to the categorisation of delays of six or 11 minutes or more affecting Connex and V/Line trains as a specified reason of 'others' when documents are provided under Freedom of Information requests — for each company by the operating lines, as separately identified in their monthly performance reports, in March 2007 —

- (1) How many trains were delayed by —
  - (a) between six and 10 minutes, 59 seconds using 'others' as a reason;
  - (b) 11 minutes or more using 'others' as a reason.
- (2) Of delays attributed to the cause of 'others' what were the 10 most common 'others' reasons, such as train-motor vehicle collision, and for each reason how many trains for each company and each line were affected.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

(1 & 2) A comprehensive report on the performance, punctuality and reliability of Victoria's public transport services is released quarterly. Copies of Track Record can be found at [www.doi.vic.gov.au/trackrecord](http://www.doi.vic.gov.au/trackrecord).

A supplementary bulletin providing line-by-line punctuality and reliability information is released monthly.

**Roads and ports: Bass Highway duplication**

**259.** Mr MULDER to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports with reference to the Bass highway duplication project announced on 25 August 2006 at a cost of \$29.1 million —

- (1) When will tenders be called.
- (2) What is the construction time line.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

- (1) Tenders for the contract for the design and construction of this stage of the Bass Highway duplication were called on the 8 August 2007, after all planning clearances were obtained.
- (2) The design and construction contract will commence once the tender process has been finalised.

**Water: rainwater tank rebates**

**268.** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Water —

- (1) How many Victorians installed rainwater tanks in —
  - (a) 2003–04;
  - (b) 2004–05;
  - (c) 2005–06;
  - (d) 2006–07.
- (2) How many Victorians have claimed the rainwater tank rebate in —
  - (a) 2005–06;
  - (b) 2006–07.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) The Department of Sustainability and Environment is unable to provide the number of rainwater tanks installed in Victoria in the prescribed years. The Department keeps a record of the number of rebates given for each of the financial years outlined.
- (2) The number of rebates for rainwater tanks in the given years is as follows:
  - a. 2003–04: Tank rebates claimed 6,916
  - b. 2004–05: Tank rebates claimed 3,383
  - c. 2005–06: Tank rebates claimed 2,304
  - d. 2006–07: Tank rebates claimed 5,076 (including Large Tank rebates from 1 January 2007)

**Water: rainwater tank charges**

**269. Mr HODGETT** to ask the Minister for Water —

- (1) Will additional Government charges be payable by recipients of the rainwater tank rebate for use of water from a rainwater tank.
- (2) Have members of the community indicated their concerns to the Department of Sustainability and Environment relating to future charges by water companies for use of water from rainwater tanks.
- (3) What assurances can be made that no claimant of the rainwater tank rebate will be charged any fee relating to the use of water from a rainwater tank at any point in the future

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) There are no taxes on the water collected in rainwater tanks and there is no intention to tax water collected in rainwater tanks.
- (2) The Department of Sustainability and Environment has had inquires on this issue in the form of letters written by members of the public to the Minister for Water as well as calls to the Department's Customer Service Centre and have been provided with a similar response.
- (3) In terms of assurances that can be made in relation to access to collected rainwater I refer you to the Water Act 1989, which states that:

A person has a right to use rainwater or other water that occurs or flows (otherwise than in a waterway or bore) on land occupied by that person or, with the permission of the other person, on land occupied by another person.

This water may be used for any purpose and on any land.

The Government supports the purchase and installation of rain water tanks for households on reticulated water supply through the Water Smart Gardens and Homes rebate scheme.

**Police and emergency services: Mornington fire station**

**271. Mr MORRIS** to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services with reference to the new fire station currently under construction for the Country Fire Authority in Mornington —

- (1) Does the design of the fire station allow for the capture of storm water from the roof of the building; if not, will capture, recycling and storage systems be retro-fitted once the Centre is operational.
- (2) Does the design of the fire station allow for the capture and recycling of storm water from the hard-standing areas, driveways and parking areas of the building; if not, will capture, recycling and storage systems be retro-fitted once the Centre is operational.
- (3) Has the fire station has been fitted with water tanks; if so, what is the capacity of the tanks.
- (4) Has the fire station has been fitted with tanks; if so, what purpose will the captured water be used for.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

- (1) The design of the new fire station allows for the collection of rainwater from a substantial part of the building's roof.

- (2) Collection and reuse of water from the external hard-stand areas of the fire station has been investigated by CFA in terms of its quality and potential suitability for reuse. It is currently considered that the degree and range of contaminants commonly present in stormwater collected from these external areas makes its use inappropriate for most purposes without extensive treatment. Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) issues are a major concern in this regard. Therefore, collection of stormwater from the external hard-stand areas at Mornington fire station is not included in the design. No retrofit works are planned in this regard.
- (3) Four water tanks of 9,000-litre capacity each have been included in the design. These tanks will provide an overall 36,000-litre water storage capacity to the new facility.
- (4) The stored water will be used to service the cisterns throughout the building as well as for firefighter training, cleaning of emergency appliances and a range of external uses, including watering of landscaped areas.

**Public transport: Mornington Peninsula bus shelters**

**312. Mr MORRIS** to ask the Minister for Public Transport with reference to the proposed program to replace or upgrade 400 bus shelters over the next two years noted in the Minister's media release on 24 May 2007 titled *New Bus Shelters for Melbourne's Suburbs* —

- (1) How many bus shelters located in the Mornington Peninsula Shire are to be replaced or upgraded.
- (2) Was the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council consulted on the program —
  - (a) if so, how many shelters did the Council nominate for the program;
  - (b) if not, how were priorities for the program determined.
- (3) How many of the bus shelters are included in the program for the —
  - (a) 781 Frankston to Mt Martha route;
  - (b) 784 Frankston to Osborne route;
  - (c) 785 Frankston to Mornington East route.
- (4) Does the program include provision for cleaning and maintenance of the replaced or upgraded bus shelters.
- (5) Is the program subsidised in any way by the sale of advertising space on any of the shelters.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

- (1) Mornington Peninsula Shire Council has advised the Department of Infrastructure (DOI) that it is still to make a decision on whether it will participate in the new DOI bus shelter contract. As a result no shelters have been allocated to the Mornington Peninsula at this time.
- (2) DOI consulted all metropolitan councils including the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council through a process which was conducted with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).

The priority sites for the installation of shelters are determined by councils having regard to passenger loadings at locations.

- (3) (a, b & c)

None.

- (4) Yes, the program will cater for the cleaning and maintenance of all shelters owned by DOI.
- (5) Yes.

**Roads and ports: Dorset Road, Croydon, traffic congestion**

**313.** Mr HODGETT to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports with reference to traffic congestion on Dorset Road, Croydon —

- (1) What are the current traffic count figures.
- (2) Does the Government have any plans to alleviate the traffic congestion.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

- (1) Recent traffic data indicates that Dorset Road carries approximately 29,000 vehicles per day between Mt Dandenong Road and Eastfield Road, where the road is divided and 18,000 vehicles per day between Lincoln Road and the Maroondah Highway, where the road is undivided.
- (2) Proposals for improvement projects must be considered and prioritised on a statewide basis, and any plans to alleviate traffic congestion in Dorset Road will be considered in this context.

**Agriculture: horticulture industry assistance**

**318.** Mrs FYFFE to ask the Minister for Agriculture with reference to the effect of the drought on the nursery and other horticulture industries —

- (1) How many jobs have been lost in the industries.
- (2) What action has the Minister taken to provide assistance to the industries.
- (3) What action does the Minister intend to take to assist in restoring economic viability to the industries.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

- (1) The horticulture industries represent a diverse range of businesses. In relation to job losses, advice from the Victorian Farmers Federation Horticulture group confirms that jobs have been affected by a range of regional and state wide issues like drought, hail, frost, floods and global issues such as market access and exchange rates. It is also important to note that in many of these industries the jobs affected are seasonal so it is extremely difficult to attribute employment impacts to a single factor.
- (2) In responding to the complex needs of the agriculture sector (including the horticultural industry) in relation to the drought, the Premier's Drought Taskforce has delivered over \$170 million in drought response initiatives since September 2006. The package includes projects for regional employment, infrastructure, securing water suppliers, drought related information for farmers, rural water bill relief, health and welfare services, financial counselling and community activities. The Drought Taskforce has sought contribution through numerous sources, particularly through the Minister for Agriculture's Drought Reference group, which includes a representative from the horticulture industry.

Through Federal Government schemes, eligible nursery and horticulture producers in EC declared areas may be eligible for drought support through Income Support Payments (Centrelink) and Interest Rate Subsidies (Rural Finance Corporation). Producers receiving income support payments through Centrelink may also be eligible for a rebate on their Municipal Rates, which is a program delivered by DPI and managed through local councils.

- (3) In addition to these specific actions taken in relation to drought relief measures, the Victorian Government considers that restoring economic viability, indeed also building on already viable enterprises, is a partnership between industry and Government. DPI is focused on strategic co-investment in sustainable agriculture

through a range of investment programs and initiatives and continues to provide strategic support to these industries. This partnership represents a co-investment of some \$30 million in horticulture, the major proportion of which is from the Victorian Government. Critical co-investment in biosecurity, market access, biotechnology, sustainable practices, food supply chain innovation and efficiency, to name some key areas, are additional initiatives aimed at restoring and enhancing the economic viability of these industries.

- (4) In addition to these important initiatives, the Victorian Government has made a major commitment to increasing water supplies, and hence water security for households and businesses in the State. \$4.9 billion has been committed to major water infrastructure projects, which is the biggest boost to Victoria's water supplies in 25 years. As well as the desalination plant, this will include a significant upgrading of Victoria's irrigation systems in the food bowl of northern Victoria. This will help capture lost water for Victoria's farms, stressed rivers, urban households and businesses. The nursery and horticulture industries will be significant beneficiaries of this program.

**Public transport: Broadmeadows–Craigieburn electrification extension**

**322.** Mr MULDER to ask the Minister for Public Transport — will the extension of electrification between Broadmeadows and Craigieburn require any extra Connex train drivers; if so, how many extra shifts will be required on —

- (1) Monday to Friday.
- (2) Saturday.
- (3) Sunday.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

The extension of rail electrification between Broadmeadows and Craigieburn will require extra Connex train drivers.

The extra shifts required are as follows:

- (1) Monday to Friday = 18
- (2) Saturday = 3
- (3) Sunday = 5

**Attorney-General: Cheltenham courthouse**

**333.** Mr THOMPSON (*Sandringham*) to ask the Attorney-General with reference to the Cheltenham Courthouse —

- (1) What are the Government's plans in relation to the courthouse.
- (2) What security system operates to protect courthouse records currently stored on the site.
- (3) Will the Government consider a proposal for the building to be used by the community in conjunction with the City of Kingston.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised that:

- (1) Cheltenham Court House closed in January 1993 and the property transferred to the Office of Public Prosecutions (OPP). The building is now occupied by OPP staff and is used for records management and file storage.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 18 September 2007

ASSEMBLY

3271

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- (2) No court records are held at the former Cheltenham Court House. When it was closed, court records were removed to the Frankston Court House.

OPP have installed an alarm system to monitor the building and have a 24 hour security alarm connection to the duty officer at a security firm. In addition, the building is next door to the 24 hour Cheltenham Police Station.

- (3) Any proposal for the building to be used by the community in conjunction with the City of Kingston will be considered, subject to normal asset management practices. An important requirement will be to provide alternative, suitable accommodation for records management and file storage for OPP.



**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, 19 September 2007**

**Mental health: drug services funding**

**181.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Mental Health with reference to new drug funding arrangements announced in the 2007–08 state budget —

- (1) In Budget Paper No 3, do footnote (f) on page 69, footnote (c) on page 88 and footnote (e) on page 90, although worded differently, mean the same thing.
- (2) What has been moved to Public Health administration in terms of —
  - (a) policy;
  - (b) programs;
  - (c) the dollar amount of funding.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) All three footnotes referred to (2007–08 Budget Paper no. 3, Footnote (f) on page 69, Footnote (c) on page 88 and Footnote (e) on page 90), relate to the transfer of the Drugs and Poisons and Tobacco Policy functions from Drugs Services to Public Health Outputs.
- (2) The following programs and allocations have transferred from Drugs Services to Public Health:
  - \$5.0m transfer in respect of the Tobacco Policy Program which manages Tobacco Policy and Regulation,
  - \$2.2m transfer in respect of the Drugs and Poisons Regulation Group which provides regulatory advice and compliance functions associated with controlled drugs, poisons and therapeutic goods.

**Mental health: drug services funding**

**182.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Mental Health with reference to funding for drug prevention and control plus drug treatment and rehabilitation outputs which were \$127.5 million in 2006–07 and are \$116.8 million in 2007–08 — what is the reason for reduced spending.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- There has been no reduction to the recurrent Drugs Services budget allocation for 2007–08. The movement from the 2006–07 budget of \$127.5 million to the 2007–08 budget of \$116.8 million includes an additional \$4 million for a range of routine annual budget adjustments including indexation and wage adjustments. In addition, the budget movement takes into account the following major changes:
  - adjustment for the one-off allocation of \$7.5m for facility development grants to drug services included in the 2006–07 budget; and
  - adjustment in respect of the movement of \$5m for Tobacco Policy and \$2.2m for Drugs and Poisons Regulation from Drugs Services to Public Health.

**Mental health: pharmacotherapy prescribers**

**183.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Mental Health with reference to 2007–08 state budget figures regarding pharmacotherapy and page 89 of 2007–08 Budget Paper No 3 showing the Government’s expected outcome of 40 general practitioners (GPs) trained to prescribe pharmacotherapy, revised down from an original target of 60 —

- (1) What will be the impact in the community of training only 40 GPs.
- (2) What has contributed to this figure.
- (3) What will be done to ensure the Government reaches its new target of 70 in 2007–08.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) The revision of this target is not expected to impact on the number of General Practitioners available to prescribe pharmacotherapy in Victoria in 2006–07. There are currently 490 General Practitioners approved as pharmacotherapy prescribers in Victoria.
- (2) This revision from the target of 60 to the expected outcome of 40 General Practitioners trained to provide pharmacotherapy services in 2006–07 reflects the establishment phase associated with the commencement of a new contract for the provision of training services. The target for the service provider is 180 General Practitioners trained over three years and the targets have been set at 40 in the first year and 70 in each of the subsequent two years.
- (3) The Providers of training for General Practitioners have contracted to train 70 GPs in 2007–08 and 2008–09.

**Mental health: drug services measurements**

**184.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Mental Health — given that the Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association has labelled episodes of care ‘arbitrary, restrictive, non-responsive, unreflective of services provided, client complexity and rural/regional costs’ on its website and that the Department of Human Services conceded issues from within the sector with the measure in a 2002 review —

- (1) Why are episodes of care still being used as a measure.
- (2) Will this measure be changed; if so, when.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

- (1) Episodes of care record the outcomes that clients achieve when undertaking alcohol and drug treatment programs. They are a qualitative measure of what a client achieves rather than a measure of inputs by agencies.

An episode of care (EOC) comprises a range of significant treatment goals attainments (STGAs). The client establishes their significant treatment goals in consultation with their clinician or alcohol and drug treatment worker when they enter a treatment program. These goals are recorded in an individual treatment plan. When the client achieves these goals (or STGAs), an episode of care is attained.

Following the review of episodes of care in 2002, DHS worked with representatives from across the sector, including VAADA members and consumer representatives, to identify Significant Treatment Goal Attainments (STGA) that accurately reflect the range of treatment goals that clients might seek to achieve across all the different alcohol and drug treatment service types. STGAs have been in place for the last few years and take into account differences between service types.

- (2) Episodes of care provide a qualitative measure of client outcomes. This reflects good practice in service delivery measurement with a focus on what a client achieves through undergoing drug and alcohol treatment.

**Mental health: pharmacotherapy pharmacies**

- 235.** **Mr SMITH** (*Warrandyte*) to ask the Minister for Mental Health — how many pharmacies which have been approved as pharmacotherapy dispensing pharmacies are located within 200 metres of a school or preschool.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

The Victorian opioid substitution pharmacotherapy system operates from community settings with the aim to integrate drug dependent people back into the community. Pharmacies are businesses with the option of dispensing this medication from their premises. The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia and the Pharmacy Guild encourage all pharmacies to participate in the pharmacotherapy program. At present approximately one third of Victorian pharmacies (398) participate in providing this service.

We have no information relating to proximity of dispensing pharmacies to schools or preschools.

**Roads and ports: VicRoads website search engine**

- 257.** **Mr MULDER** to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports with reference to searches made from the search box on the top left hand section of the VicRoads website that show results that are not able to be clicked on to obtain documents —

- (1) Why are the documents in the search results not able to be clicked on.
- (2) How long has this been a problem on the site.
- (3) When will the problem be fixed.
- (4) What is the estimated cost of fixing the problem.
- (5) Who will undertake work to fix the site —
  - (a) VicRoads in-house staff;
  - (b) contractors or consultants; if so, what is their name.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

There have been two documented issues with the search engine and both are related to a particular version of the Firefox browser that some members of the public may be using. The first issue results in users seeing a blank page when searching, and the second issue is users being directed back to the homepage. These issues were first raised in March 2007.

The first issue has been resolved by our provider and the other issue currently cannot be reproduced. We are attempting to obtain more information from users as we believe it is related to certain user settings within their Firefox browser.

Our website provider, EDS Australia is working with our search engine provider, Autonomy, to resolve the outstanding issue.

**Public transport: Connex roving safety officers**

**310.** **Mr MULDER** to ask the Minister for Public Transport how many full-time roving safety officers were employed by Connex as at —

- (1) 1 January 2004.
- (2) 1 July 2004.
- (3) 1 July 2005.
- (4) 1 July 2006.
- (5) 1 July 2007.
- (6) 18 July 2007.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

The number of full-time roving safety officers employed by Connex as at:

- (1) 1 January 2004 = 254
- (2) 1 July 2004 = 249
- (3) 1 July 2005 = 292
- (4) 1 July 2006 = 301
- (5) 1 July 2007 = 327
- (6) 18 July 2007 = 323

**Public transport: Connex roving safety officers**

**311.** **Mr MULDER** to ask the Minister for Public Transport with reference to roving safety officers on the Camberwell to Alamein, Camberwell to Flinders Street, Flinders Street to Belgrave, Flinders Street to Broadmeadows, Flinders Street to Cranbourne, Flinders Street to Epping, Flinders Street to Frankston, Flinders Street to Glen Waverley, Flinders Street to Hurstbridge, Flinders Street to Lilydale, Flinders Street to Sandringham, Flinders Street to Upfield, Flinders Street to Watergardens, Newport to Williamstown and Frankston to Stony Pointy train lines —

- (1) How many individual trips on each line were covered for at least 80 per cent of the total length of the journey, in each direction and for each day between —
  - (a) 27 December 2006 and 3 January 2007;
  - (b) 2 July 2007 and 8 July 2007.
- (2) How many trips on each line departing from a terminal station after 9.00 p.m. were not covered for 80 per cent of the total length of the journey, and for each of these, what was the —
  - (a) day;
  - (b) date;
  - (c) scheduled time of departure;
  - (d) reason;
  - (e) the number of customer service staff rostered for duty;
  - (f) the number of customer service staff who failed to present for rostered duty.

- (3) How many staff were dismissed for failing to achieve the contracted 80 per cent coverage of a scheduled trip in —
  - (a) 2004–05;
  - (b) 2005–06;
  - (c) 2006–07;
  - (d) 2007–08.
  
- (4) How many staff were cautioned for failing to achieve the contracted 80 per cent coverage of a scheduled trip in —
  - (a) 2004–05;
  - (b) 2005–06;
  - (c) 2006–07;
  - (d) 2007–08.
  
- (5) How many staff were dismissed for claiming that they escorted a Connex passenger to or from a railway station car park when in fact no escort occurred in —
  - (a) 2004–05;
  - (b) 2005–06;
  - (c) 2006–07;
  - (d) 2007–08.
  
- (6) How many staff were cautioned for claiming that they escorted a Connex passenger to or from a railway station car park when in fact no escort occurred in —
  - (a) 2004–05;
  - (b) 2005–06;
  - (c) 2006–07;
  - (d) 2007–08.
  
- (7) For each day from 27 December 2006 to 3 January 2007 and 2 July 2007 to 8 July 2007, how many assaults were recorded on each line between —
  - (a) 9.00 p.m. and 10.00 p.m.;
  - (b) 10.00 p.m. and 11.00 p.m.;
  - (c) 11.00 p.m. and 12.00 a.m.;
  - (d) 12.00 a.m. and 1.00 a.m.;
  - (e) 1.00 a.m. and 2.00 a.m.;
  - (f) 2.00 a.m. and 3.00 a.m.
  
- (8) At which stations on the lines is a taxi provided for the travel of officers between stations and depots, and —
  - (a) what was the cost of such travel from 27 December 2006 to 3 January 2007 and 2 July 2007 to 8 July 2007;
  - (b) what was the total expenditure for such travel on each line in 2006–07;
  - (c) what is the expected expenditure for such travel on each line in 2007–08.
  
- (9) What was the total budget allocation for roving customer service staff in —
  - (a) 2003–04;
  - (b) 2004–05;
  - (c) 2005–06;
  - (d) 2006–07;
  - (e) 2007–08.

(10) Do officers normally work in groups of three; if not, what size do they work in.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

- (1–9) Connex has advised that the information requested is not readily obtainable and the time and resources required to manually extract the data cannot be justified.
- (10) Yes, officers normally work in groups of three.

**Public transport: Lilydale station car park**

**317.** Mrs FYFFE to ask the Minister for Public Transport with reference to Lilydale Railway Station — what plans does the Minister have to —

- (1) Increase the number of car parking spaces.
- (2) Improve lighting.
- (3) Improve security.
- (4) Resurface the car park.

**ANSWER:**

As at the date the question was raised, the answer is:

(1–4) *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* includes funding of \$90 million to deliver 5,000 additional car parking spaces on the metropolitan and regional rail networks by 2016. Investigations are currently under way to determine whether car parking facilities can be improved at Lilydale Railway Station. A number of other stations on the Lilydale rail line are also being investigated.

As well as identifying opportunities to increase the number of available parking spaces, the current investigations will also consider whether the parking facilities at Lilydale Railway Station can be improved through other measures such as lighting, security and asphalt resurfacing.