

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio / Group:	Small Business
Witness:	Minister Pakula
Committee Member:	Mr Sam Hibbins
Page/s of transcript:	44-45

Relevant text:

Mr HIBBINS: Well then, you mentioned around 2000 times that the small business mediation service has been accessed. Is that correct; was that the figure? Was that since the support has been announced?

Mr PAKULA: I think the comment that I made was that there had been something like 2200 approaches made to the small business commissioner in recent times, since we announced the commercial tenancy relief scheme.

Mr HIBBINS: And so do you have figures on how many agreements have been reached?

... If you could take that on notice and other information in terms of just how long it is taking—the average time for a resolution—and the average reduction and how many have actually not been reached and gone to VCAT or the courts.”

Answer:

As at 15 May a total of 235 formal disputes related to commercial leases had been lodged with the Victorian Small Business Commission, three disputes have been successfully resolved through mediation, 14 disputes resolved prior to mediation, one mediation has been adjourned and one mediation was not successfully resolved.

The VSBC does not track cases that may progress to VCAT or the court system

The average time for a resolution and the average reduction in rent is not kept by the VSBC, noting amounts negotiated at mediation is confidential.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio / Group:	Regional Development
Witness:	Minister Pakula
Committee Member:	Mr Danny O'Brien
Page/s of transcript:	46

Relevant text:

“Mr D O’BRIEN: Thank you. Can I move to another issue? Just ahead of the last election the Government committed to funding support for SEA Electric to establish an electric vehicle plant in the Latrobe Valley and create 500 jobs there... how many jobs have actually been created?”

Answer:

We have supported SEA Electric since our agreement with them to create jobs for Latrobe Valley workers began in 2018.

To date, 59 jobs have been created at SEA Electric.

We remain committed to working with the company to progress the agreement they signed with the Government to create jobs for Latrobe Valley workers.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio / Group:	Jobs, Innovation & Trade
Witness:	Secretary
Committee Member:	Ms Bridget Vallence asked to the Secretary
Page/s of transcript:	40

Relevant text:

Ms VALLENCE Okay. And in February this year, the bureau of statistics reported that the unemployment rate in Victoria will be 5.7. Is there any sort of forecasting or commitment that you can make that by the end of next year, the end of 20–21, we will be able to normalise and drop back to that similar amount, that 5.7 per cent unemployment rate?

Mr PHEMISTER: I will refer to my colleague, David Martine, who you spoke to this morning, but I am more than happy to track David's forecasts down and share them with the Committee."

Answer:

The latest Treasury forecasts released in April 2020 forecast the unemployment rate peaking as high as 11 per cent in the September quarter.

<https://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/Coronavirus%20Economic%20Outlook%20-%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>.

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Portfolio / Group:	Jobs, Innovation & Trade
Witness:	Secretary
Committee Member:	Ms Bridget Vallence asked to the Secretary
Page/s of transcript:	39

Relevant text:

“**Ms VALLENCE:** ... From 1 March to the beginning of May, Secretary, how many businesses has the department estimated to have closed permanently?”

Answer:

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions does not collect data on permanent business closures. However, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has released data on businesses (catalogue no. 5676.0.55.003 Business Indicators, Business Impacts of COVID-19) that were not trading (not necessarily permanently) in early April 2020. A link to the data is as follows:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/5676.0.55.003>

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio / Group:	Jobs, Innovation & Trade
Witness:	Secretary
Committee Member:	Ms Bridget Vallence asked to the Secretary
Page/s of transcript:	39

Relevant text:

Ms VALLENCE: Thank you. Well, do you have any estimated figures of businesses that have temporarily closed in that same period? If not, can you take that on notice?

Mr PHEMISTER: I have certainly got numbers of businesses who have applied for our Business Support Fund, and I have got numbers of businesses who are applying for the payroll tax relief, which tells us they are impacted businesses. I have those numbers. When it comes to businesses that have closed, I am going to have to pull together a range of different data points, Ms Vallence. Perhaps I can break it down and provide it to the Committee later.

Ms VALLENCE: Yes, if you could, and including those figures that you have just mentioned in terms of the number of businesses that have applied. If you could provide that in a package

Answer:

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions does not collect data on temporary business closures. However, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has released data on businesses (catalogue no. 5676.0.55.003 Business Indicators, Business Impacts of COVID-19) that were not trading (not necessarily permanently) in early April 2020. A link to the data is as follows:

<https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/5676.0.55.003>

Between 30 March and 1 May 2020, 45,878 applications were submitted to the Business Support Fund.

As of 7 May 2020, more than 18,200 businesses have received payroll tax relief, totalling over \$480 million.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio / Group:	Jobs, Innovation & Trade
Witness:	Secretary
Committee Member:	Ms Bridget Vallence asked to the Secretary
Page/s of transcript:	39-40

Relevant text:

“**Ms VALLENCE:** ... How many of the larger businesses, those that are above the Business Support Fund threshold, have sought government financial assistance?”

Answer:

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions received applications from 1,495 larger businesses seeking a Business Support Fund grant that were ineligible due to the \$650,000 payroll threshold. A further 11 large businesses have sought financial assistance via other approaches to the Department.

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings.

Portfolio / Group:	Racing
Witness:	The Hon Martin Pakula MP
Committee Member:	Mr Danny O'Brien
Page/s of transcript:	47

Relevant text:

“Mr D O’Brien: ... Have you asked GRV to undertake an audit and to reduce their administrative costs to ensure that the losses to the industry in the greyhound sector have not been borne disproportionately just by breeders and trainers?

Mr PAKULA: Well, they have, Mr O’Brien. Part of the response by the racing industry to COVID-19 is that there have been reductions in administrative costs at the head offices of all of the principal racing administrations—so Harness Racing Victoria, Racing Victoria and GRV—as well of course as many of the racing clubs, including the metropolitan racing clubs. And in regard to—

Mr D O’Brien: Do you know the extent of those savings?”

Answer:

Harness Racing Victoria has advised that it has reduced its administrative costs during the COVID-19 pandemic by approximately \$200,000 per month.

Racing Victoria has advised that it has reduced its administrative costs during the COVID-19 pandemic by approximately \$600,000 per month.

Greyhound Racing Victoria has advised that it has reduced its administrative costs during the COVID-19 pandemic by approximately \$860,000 per month.