

VERIFIED VERSION

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Inquiry into budget estimates 2012–13

Melbourne — 15 May 2012

Members

Mr N. Angus

Mr P. Davis

Ms J. Hennessy

Mr D. Morris

Mr D. O'Brien

Mr M. Pakula

Mr R. Scott

Chair: Mr P. Davis

Deputy Chair: Mr M. Pakula

Staff

Executive Officer: Ms V. Cheong

Witnesses

Mr H. Delahunty, Minister for Sport and Recreation,

Mr A. Tongue, Secretary,

Dr P. Hertan, Deputy Secretary, Sport and Recreation and Veterans' Affairs,

Ms S. George, Director, Community Sport and Recreation, and

Mr G. Forck, Chief Finance Officer, Department of Planning and Community Development.

**Necessary corrections to be notified to
executive officer of committee**

The CHAIR — I declare open the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee hearing on the 2012–13 budget estimates for the portfolios of sport and recreation and veterans’ affairs.

On behalf of the committee I welcome the Honourable Hugh Delahunty, MP, Minister for Sport and Recreation and Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, and from the Department of Planning and Community Development: Mr Greg Forck, chief finance officer; Dr Peter Hertan, deputy secretary, sport and recreation and veterans’ affairs; and Ms Susan George, director, community sport and recreation.

Members of Parliament, departmental officers, members of the public and the media are also welcome.

In accordance with the guidelines for public hearings, I remind members of the public gallery that they cannot participate in any way in the committee’s proceedings. Only officers of the PAEC secretariat are to approach PAEC members. Departmental officers, as requested by the minister or his chief of staff, can approach the table during the hearing to provide information to the minister, by leave of myself as Chairman. Written communication to witnesses can only be provided via officers of the PAEC secretariat. Members of the media are also requested to observe the guidelines for filming or recording proceedings in the Legislative Council committee room, and no more than two TV cameras are allowed at any one time in the allocated spaces. May I remind TV camera operators to remain focused only on the persons speaking and that panning of the public gallery, committee members and witnesses is strictly prohibited.

As previously advised to witnesses here today, I am pleased to announce that these hearings are being webcast live on the Parliament’s website.

All evidence taken by this committee is taken under the provisions of the Parliamentary Committees Act, attracts parliamentary privilege and is protected from judicial review. However, any comments made outside the precincts of the hearing are not protected by parliamentary privilege. This committee has determined that there is no need for evidence to be sworn; however, witnesses are reminded that all questions must be answered in full and with accuracy and truthfulness. Any persons found to be giving false or misleading evidence may be in contempt of Parliament and subject to penalty.

Before I proceed I would like to welcome Andrew Tongue, secretary of the department.

All evidence given today is being recorded. Witnesses will be provided with proof versions of the transcript to be verified and returned within two working days of the hearing. Unverified transcripts and PowerPoint presentations will be placed on the committee’s website immediately following receipt, to be replaced by verified transcripts within five days of receipt.

Following a presentation by the minister, committee members will ask questions relating to the inquiry. Generally, the procedure followed will be that relating to questions in the Legislative Assembly.

I ask that all mobile telephones be turned off.

I now call on the minister to give a brief presentation of no more than 10 minutes on the more complex financial and performance information that relates to the budget estimates for the sport and recreation portfolio.

Overheads shown.

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thank you, Mr Chairman and other members of the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee. I begin my contribution today by giving a 10-minute summary. I will start it off by saying the coalition government recognises that sport and recreation help build strong and healthy communities in Victoria and bring all sections of society together providing health benefits and makes an important contribution to our economy.

Our priorities for sport and recreation can be summarised into five key areas. The first key area is to work towards active and healthy communities. We want to get more people more active more often. The government is facilitating increased activity levels in the community through a range of programs, including the Sporting Uniform Grants program, the Premier’s Active Families Challenge, the Sports Injury Prevention Taskforce, the new Women in Sport and Recreation program and the supporting volunteers and coaches initiative.

In order to encourage increased participation, it is essential to have facilities for active communities. The government is providing assistance to local councils and clubs to improve community sport and recreation facilities through a range of programs, with at least 190 new projects approved during 11–12. In addition to community facilities for sport and recreation, Victoria is also renowned for its major sporting infrastructure and its sporting events. The government recognises the state's outstanding record in relation to these areas and is committed to maintaining support for our world-class facilities such as Melbourne Park and for events in Melbourne and regional areas.

The government is proud of the sporting achievements of Victorians. Reaching your potential is about providing improved support for our athletes through new and existing programs and is a key priority for the government. There is a significant range of achievements in relation to our active and healthy communities. State sporting associations have a key role in providing opportunities for people to participate in sport. In December last year I approved funding of over \$2 million to SSAs through the new Victorians More Active program. It will support four key pillars of community sport and recreation: participation, membership, coaches and officials, and club capacity.

The Regional Sport and Recreation program helps to provide volunteer support in information and training development opportunities to local clubs in rural and regional Victoria: 107 workshops and seminars involving 610 clubs were delivered in the first half of 2011-12. The government is providing \$1.48 million over three years for a new Women in Sport and Recreation, WISAR, program, which will deliver initiatives such as supporting professional development, organisational change and increased participation. The Premier's Active Families Challenge was an outstanding success in March and April this year. The Country Action grant scheme, CAGS, and Victalent grants provide tangible support for grassroots sporting clubs in rural and regional Victoria. Earlier in 2012 I approved 36 CAGS grants and 97 Victalent grants, totalling approximately \$180 000.

There have also been major developments in relation to facilities for active communities. Reflecting our commitment to improving community sport and recreation facilities, I have approved projects across several community facility and funding programs. I have approved over 100 projects through the community facility funding program. The minor sport and recreation grants, a component of this program, has been boosted by an additional \$5 million over four years in last year's budget. Better pools, seasonal pools, major facilities and planning projects were also approved under this program during the year.

I have approved a range of projects through the country football and netball program. The Tyers netball umpire change room upgrade has been allocated \$50 000 to provide change rooms for female participants and male and female umpires. This program makes an enormous difference to country Victoria, where football and netball clubs play a major role in the community's life.

New projects to provide facilities for football — soccer — have been approved under the Strengthening the World Game program, such as \$70 000 to the Seaford United Soccer Club. In addition, a number of facility projects the government committed to fund during the election campaign have now been fully scoped and formally approved, and funding has commenced through the small-scale facility program. I would like to show committee members two maps which illustrate the location of funding community facility projects across Victoria.

The first map, now showing, shows projects in regional Victoria, program by program — the community facility funding program, country football and netball, Strengthening the World Game, Sustainable Sports Grounds and the small-scale facility program. The second one shows the metropolitan area of Melbourne and the community facility funding program, the country football and netball program, Strengthening the World Game, Sustainable Sports Grounds and the small-scale facility program.

This year, 2012, has been a year of major achievements in relation to major sport infrastructure. The redevelopment of Melbourne Park has progressed significantly, culminating in the recent installation of the final truss of the Eastern Plaza structure. The MCG Great Southern Stand is being refurbished at an impressive rate, with government support, to ensure it continues to serve future generations of Victorians. The government recognises the importance of Yarra Park as a significant regional park and as a gateway to Melbourne's sporting precinct. We are continuing to support the implementation of the Yarra Park master plan. Kardinia Park is very important to Geelong and the broader western region. The government has now allocated \$26.5 million to the third stage of the development of Simonds Stadium. Geelong Football Club is to be commended for responding

to the government's community benefit policy by making a commitment to the development of the community wellness and education centre.

In last year's budget the government provided funding of over \$15 million to enable the state sports facilities project at Lakeside Stadium to be fully delivered. This development includes a new state athletics centre — the long-term home of the Victorian Institute of Sport, South Melbourne Football Club, Athletics Victoria, Athletics Australia and Little Athletics Australia. Also, the new building for the VIS was opened earlier this year, the state athletics centre is operational and the athletics building will be finished later this year.

The financial year 2011–12 has been a magnificent year for sporting events. In addition to the impressive range of ongoing major events hosted by Victoria, there were three particular special additions this year. The President's Cup was held at Royal Melbourne in November in 2011 and was a tremendous success. The UCI track world championships were held last month and delivered no less than eight new world records and a number of sell-out crowds at Hisense Arena. In March this year we had the Ironman Asia-Pacific Championships in Melbourne for the first of three years. It was a highly successful event, with an estimated economic impact of \$10 million.

I would also like to highlight the Significant Sporting Events program. This program enables the government to fund fantastic smaller events such as the Australian Deaf Games in Geelong, the ISU world junior speed skate skating championships at the Icehouse and the Australian indoor hockey championships at Sale. These events bring benefits to a wide range of communities around the state.

I cannot leave this subject, Chair, without mentioning the Stawell Gift. I know Mr O'Brien would be keen on that. The government has fulfilled its commitment to fund this iconic event, which was held over Easter and was a resounding success.

In 2011-12 we have also taken major steps forward in relation to the government's key priority of 'reaching your potential'. The government's new elite athlete travel grants program was launched this year to help Victorian athletes reach their potential. These grants can make a major difference to athletes and their families, who often struggle with the cost of participation at the elite level of sport.

The government has also committed to encouraging sports excellence through its support for the Victorian Institute of Sport and the regional sports academies with funding of over \$6 million in 2011-12. The VicTalent program helps officials, coaches and athletes who are required to travel extensively for training and competition to achieve their potential, and 97 VicTalent grants of up to \$500 were provided in the first round.

The 2012–13 budget includes new strategic investments across the key priority areas of facilities for active communities, major sport infrastructure and sporting events that build on extensive new initiatives announced in 2011-12. Extending support for soccer facilities supports facilities for active communities. It is designed to cater for the growing popularity of grassroots soccer. The Strengthening the World Game program will be continued, with additional funding of \$1.45 million.

There are two new initiatives that support major infrastructure in Victoria. Funding of \$5.5 million will be provided to commence the design process and inform the business case of stage 2 of the works at Melbourne Park, Australia's home of tennis. This strongly reinforces the government's commitment to keeping the Australian Open in Melbourne until 2036. The government will also provide support totalling \$3.5 million for the new capital and operational requirements for the State Sports Centre Trust. This will allow the trust to maintain the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre and the State Netball Hockey Centre at an acceptable standard by undertaking minor capital works and maintenance, and with operational requirements for the recently completed Lakeside Stadium. These strategic investments in our world-class facilities will help Victoria continue to attract major sporting events and reinforce Melbourne's standing as the world's ultimate sports city.

Importantly the government will also provide further support for sporting events. Funding of \$2.4 million over two years has been allocated to continue the Significant Sporting Events program. This program is not only about attracting and supporting international, national and regionally important events, it is also about building participation opportunities and showcasing less prominent sports such as the Ballarat Triathlon Multisport Festival, the Australian Indigenous Surfing Titles at Bells Beach and the showjumping world qualifying event held in Shepparton.

I indicated earlier in my presentation that I would like to return to the subject of Lakeside Stadium. To give members a better appreciation of the project I would like, with your agreement, Chair, to conclude my presentation by showing a brief video of Lakeside Stadium, if I could.

Video shown.

Mr DELAHUNTY — This is the laying of the track, obviously.

Mr PAKULA — This was Bob Jane?

Mr DELAHUNTY — This was Bob Jane; that is correct. The old South Melbourne football ground — there is a bit of my blood on the ground there, I think, from when Vinnie Waite clocked me.

You will see the track is a blue colour, and that is the new international colour, I believe. It looks sensational if you ever get the chance to get up on one of the high buildings in the city and look over it. The VIS is just to the left there in the old South Melbourne grandstand. The grandstand shell was kept. That is a sensational building also.

Mr PAKULA — Is this the productivity demanded by your new Building Commission?

Mr DELAHUNTY — That is correct. They are working very fast.

Already this year we have had the 2012 Melbourne IAAF World Challenge and the Australian Olympic selection trials. I have been down there a couple of times and there have been school events there, so it is getting good usage from elite athletes right down to Little Athletics.

Sally Pearson was one of the runners who used the track earlier in the year, and she put on a sensational performance. It is a world-class facility that will attract, no doubt, a lot of athletics events there. The stadium also houses the VIS, as I said earlier, for their relocation. Also we have got the three athletics codes there. Thank you, Mr Chair.

The CHAIR — Before we proceed, could you run back to one of the slides — ‘Strengthening the world game’?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Yes.

The CHAIR — Is that the one you were after?

Mr PAKULA — Yes. Thank you.

The CHAIR — In the remaining time, which is a little bit less than an hour, we will take questions on the sport and recreation portfolio. Minister, given the key growth and efficiency initiatives announced in the budget can you please outline for the committee the likely impact of the budget on enhancing service delivery, promoting productivity and achieving efficiency gains within your portfolio, and in responding could you also indicate how you intend to monitor the portfolio’s effectiveness in maximising improvements in these areas?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thank you, Mr Chair. The budget includes four growth initiatives for the sport and recreation portfolio: firstly, extending the support for soccer facilities; secondly, the Melbourne Park redevelopment — stage 2 of the scoping process; thirdly, the State Sport Centres Trust, continuing maintenance of facilities to ensure quality sporting opportunities for the public; and finally, the significant sporting events program. Each of these initiatives will enhance service delivery and promote productivity. For example, providing support for local government to develop additional facilities for soccer will improve service delivery to the community by helping to cater for the staggering — I say again, staggering — 40 per cent increase in registered soccer players since 2007; and a lot of them are female. Improvements to facilities managed by the State Sport Centres Trust will ensure that these facilities continue to provide opportunities to improve our capacity and attract and maintain major events, provide sports with high-quality facilities for their elite programs and provide important sport and recreation opportunities for the general public.

The redevelopment of Melbourne Park will help Victoria to retain the Australian open as the grand slam of the Asia-Pacific until 2036, along with providing quality experiences for approximately 2.4 million visitors who attend the events in the precinct each year.

The continuation of the significant sporting events program will build on its success to date. Over the past 18 months we have seen almost 100 events funded, more than half of which have been in regional areas. I intend to monitor my portfolio's effectiveness in maximising improvements in these areas through ongoing discussions with the department, regular program reviews and measuring outcomes from events in participation.

The CHAIR — Briefly, could you please inform the committee what you consider to be the likely impact on the community stakeholders in your portfolio of initiatives you have outlined in your presentation?

Mr DELAHUNTY — There are many community stakeholders. I am pleased to respond to that question about the likely impact on the industry and the community stakeholders in my portfolio. Support for soccer facilities funding will be provided to local government to meet the increasing demand for soccer facilities right across the state. Secondly, in relation to the Melbourne Park stage 2 scoping, this will ensure we are continuing to work towards the keeping of the Australian open until 2036, which not only is an important event for Tennis Australia but also underpins Victoria's events industry. The project will also enhance the experience of over 2.4 million visitors, as I said, to the Melbourne and Olympic parks precinct every year.

In relation to our investment in the State Sport Centres Trust, this will allow us to continue to provide quality facilities for more than 1.8 million visitors to those trust facilities each year. These facilities will continue to support Victoria's enviable events industry and the development programs of both state and national sporting associations.

Finally, in relation to the significant sporting events program — a very important one — we will be able to boost the attraction and retention of events across a wide range of sports, particularly smaller sports. This is especially the case in regional areas, which until this program was introduced found it difficult to get government support for their events.

Mr PAKULA — Minister, I just want to clarify — the slide you had up there under 'Strengthening the world game', the \$1.45 million, just before I ask the question — is that money and the money outlined for 2012–13 on page 47 as extending support for soccer facilities at 1.5, are we talking about the same output?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Yes, we are.

Mr PAKULA — So it is actually 1.45 — I know the budget papers cannot show that, right. I suppose my question is this: my understanding is that extending support for soccer facilities was originally budgeted as a sort of ongoing initiative — sorry, Strengthening the World Game was originally budgeted as an ongoing initiative. You yourself said there has been a staggering 40 per cent increase since 2007. I can attest to it — my 10-year-old is one of the new participants. It is the boom sport in Victoria. You have said that yourself in your media release. I am wondering why in those circumstances you have not provided for ongoing funding for soccer rather than a one-year lapsing program.

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Mr Pakula. As you rightly say, soccer, as we know it — it is called football by the soccer community — is one of the very important sporting programs that I look after. There are over 50 sports in the state, and it is about trying to get equity for all those sports but address the needs of a growing demand for soccer — in this case particularly, I have to say, for female participation in soccer. The previous program was only funded for three years. We have in this budget funded for this year, and we will look at further commitments at a later stage, but it is a very important program. In fact the CEO of Football Federation Victoria has complimented the state government on its continuing funding for this very important program of supporting soccer infrastructure here in Victoria.

Mr PAKULA — I know what you say about the previous program being funded for three years, but I think in terms of certainty for the participants in the sport, certainly three years is preferable to 12 months. What certainty can you provide to the participants, the parents, the clubs and everybody else involved in soccer, particularly youth soccer, that there will be funding beyond 30 June 2013?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Mr Pakula. The immediate priority of this program, which, as I said, is a very important program, was to ensure that it continued into 2012 and 2013, and this has been achieved very successfully, if I may say. But the main focus of the budget is on 2012-13. Any future need for funding will be considered in future budgets.

Mr MORRIS — Minister, in relation to budget paper 3, page 221, the expected outcome for the performance measure ‘Community facility grants: number approved’ — you also referred to this matter in the presentation — I am just wondering if you can inform the committee of the steps taken in regard to support for the community facilities projects.

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thank you, Mr Morris. I know of your keen interest in community facilities sport in your electorate down on the Mornington Peninsula. The Victorian government is committed to supporting the development of quality sport and recreation community facilities that provide more opportunities for our communities to get physically active. Increasing participation in sport and recreation is a key priority of the Victorian government. This year the coalition government will provide funding to at least 190 projects to support the development of community sport and recreation facilities right across this great state of Victoria. While most of these projects support facilities that benefit both men and women, approximately 30 projects are specifically targeted at the provision of facilities for females. These include the provision of change rooms for females and female umpire facilities, sports lighting for female teams and the provision of courts for netball. I am a strong supporter of increasing participation opportunities for women, and these investments are an important step forward.

Examples of the projects that specifically benefit women include female change rooms at the Johnson Reserve at Maribyrnong and floodlighting for females at the Benalla Saints Sports Club. These 30 projects were funded through a range of grant programs that focus on delivering participation outcomes, such as the community facility funding program, the Strengthening the World Game program, the country football and netball program and also the Sustainable Sports Grounds Program. The community facility funding program aims to increase participation in community support by providing access to modern, high-quality facilities.

There is a lot more I could say about that, but I just want to say that many examples have been funded in my time. I want to just talk about a couple. We have given \$2.6 million from the ‘better pools’ category towards the Wyndham aquatic and leisure centre redevelopment, \$650 000 from the ‘major facilities’ category towards a redevelopment of the Boardman Regional Stadium at the City of Hume. Under the ‘seasonal pools’ category we gave \$200 000 to the Pyrenees shire for a redevelopment project at the Beaufort and Avoca pools, \$100 000 from the ‘minor facilities’ towards the Footscray Park regional playground and \$46 000 from the ‘planning’ category under the CFFP towards the Loddon Mallee regional soccer strategy.

I think, Mr Morris, you would have to say that this funding ensures that local government in particular and the community sport and recreation clubs have additional facilities to support physically active and healthy Victorians, and that is what I am all about.

Mr SCOTT — Minister, I would like you to turn your attention to the departmental questionnaire that was provided to the committee from the Department of Planning and Community Development and particularly the response to question 4.2, which related to savings within the 2012–13 budget year. There is a total savings there of 49 million for the whole department. What I would be grateful to know is how those savings measures impact on your particular areas of responsibility in terms of whether there are any less programs, lapsed programs, reduction in funding or any other impact that those saving measures will have, and what is the dollar figure for the savings that impact on your areas of responsibility?

Mr DELAHUNTY — The savings will be made across the government to improve budget sustainability and efficiency, and we need to do a lot to pick up the ground we have lost. The savings will be achieved through efficiency initiatives that improve the way the public service operates and delivers services. Savings announced in the budget build on the sustainable government initiative. Sustainable government was announced in the 2011–12 budget update and includes a range of measures to improve budget sustainability and improve efficiency. These efficiencies will be achieved via a combination of measures including maintaining a sustainable public service through a combination of non-renewal of fixed-term contracts, attrition and commencement of processes for voluntary departure packages, and capping departmental expenditure growth

by advancing the government's commitment to reducing consultant and contractor expenditure and realising procurement-saving opportunities.

Mr SCOTT — Just to follow up the answer, you mentioned non-renewal of fixed-term contracts and voluntary redundancies. Could you outline to the committee how much of a reduction in full-time employment you would expect from those changes within your area of the department?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Savings related to the Department of Planning and Community Development, which my portfolios fall under, should be directed towards the DPCD's lead minister, and that is the Minister for Regional and Rural Development. I do not have any further details apart from that, and you need to take up those details with the lead minister.

Mr ANGUS — Minister, I refer you to budget paper 3, page 47, and table 1.13 'Output initiatives — Planning and Community Development', and the line item 'Significant sporting events program'. Minister, could you please inform the committee about this initiative?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thank you, Mr Angus. You also realise the importance of this program called the significant sporting events program, and I thank you for your question. I am pleased to advise that, as outlined in the budget, the significant sporting events program has been extended for a further two years through to 30 June 2014, with \$1.2 million allocated in each year. The program aims to support events that are at a national or an international level or are significant to a particular region in Victoria. More than \$1.8 million has been awarded to 98 events, including Amy's Gran Fondo down on the coast; the men's and women's combined Victorian golf open, which was a sensational event, particularly for women's golf; the national indigenous athletic championships; the Jayco Bay Cycling Classic; and the Water Polo Pan Pacs, just to name a few of them.

I was particularly pleased to provide the inaugural Amy's Gran Fondo with \$50 000 from this program in September last year. It attracted 2650 entrants to complete the 120-kilometre course, which included a section along the Great Ocean Road — there is a sensational view along there. The event is one leg of the UCI's World Cycling Tour, and 31 per cent of the entrants were from interstate or overseas. Not only was this an important community event but it was also a major boost for tourism on the Great Ocean Road and had a very important road safety message.

It is also important that we could support the 2012 men's and women's Victorian golf open. This was the first time the men and women had competed in their respective championships on the same course at the same time. The program provided \$75 000 to Golf Victoria to deliver this historic golfing event. The program also provided \$20 000 to Athletics Australia to host the national indigenous athletics championships in Melbourne for the first time. This event not only provided a chance for indigenous children to compete but it also included a series of classes and lectures to improve their life skills. This funding assists to attract new to or retain existing events in Victoria, enhancing the skills of officials and volunteers, increasing economic stimulus through visitation to Victoria, and providing ongoing benefits to junior sporting and community programs.

Mr Angus, the program complements Victoria's highly successful major events strategy, which has seen Melbourne crowned the world's ultimate sports city for the third consecutive time, ahead of Singapore, London, Berlin and Sydney. Major events in Victoria play an enormous role in delivering social and economic benefits to the state and over the last two decades have firmly secured the reputation for Melbourne and Victoria as an international leader in major events hosting.

Ms HENNESSY — Minister, just in relation to budget paper 3, page 47, I wanted to ask a question about the integrated bike and walking track from Carrum to Warburton. I was wondering if you could identify any line item that would indicate that that program has been budgeted for, or are you able to give the committee a commitment that it has been accommodated in the base somewhere?

Mr DELAHUNTY — The Victorian government is committed to improving the access and availability of sporting and recreation facilities to promote physically active and healthy communities. Raising the profile of recreation by increasing recognition of the recreation sector in Victoria was a key policy for us. Priority will be given to improving the bike path network and extending the state bicycle strategy to address recreational cycling as well as cycling as a sustainable and affordable transport mode.

While regional bike trials have been successful at generating tourism and employment opportunities in regional and rural Victoria, unfortunately the bike trail network in regional Victoria is ad hoc and disjointed. The Victorian government will undertake a feasibility study and a plan for developing an integrated regional bike trail network. An interdepartmental committee and the Victorian Trails Coordinating Committee, the VTCC, has been established to review the roles and responsibilities of interested parties. The committee is based at Tourism Victoria and is chaired by none other than the chairman here, Mr Philip Davis. The membership includes the departments and agencies involved in and responsible for the tracks and trails in Victoria: the Department of Sustainability and Environment, Parks Victoria, Tourism Victoria, the Department of Transport, the Department of Planning and Community Development, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Regional Development Victoria and planning.

The VTCC will oversee the feasibility study and plan. To improve the bike path network the government has committed \$10 million towards the construction of the Carrum–Warburton trail, with a particular focus on the Bayswater North–Mount Evelyn gap in the route, and the eastern rail trails, Box Hill–Ringwood. These projects are complex and involve a number of parties. As the majority of the proposed route on the eastern rail trail is along the active rail line, the implementation of this commitment has been undertaken by the Department of Transport.

The Department of Transport is currently preparing a funding plan with detailed proposals and options. This plan will be submitted for consideration as part of the 2013–14 budget process. The allocation of responsibilities and the route of the Bayswater–Mount Evelyn component of the Carrum–Warburton rail trail is currently under consideration at a departmental level. SRV are working with the Department of Sustainability and Environment on developing route options and a funding implementation time line.

I have covered both of the ones you have talked about, but I want to finish off by saying that the government has also provided significant support to cycling events in 2011–12. The government has supported numerous cycling events, whether it be the grand fondo I have spoken about, the Australian Masters Cycling, events at Geelong Multi Sport Festival, the 3 Peaks Challenge, there are numerous ones that we have supported in the last 12 months.

The government is also supporting young people to enjoy cycling through the Ride2School program. I am sure, Ms Hennessy, in your electorate there will be a lot of schools that have been involved, because my information is that in the last financial year 1271 Victorian schools registered for the program, with over 450 000 participants, and the Victorian government provided \$820 000 to support the Ride2School day. Cycling is a very important sector of the recreation industry, and I believe it gets strong support from our government.

The CHAIR — Thank you for your very informed response, Minister; that has really helped.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I did not want to miss the opportunity of mentioning that you were the chair of one of our very important committees.

The CHAIR — That has really helped the committee — and I am not talking about this committee either.

Mr O'BRIEN — I note your example about staying healthy, and I commend you on that Chair, and your advice to me on a similar note. I ask you, Minister, to pick up further in relation to the 'Extending support for soccer facilities' initiative at page 48 of budget paper 3. I note that you have touched on this in your presentation already and in answer to some questions, but I ask you to provide us with some specific information in relation to this important initiative.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I thank Mr O'Brien for his question on this matter. I know he is a very talented athlete. I am not sure if he has played a lot of soccer. I know he plays Aussie rules occasionally

Mr O'BRIEN — I played in the South Melbourne game, in the parliamentary match recently against the press, but you will see there that my talents are limited, my enthusiasm is high, but not as talented as you anyway.

Mr PAKULA — Do you want us to leave?

The CHAIR — Yes; you have had a serious question. Minister, proceed.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I am very pleased to advise the committee that the budget provides \$1.45 million to extend the support for soccer facilities into 2012–13. This is a very important strategic initiative designed to help cater for the massive growth in soccer participation in Victoria in recent years. This program provides funding to assist local football — soccer — clubs and local government authorities to upgrade existing or develop new facilities. The program is one of a suite of Victorian government-funded programs, including the community facility funding program and the country football netball program, which support local community sporting facilities.

The key focus of this program is maximising the capacity of community soccer clubs to cater for additional participation. One of the strongest areas of growth in soccer is in participation by women, which is fantastic, from my point of view, to see. The types of projects that have been funded include change rooms for both male and female players and referees, floodlighting to maximise the times grounds can be used — and if I could just say there that we have got growing populations, growing needs, but we cannot find any more space. So if you want to increase the hours of usage, floodlighting is a very important component to allow that to happen. We are also building new pitches or upgrading existing pitches, and as I pointed out during my presentation, the FFV has strongly endorsed the extent of this program by the government. FFV noted that the increased funding will go a long way to making football more accessible to all members of the community.

Mr O'Brien, I recently announced funding towards 11 new projects under this program for a total amount of over \$800 000. The projects included \$100 000 for the Alpine shire to renovate two soccer playing surfaces, irrigation and construction of a fence and the installation of two new light towers for a training pitch to be used by the Myrtleford Savoy Soccer Club, and also \$60 000 to Latrobe City Council to upgrade the current lighting to competition and match practice standard, and the infrastructure to make lighting upgrades in the future at Ronald Reserve.

There is a lot of work we are doing in that area and a lot of work with local clubs, local councils and Football Federation Victoria has been a great partnership which is giving good outcomes to the government, but more importantly to the community that we are out there serving.

Mr PAKULA — I want to go back in part to the answer you gave to Mr Scott about the effect of the funding cut on DPCD on your portfolio areas. The substance of your answer was that it was a matter for the coordinating minister, despite the fact that you were only asked about it as it affected your portfolio. At page 207, budget paper 3, there is an item 'Investing in communities' which was budgeted in 11–12 at 261.8 and is budgeted in 12–13 for 222. It is near enough to a \$40 million reduction in the budget, so I am wondering if you can take us through — —

Mr DELAHUNTY — Mr Pakula, what page was it?

Mr PAKULA — It is budget paper 3, page 207: 'Investing in communities', under 'Output summary'. When you look a bit further on, on page 214 under the heading 'Investing in communities', one of the aims of the output group is to 'provide funding and coordination to develop and extend sport and recreation opportunities in Victoria'. It seems on the face of it that there will be an implication for areas within your portfolio responsibility of that cut, so I just want to be clear. I am not asking you anything department-wide. I am simply asking: in relation to sport and recreation, what will the implications be of that \$39.8 million cut in the 'investing in communities' budget? What programs will be affected, and to what extent will they be affected?

The CHAIR — So am I to understand in relation to the minister's component of 'investing in communities'?

Mr PAKULA — Yes, the minister's component of that 'investing in communities'.

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Mr Pakula. Key points I would like to make are: the nature of the portfolio dictates that there will be a large variation from year to year in the sport and recreation budget. This is principally due to Victoria hosting different major events and also different major capital projects. The major changes in the output funding across the two years are due to a couple of things. One of those is the funding of the MCG southern stand redevelopment and also differences in major events, as in 2011-12: where there were

expenses for significant events such as the Presidents Cup and the track cycling world championships which will not be held in 2012-13. I think that covers the variations in the output funding over those years that you have spoken about in the budget paper.

Mr PAKULA — Humour me then, Minister, just so I am satisfied. In terms of the sport and recreation portfolio can you just take us through what outputs are funded through that ‘investing in communities’ banner headline? I understand things that are ceasing, things that are not going to be held this year, but are there any programs that are being cut or reduced as a result of that, or is that simply a cyclical change?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Mr Pakula, I think I will try and answer that by saying there were two programs in the sport and recreation portfolio that were concluded in 2011–12. The Sustainable Sports Grounds program was a short-term program designed to support sporting clubs affected by the drought. As the drought conditions have reduced across Victoria the program has now been concluded, but the Victorian government will continue to support projects that include long-term sustainable water management practices through other programs such as the community facility funding program, the country football and netball program, and the Strengthening the World Game program. The other program that will conclude in 2011–12 is the community sport code of conduct. This program was established to help state sporting associations develop codes of conduct. Continuing support to community sport to develop and maintain welcoming and inclusive sporting environments will be provided through other SRV programs.

The CHAIR — In BP 3, page 221, in the performance measures there is a descriptor which includes the phrase, ‘Enhance participation in sport and active recreation’. Minister, could you please advise the committee about what action you are taking in relation to enhancing participation by women?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Chair. That is a very important question. The Victorian government is committed to increasing the number of women who participate in all aspects of community sport. The Victorian government’s policy platform focused on continuing support for women’s sport by giving women a greater say in developing programs and funding; secondly, by also supporting the appointment of women to administration and managerial roles in Victorian sport through the diversity register, and ensuring that their views, knowledge and skills are included in the administration of sport. This is not only a matter of creating opportunities to participate in sport and recreation but also ensuring that the sector is able to capitalise on the valuable contribution that women can make to management and decision making when offered the opportunity to share their views, knowledge and skills. I am sure Ms Hennessy also would be very interested in that.

Ms HENNESSY — I am.

Mr DELAHUNTY — The government is committed to giving women a greater say in the development of programs, supporting the appointment of women to boards and decision-making roles by promoting the Victorian Women’s Register and utilising the existing networks across the sector associated with professional development opportunities to advance the profile of women in sport. The government is providing \$1.48 million over three years to focus on these commitments through the new Women in Sport and Recreation, known as the WISAR, program, which will deliver new initiatives relating to three themes: to lead, in other words supporting leadership initiatives and professional development opportunities for women; influence, supporting organisational change and governance structure; and change, supporting program initiatives that will increase participation levels across all streams of sport and recreation involvement.

I also announced eight projects that will deliver on these themes that will be led by Gymnastics Victoria, Football Federation Victoria, Motorcycle Victoria, Touch Football Victoria, AFL Victoria, Softball Victoria, Canoeing Victoria and CycleSport Victoria. VicSport was also funded \$100 000 per annum from 2011 until 2014 from the WISAR program to develop a strategic platform for women’s sport. This includes the development of a Victorian women in sport statement and the delivery of program initiatives such as guest speaker and champions of change programs, the female administrative network and professional development and mentoring program. The government has identified the need and the demand for professional development and networking activities for women in the sport and recreation sector. This presents a clear opportunity for continuing and involving government in support for women in sport and recreation.

In 2011–12 the government also approved 30 facility projects that specifically target the promotion and participation of females, and I spoke about them earlier. There are some examples, and I want to go over a

couple of them, including female change rooms at the Johnson Reserve in Maribyrnong and floodlighting for females in Benalla. This support was achieved through a range of grant programs that focus on delivering participation outcomes. Through the 2010–11 CFFP ‘major facilities’ category, the Kingston City Council was successful in receiving \$110 000 for the Chelsea Sportswomen’s Centre, stage 1, and I know Ms Hennessy is very interested in this project. Through the small-scale facilities program, the government will be making an additional contribution of \$200 000 towards the completion of the Chelsea Sportswomen’s Centre improvement, stage 2. This centre now includes administrative space, two sports halls, change facilities, a canteen and spectator facilities, bringing the total contribution of the project over two stages to \$310 000. So there is a lot of work going on in women’s sport.

Mr SCOTT — Minister, I refer you again to the questionnaire that was provided by the department to this committee. Under question 3.3 there is an item, ‘Overseas travel’, and there is not a figure given for 2012–13. I would be interested to know whether the state government is sending a delegation to the Olympics this year.

Mr DELAHUNTY — My understanding is — and I am talking about the budget papers and my relation to that; I cannot speak on behalf of other members of Parliament — that in relation to the Victorian Institute of Sport, which is our major facility and which provides quality facilities for training, no doubt there will be athletes going from there and no doubt some of their staff. But in relation to any other matters, I am not aware of any other delegations going on in relation to going to the Olympics this year in London, which is only a month or so away.

Mr SCOTT — You may need to take this on notice because it affects the Victorian Institute of Sport. Could you provide — it might have to be on notice; I accept that — any funding for the Victorian Institute of Sport or others that relates to the Olympics, if there is any direct funding for that?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Can I just clarify the question? So it is in relation to — —

Mr SCOTT — The Olympics. Not the funding for the whole entity.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I will have to take — —

The CHAIR — So we are clear, Mr Scott’s question relates directly to the question of overseas travel in relation to the Olympics in respect of the Victorian Institute of Sport — —

Mr SCOTT — Yes, if there is any — —

The CHAIR — It is a fairly narrow question.

Mr SCOTT — It is a very narrow question.

The CHAIR — You can take it on notice or — —

Mr DELAHUNTY — I do not have that information in front of me, Chair — —

Mr SCOTT — I accept that.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I will take that on notice.

The CHAIR — Thank you very much.

Mr MORRIS — Minister, returning to the sport and recreation development output — and the reference is budget paper 3, page 221 — and in particular the reference there to provide strategic leadership to the Victorian sport and recreation industry through innovation sector development and funding support. I am wondering if you can indicate to the committee any initiatives that you might have introduced to support coaches and volunteers, who are clearly the backbone of our communities in sport.

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Mr Morris, who I know is a very athletic person himself — —

Mr MORRIS — Might have been once!

Mr DELAHUNTY — We walked Kokoda together, didn't we? You are spot on with your question in relation to support for coaches and volunteers. It is National Volunteer Week, and it is a good question to ask at this period of time. In our election campaign the Victorian Liberal-Nationals coalition plan for sport and recreation announced a commitment of \$1.75 million from 2011–12 to 2014–15 to increase the skills of volunteers to allow them to do the work they do in their communities; to increase the skills of coaches and sports administrators by working in partnership with the stakeholders; thirdly, to establish a sports volunteer resource program; and fourthly, to establish through Sport and Recreation Victoria a program to disseminate modern coaching techniques and new developments in sports science to community sporting clubs and organisations across this great state of Victoria. As you rightly said, Mr Morris, volunteers are critical to the operation of sporting clubs and associations, and I say right here and now that we say a big thankyou for the work they do in their communities. It is essential for the delivery of both community and elite sport that they are supported.

Some examples of the types of initiatives that will be supported by the Victorian coalition government over the next two years are Target 1000, where \$200 000 has been allocated to increase the number of coaches at grassroots-level sport. This will contribute to increasing the capacity of clubs to provide opportunities for participation in sport and active recreation. Secondly, workforce capability — \$10 000 has been allocated to a partnership program with the Office for the Community Sector to support state sporting associations in utilising the workforce capability framework. The framework was developed for use by the community sector to improve the quality and effectiveness of service provision and build sector capacity for professional development and learning. Thirdly, supporting the regions — \$250 000 has been allocated to engage regional volunteers and to assist them to better understand the challenges of running successful sporting clubs. It is not only about winning premierships; it is about running the clubs. Using systems to identify where a club requires support, regional sporting bodies will provide a range of support to assist in the delivery of local sporting opportunities.

Other programs include a School Sport Victoria leadership program, which is a year-long leadership program for middle secondary students equipping them to become the next generation of volunteers, and, secondly, a volunteer innovation program. This will be a small grants program for state sporting associations to develop or pilot a range of initiatives to attract, support, retain and recognise volunteers within their sport.

Mr Morris, this investment in these volunteer and coaching initiatives will deliver the following strategic outcomes, and these are important: engage key stakeholders across the sector; secondly, provide a platform to evaluate the success or otherwise of a range of different approaches; thirdly, support individuals and organisations that are contributing to the volunteering across the sport and recreation sector; fourthly, form partnerships with key sector agencies; and lastly, respond to the needs of the broad cross-section of the community involved in volunteering. It is one area of great concern to me because without volunteers we do not have the sport and recreation sector. Your question, Mr Morris, was very timely and is a key component of the work I do in the sport and recreation portfolio. Thanks for your question.

Ms HENNESSY — Minister, I think it is terrific that you have such a strong interest in female participation in sport and understand the importance of female change rooms at sporting facilities. Certainly your reference to the Johnson Reserve soccer facilities — it is actually in West Footscray, not in Maribyrnong. There is a really strong need, particularly out in the west, for a number of sporting facilities to be able to accommodate and expand female change rooms.

I am trying to understand what the impact of the \$39.8 million cut in the investing in Victorian communities output is. For example, if we go to page 221 of budget paper 3, we see 'Community facility grants', number of grants approved. Last year there were 190 grants approved. Next financial year you expect that to be 160, possibly more. What I want to understand is: is the amount of money that was allocated in last year's budget more or less than what is located in this year's budget? I understand that this is measuring the number of applications approved, but I am interested in the cold, hard cash. Is there more or less?

The CHAIR — So you are comparing the 160 target — —

Ms HENNESSY — Have we got more money in that line item — —

The CHAIR — Greater than 160.

Ms HENNESSY — Yes.

The CHAIR — Which is the same for the two years.

Ms HENNESSY — I just want to understand: is the amount of money available more or less this financial year?

The CHAIR — So it is a similar target.

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Chair, and thanks to Ms Hennessy for her question. Looking at those you will see that we had a target of 160. We will deliver more than that. We have set a target there on page 221 — again, a target of 160. What happens in this sport and recreation portfolio is that there are many sporting grants, as I have outlined in my presentation earlier. We have minor facilities, we have major facilities, we have country football and netball programs and significant sporting events. There are lots of different grants programs, and the amounts go up and down a little bit.

I have to tell you that when I first arrived, after talking with the industry, there was a grave concern that under this community facility funding program the minor facilities grant cap had not been changed for many years, so I have increased that. In the major facilities cap I have increased it also. What I am trying to highlight is that there will be different amounts of money given to different projects, and that will mean we get different outcomes in relation to the number of projects. The money we have allocated this year is very similar to the amount of money we allocated last year, but the performance measures will vary because of those facts I have given you there. Different amounts are applied, and therefore we will get different outcomes as in the number of projects that will be funded in this financial year.

Ms HENNESSY — I understand all of that. How much money have you allocated in that line item this year?

Mr DELAHUNTY — In relation to the community facility funding program, which is probably the major one, we have announced — it is a little bit tricky from the point of view that I need to explain. The announcements I have made this year are for funding programs for the councils for the year 2012-13.

Ms HENNESSY — I am talking about the budget papers, though.

Mr DELAHUNTY — That is right.

Ms HENNESSY — What is the budget allocation?

Mr DELAHUNTY — We talk about the community facility funding program as one of those, and the government will continue to fund through contributions from the Community Support Fund for sporting facilities that were previously funded through the community facility funding program. These are always subject to the usual appropriation processes and capacities, but the funding for projects for 2012-13 has already been provided by the government through a range of programs that I have already announced. As is clearly stated in the budget papers, the government will continue to fund these programs, and they will always be subject to the usual approval processes and capacity. As had occurred in previous years, the funding guidelines for programs such as CFFP are scheduled to be released in the middle of this year.

Mr ANGUS — I also refer you to budget paper 3, page 221, under the sport and recreation development output performance measures there. I note that that includes assisting Victoria's elite athletes achieve their potential. Minister, can you please inform the committee about how this objective is being progressed?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks, Mr Angus. Like all of us, we want to see any athlete achieve their potential. From our point of view as a government we want to see all Victorian athletes reach their potential. I am always pleased and proud to see or hear about Victorian athletes achieving their personal best or performing well on the national or international stage. Sport is an important part of our community, and I am sure that many Victorians feel the same way.

Reflecting that, it is a priority of the government to help Victorian athletes to reach their potential. The government provides significant support to a network of sporting organisations and training institutions, including the VIS, the regional academies of sport — there are six of those — also the state sporting

associations and the regional sports assemblies to strengthen and develop opportunities from the grassroots level through to the elite sports for talented athletes to realise their potential. The government will continue to work in partnership with these organisations to ensure that Victorian pathways for athletic development are clear and well aligned across the sector and to strengthen opportunities for Victorian athletes to access support for training and competition at national and international levels.

In the 2011 budget the Victorian coalition government committed funding of \$2 million over four years to assist high-achieving Victorian athletes to perform at their best. This commitment is being delivered through the elite athletes travel grants program. Under this program, Mr Angus, grants of up to \$2000 per year are available to subsidise the cost of travel and accommodation for elite or developing athletes. This will help remove some of the obstacles facing our high-level athletes, making it easier to focus on pursuing their sporting careers and representing Victoria and Australia. These grants are available to promising athletes across a range of sports, ensuring that support is not limited to athletic sports only. I recently approved the first group of successful applicants for these important grants, with over 340 athletes from across 48 — and I say again, 48 — sports receiving funding to allow them to travel to national or international competitions.

These grants are making a real difference to our up-and-coming athletes, and they will be in addition to the Victalent grants, which are available to grassroots sporting and recreational organisations in regional and rural Victoria. Victalent grants, as you are no doubt aware, assist athletes, coaches and officials in rural and regional Victorian areas who require assistance to travel for competitions and training.

The government's support for the VIS and regional academies, and our support for individual athletes through the elite athlete travel grants program and Victalent, is making a big difference to enabling Victorian athletes to achieve their enormous potential. We look forward to seeing further outstanding performances over the coming year, and as you are no doubt aware, the Olympics this year will be a major focus. My understanding is that about 67 per cent of the athletes at the VIS are in national or international sides or competitions. We do very well, but again, we need to keep putting our shoulder to the wheel in supporting these athletes to achieve their potential.

Mr PAKULA — Sorry, Minister, I just want to persist with this issue about grants. During your answer to Ms Hennessy's question you talked about funding for those community facility grants being through the Community Support Fund, but in budget paper 3, and in fact throughout the budget papers, the Department of Planning and Community Development makes clear that the funding from the Community Support Fund has been significantly reduced in terms of what is being paid into DPCD through the CSF. I will look at page 207 by itself:

The 2012–13 budget for the investing in communities output is lower than the 2011–12 budget as a result of reductions in funding from the Community Support Fund.

I have seen the reference in budget paper 5 as well in terms of the total budgetary position of the department. I do not want you to pre-empt whatever midyear funding announcements you want to make; I simply want to understand whether the total envelope of funding available for the grants in your portfolio is the same, lower or greater than it was in 2011–12.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I thank Mr Pakula for his question. The grants for sport and recreation, which come under DPCD, are very similar to the amount of money we had last year. In the last year's budget we announced funding programs through various programs such as the CFFP. Again, the amount of money for the CFFP for the next year will be announced later next year. The government's intention towards future community facility funding programs is clearly outlined in budget paper 3 on page 48. It states:

... the government will continue to deliver funding through contributions from the Community Support Fund for sporting facilities that were previously funded through the community facility funding program, subject to the usual approval processes and capacity.

But at this stage the amount of money in this year's budget compared to other years is very similar.

Ms HENNESSY — I would like to say to the Victorian taxpayers, 'Yeah, our tax rate will be very similar'. Do you reckon they'd cop it?

Mr PAKULA — Minister, thank you. I am grateful to you for the effort you are making to actually answer the question. I am not sure whether it is that you do not know specifically whether it is going to be more or less

or whether you do know but you do not want to tell us, but this is the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee, and I do not think 'very similar' or 'similar' is sufficient. I mean, is it similar more or similar less?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Thanks again — through you, Chair — to Mr Pakula. As I said in the responses I gave earlier, where I spoke about the various amounts of money, it is outlined in the budget papers exactly what is going on.

Mr PAKULA — No, it is not. That is why I am asking you.

Mr DELAHUNTY — If you want to get down to the specific detail — —

Mr PAKULA — No, I just want to know if it is more or less, that is all.

Mr DELAHUNTY — I said it will be very similar. If you want any further detail, I will take it on notice.

Mr PAKULA — Okay. Thank you.

Mr O'BRIEN — I also want to ask you a question in relation to page 221 of budget paper 3, where the expected outcome of the budget performance measure 'Events facilitated: sport and recreation' is 77, and that is above a target in 2011–12 of 40 and a 2012–13 target of 40. Minister, could you please outline the achievements in your portfolio in relation to sporting events in the 2011–12 year?

Mr DELAHUNTY — Events are a very important part of the sporting scene of Victoria. The Victorian major sporting events industry is what sets us apart from the rest of Australia — in fact, indeed the world. Melbourne continues to wear the crown of the world's ultimate sporting city — ahead of places like, as I said before, Singapore, London, Berlin and Sydney — awarded for the third successive time back in 2010.

The target outcome of 77 includes both major events and events funded under the Significant Sporting Events program, which I mentioned earlier. Our annual program of major events is one of the most prestigious and successful in the world. Collectively the events work together over a year to provide consistent positioning and a profile for Victoria both within Australia and overseas. They are a major driver of tourism, employment growth, industry development, business linkages, investment decisions and community outcomes, including motivating and inspiring other athletes.

In 2011–12 Victoria hosted a number of major sporting events including: the Jayco Herald Sun Tour, the sailing world cup, the Melbourne Victory versus LA Galaxy friendly match, the Australian Dancesport Championship, cricket events, the Festival of Sails in Geelong, the Women's Australian Open golf, the State of Origin match 1 in Rugby League, the Rugby Union test match of the Wallabies versus Wales, the Australian Goldfields Open in snooker, which was held up in Bendigo and will be held there again this year, and the lawn bowls Australian Open.

Over the next three years an outstanding variety of sporting events will continue to enhance Victoria's reputation, including the 2013 Australian Masters Games and the 2014 World Masters Rowing Championships. The coalition government recently announced our continued support for ISAF Sailing World Cup for a further four years, in addition to support for the event until 2015. Our support also enhances a community benefit delivered by the event through initiatives such as disability classes for racing, and family days throughout the event. Our government is committed to enhancing the value of major sports events by working with each event to deliver a community benefit, alongside the strong economic and tourism benefits that these events generate. Chair and members of the board, the strong government support received by the sport and events sector continues to ensure that Victoria's thriving sports industry will continue to boom in the future.

The CHAIR — Thank you, Minister. Regrettably we are out of time for the sport and recreation portfolio. I thank Ms George for her attendance, and we will take a short adjournment.

Witnesses withdrew.