

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

5 and 6 May 2015

(Extract from book 6)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

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Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Police and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
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Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. A. Somyurek, MLC
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Kairouz, MP

**OFFICE-HOLDERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

Speaker:

The Hon. TELMO LANGUILLER

Deputy Speaker:

Mr D. A. NARDELLA

Acting Speakers:

Mr Angus, Mr Blackwood, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Carbines, Mr Crisp, Mr Dixon, Ms Edwards, Ms Halfpenny,
Ms Kilkenny, Mr McCurdy, Ms McLeish, Mr Pearson, Ms Ryall, Ms Thomas,
Mr Thompson, Ms Thomson, Ms Ward and Mr Watt.

Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Premier:

The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier:

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. M. J. GUY

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. D. J. HODGETT

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Ms S. RYAN

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

Member	District	Party	Member	District	Party
Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie	Bendigo East	ALP	McLeish, Ms Lucinda Gaye	Eildon	LP
Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael	Mulgrave	ALP	Merlino, Mr James Anthony	Monbulk	ALP
Angus, Mr Neil Andrew Warwick	Forest Hill	LP	Morris, Mr David Charles	Mornington	LP
Asher, Ms Louise	Brighton	LP	Mulder, Mr Terence Wynn	Polwarth	LP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Naphthine, Dr Denis Vincent	South-West Coast	LP
Blackwood, Mr Gary John	Narracan	LP	Nardella, Mr Donato Antonio	Melton	ALP
Blandthorn, Ms Elizabeth Anne	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Neville, Ms Lisa Mary	Bellarine	ALP
Brooks, Mr Colin William	Bundoora	ALP	Noonan, Mr Wade Matthew	Williamstown	ALP
Bull, Mr Joshua Michael	Sunbury	ALP	Northe, Mr Russell John	Morwell	Nats
Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ²	Gippsland South	Nats
Burgess, Mr Neale Ronald	Hastings	LP	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
Carbines, Mr Anthony Richard	Ivanhoe	ALP	Pakula, Mr Martin Philip	Keysborough	ALP
Carroll, Mr Benjamin Alan	Niddrie	ALP	Pallas, Mr Timothy Hugh	Werribee	ALP
Clark, Mr Robert William	Box Hill	LP	Paynter, Mr Brian Francis	Bass	LP
Couzens, Ms Christine Anne	Geelong	ALP	Pearson, Mr Daniel James	Essendon	ALP
Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence	Mildura	Nats	Perera, Mr Jude	Cranbourne	ALP
D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Pesutto, Mr John	Hawthorn	LP
Dimopoulos, Mr Stephen	Oakleigh	ALP	Richardson, Mr Timothy Noel	Mordialloc	ALP
Dixon, Mr Martin Francis	Nepean	LP	Richardson, Ms Fiona Catherine Alison	Northcote	ALP
Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony	Narre Warren North	ALP	Ryall, Ms Deanne Sharon	Ringwood	LP
Edbrooke, Mr Paul Andrew	Frankston	ALP	Ryan, Mr Peter Julian ¹	Gippsland South	Nats
Edwards, Ms Janice Maree	Bendigo West	ALP	Ryan, Ms Stephanie Maureen	Euroa	Nats
Eren, Mr John Hamdi	Lara	ALP	Sandell, Ms Ellen	Melbourne	Greens
Foley, Mr Martin Peter	Albert Park	ALP	Scott, Mr Robin David	Preston	ALP
Fyffe, Mrs Christine Anne	Evelyn	LP	Sheed, Ms Suzanna	Shepparton	Ind
Garrett, Ms Jane Furneaux	Brunswick	ALP	Smith, Mr Ryan	Warrandyte	LP
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Graley, Ms Judith Ann	Narre Warren South	ALP	Southwick, Mr David James	Caulfield	LP
Green, Ms Danielle Louise	Yan Yean	ALP	Spence, Ms Rosalind Louise	Yuroke	ALP
Guy, Mr Matthew Jason	Bulleen	LP	Staikos, Mr Nicholas	Bentleigh	ALP
Halfpenny, Ms Bronwyn	Thomastown	ALP	Staley, Ms Louise Eileen	Ripon	LP
Hennessy, Ms Jill	Altona	ALP	Suleyman, Ms Natalie	St Albans	ALP
Hibbins, Mr Samuel Peter	Prahran	Greens	Thomas, Ms Mary-Anne	Macedon	ALP
Hodgett, Mr David John	Croydon	LP	Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross	Sandringham	LP
Howard, Mr Geoffrey Kemp	Buninyong	ALP	Thomson, Ms Marsha Rose	Footscray	ALP
Hutchins, Ms Natalie Maree Sykes	Sydenham	ALP	Tilley, Mr William John	Benambra	LP
Kairouz, Ms Marlene	Kororoit	ALP	Victoria, Ms Heidi	Bayswater	LP
Katos, Mr Andrew	South Barwon	LP	Wakeling, Mr Nicholas	Ferntree Gully	LP
Kealy, Ms Emma Jayne	Lowan	Nats	Walsh, Mr Peter Lindsay	Murray Plains	Nats
Kilkenny, Ms Sonya	Carrum	ALP	Ward, Ms Vicki	Eltham	ALP
Knight, Ms Sharon Patricia	Wendouree	ALP	Watt, Mr Graham Travis	Burwood	LP
Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon	Tarneit	ALP	Wells, Mr Kimberley Arthur	Rowville	LP
Lim, Mr Muy Hong	Clarinda	ALP	Williams, Ms Gabrielle	Dandenong	ALP
McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Ovens Valley	Nats	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP
McGuire, Mr Frank	Broadmeadows	ALP			

¹ Resigned 2 February 2015

² Elected 14 March 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP — Labor Party; Greens — The Greens;
Ind — Independent; LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals.

Legislative Assembly committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Allan, Ms D’Ambrosio, Mr Morris, Mr Mulder, Ms Neville, Ms Ryan, Ms Sandell, Mr Scott and Mr Wells.

Standing Orders Committee— The Speaker, Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Brooks, Mr Clark, Mr Hibbins, Mr Hodgett, Ms Kairouz, Mr Nardella, Ms Ryan and Ms Sheed.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Staikos and Ms Thomson.
(*Council*): Ms Bath, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula, Ms Richardson and Mr Walsh. (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge.

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Perera and Ms Ryall.
(*Council*): Mr Elasmr, Mr Melhem and Mr Purcell.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon, Mr Northe and Ms Spence.
(*Council*): Mr Dalidakis and Ms Patten.

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Battin, Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Young.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards, Ms Kealy, Ms McLeish and Ms Sheed. (*Council*): Mr Finn.

House Committee — (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson. (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson, and Mr Wells. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes.

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley. (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Ms Patten.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kealy, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto. (*Council*): Mr Dalla-Riva.

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ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Tuesday, 5 May 2015

Ripon electorate**Question 74**

Question asked by: Member for Ripon
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 25 February 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, at the date the question was raised:

There is no contradiction. The former Minister for Planning's assessment of the BHEDP project described in the Environment Effects Statement (EES) is final. There is no provision in the Environment Effects Act 1978 for a Minister's assessment to be reviewed.

An assessment under the Environment Effects Act 1978 is not an approvals decision about the project. Rather, it constitutes authoritative statutory advice about the project to decision-makers. In this case, for example, the Secretary of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources, would consider the Minister's assessment to inform his decision about whether a work plan variation should be approved for the project under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990.

To date, I am informed that the proponent has not submitted a work plan variation for approval. In the light of the Minister's assessment, the proponent may choose to revise the project to address the unacceptable environmental effects identified in the assessment. As Mrs Diane Raeburn was advised, any revised project will be required to go through a new process where the proponent would need to demonstrate clearly how the issues identified in the Minister's assessment have been addressed. This is consistent with the Minister for Energy and Resources' response.

I am advised that the proponent, Crocodile Gold Corporation, is considering its options in light of the Minister's assessment of the EES, and may revise its proposed project and seek consent for the revised proposal. In the meantime, it is prudent for the Minister for Energy and Resources to ensure the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport & Resources, as lead agency, is prepared and can respond to any future Crocodile Gold Corporation proposal for the BHEDP.

Evelyn electorate**Question 87**

Question asked by: Member for Evelyn
Directed to: Minister for Mental Health
Asked on: 26 February 2015

REPLY:

Under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981, substances found to be an analogue (intended to be synthetic version) of any illegal drug are already banned.

As additional legislative coverage, Schedule 11 of the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981, also now lists an extensive range of specific cannabinoids that have caused harm to people who used them.

If you have any information about the display or sale of synthetic drugs, or illegal drug analogues, I suggest you contact Victoria Police.

If you have any information about the misleading labelling of products being sold, I suggest you contact Consumer Affairs.

Broadmeadows electorate

Question 94

Question asked by: Member for Broadmeadows
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 17 March 2015

REPLY:

I am pleased to inform the house that the Government is committed to ensuring a positive outcome for all Sunbury and Hume residents on this issue. It is important to me that all of the residents of Hume City Council — both in Sunbury and in the rest of Hume — are not disadvantaged. I am committed to ensuring that all of those affected by the decision have confidence in the way the process is managed.

I have been advised by Hume City Council that a range of complex issues are still unresolved including staffing, maintaining continuity of services and the distribution of assets. This is why, the Government has decided to delay the establishment of a new Sunbury City Council to the 1 July 2016.

To review all of the issues involved in the separation, I have appointed the Hon Frank Vincent AO QC and Mr John Watson as transition auditors. The transition auditors will work closely with Hume City Council and the community to ensure the necessary planning is undertaken and local residents are fully informed of all of the implications of the separation.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 96

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 17 March 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

From mid-year, VicRoads will be consulting with the community on local noise concerns. This will assist in the development of the project scope. VicRoads will also undertake noise modelling to better understand how attenuation of noise can be achieved most effectively in this area. At this stage, VicRoads estimates that this project has a two-year timeframe for delivery, which includes up to 12 months of planning and preconstruction activities, and a further 12 months for construction.

BendigoWest electorate

Question 98

Question asked by: Member for Bendigo West
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 17 March 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

A taskforce has been established representing a broad cross section of the Bendigo community representing Bendigo's key public transport user groups.

The taskforce's consultation group will be supported by a technical working group of transport specialists from PTV, V/Line, local bus operators Christian's Bus Company and Whitmore's Bus Service and Bendigo Taxis, as well as the City of Greater Bendigo, to inform the Government on what shape Bendigo Metro should take.

The taskforce will be led by the Member for Bendigo West, Maree Edwards MP, and will report back to me by the end of June 2015.

Importantly, I have asked the taskforce to ensure Bendigo Metro aligns to the City of Greater Bendigo's Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy, that many Bendigo residents have contributed to, to help shape the future of the city.

Mildura electorate

Question 105

Question asked by: Member for Mildura
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 18 March 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

The Victorian Government is committed to the provision of appropriate, affordable housing for all members of the community. This is supported by Clause 52.23 in the Victoria Planning Provisions, which facilitates the provision of shared housing without the need for a planning permit. However, I am advised that Mildura Rural City Council is of the view that no planning permit is required for a backpackers' lodge if it meets the minimum requirements for shared housing under Clause 52.23. I understand that this is a matter of concern to some members of the Mildura community. The Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning is assessing the issue more broadly as the matter has been raised as an issue both in the metropolitan and regional area and I will consider this matter in due course and advise Mr Crisp, Member for Mildura, of my decision.

Evelyn electorate

Question 107

Question asked by: Member for Evelyn
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 18 March 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is concerned about ice, and delivered its Ice Action Plan in the first 100 days of government, as promised. Ice use is a complex problem that demands a long-term solution. The Ice Action Plan deals with the things that cannot wait. It's about supporting families, treating users and making our community safer.

Under the Plan, the Government will invest \$4.7 million to help families identify and manage ice users and \$1 million to support frontline workers who are at risk of getting attacked at work. The Government will invest \$18 million to expand drug treatment and rehabilitation, so users can get the help they need, and set up a dedicated Ice Help Line that directs families and health professionals to the support they need.

A 1800 Ice Help phone line is being established so that people can get information, referral and access to other support when they need it. Teachers and other front-line workers can also call this number if they require clinical or other advice.

An additional \$1 million will include the development of a standardised ice training course for front-line workers such as teachers, so they know how to address ice use. Victoria also has a world-leading drug education curriculum and evidence-based resources that help schools develop resilient young people. The Government will also examine

ways to build stronger pathways between drug treatment services and other health settings, including the General Practitioners in Schools initiative, where General Practitioners will visit 100 secondary schools.

The Government has committed to provide the same level of funding in 2015 to Life Education Victoria as was provided in 2014 — \$393,376.50. This is not a decrease in funding, unlike under the previous Government, when Life Education Victoria's funding was reduced by almost 20% between 2011 and 2013.

The Government is working with Life Education Victoria and the Department of Education and Training to determine the best approach for funding health and well-being programs in 2016, an approach which will be of greatest benefit and support to Victorian students, schools and families. The Minister for Education has responsibility for Life Education Victoria funding.

Croydon electorate

Question 117

Question asked by: Member for Croydon
Directed to: Minister for Sport
Asked on: 19 March 2015

REPLY:

The funding is allocated in the Labor Financial Statement. The Statement indicated that the funding program would not open until the 2015-16 financial year. It is anticipated that the first defibrillators will be distributed to clubs in the first half of 2016.

It is anticipated that Victorian sporting clubs, active recreational clubs and community not-for-profit sports facilities/venues will be eligible to apply to the program. It is more than likely that there will be several grants rounds made available over the coming four years. All defibrillator commitments will be handled through this program.

Caulfield electorate

Question 121

Question asked by: Member for Caulfield
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 19 March 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

VicRoads advises me that it initially objected to the proposed development on the basis that adequate information was not submitted by the applicant. However, the applicant has since provided the information to VicRoads' satisfaction.

Accordingly, VicRoads withdrew its objection subject to conditions listed in its response to the Glen Eira City Council.

I understand that the applicant has indicated that it accepts the conditions placed by VicRoads and, as such, VicRoads is not required to be a party at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal proceedings.

Polwarth electorate

Question 123

Question asked by: Member for Polwarth
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 19 March 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

As you would be aware as former Minister for Roads, VicRoads is currently investigating options for the treatment of the intersection of Great Ocean Road and Camp Road in Anglesea in order to improve capacity and efficiency. Options being investigated include additional traffic lanes at the roundabout, signal metering of the roundabout or replacing the roundabout with traffic signals. When reviewing options, factors including safety, efficiency, amenity and environment are taken into consideration.

VicRoads undertook a community information session on 26 March 2015, in Anglesea, to discuss the proposed options and to gather feedback. It is expected that the preferred option, along with associated project cost, will be identified by end of April 2015.

Gippsland East electorate

Question 135

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland East
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to protecting the health of the Gippsland Lakes.

The Victorian Government recognises the important environmental, social, cultural and economic values of the Gippsland Lakes.

On-ground management activities and a range of other projects supported by the Gippsland Lakes Environment Fund will continue to be implemented in 2015.

We will release a renewed Gippsland Lakes Ramsar Site Management Plan in mid-2015, with clear actions to meet our international obligations for maintaining the ecological character of the Gippsland Lakes.

The Victorian Government is committing a further \$2.5 million in 2015-16 towards on-ground management activities to maintain or improve the environmental condition of the Gippsland Lakes.

Narre Warren South electorate

Question 140

Question asked by: Member for Narre Warren South
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of volunteer firefighters of the Hampton Park Country Fire Authority Brigade who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the Hampton Park community as well as attending to large scale emergency events across the South East Region.

The government has committed to a range of measures to better support firefighters, including the recruitment of 350 CFA career firefighters; new CFA stations and upgrades; installation of toilet and washroom facilities at up to 100 rural CFA stations; delivery of 50 Medium Tankers; and expansion of the Emergency Medical Response Program.

Furthermore, the government has committed to implementing presumptive legislation for career and volunteer firefighters.

Box Hill electorate**Question 141**

Question asked by: Member for Box Hill
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

The Government is finalising the terms of reference and membership for the Ministerial Advisory Group and expects to make an announcement shortly.

Bayswater electorate**Question 146**

Question asked by: Member for Bayswater
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

The Department of Education and Training does not endorse specific devices. Victorian Government Schools are governed by locally elected school councils that are best placed to determine the programs and resources, to meet the learning needs of their students.

The Department provides advice to assist schools to plan and select technologies to support teaching and learning, including 1-to-1 programs using tablet devices. This advice includes case studies and available apps for Apple, Android and Windows products.

Murray Plains electorate**Question 148**

Question asked by: Member for Murray Plains
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

The former Coalition government's election costings reveal that no money was allocated to fund this service until the 2016/17 Budget.

The Andrews Labor Government will soon commence consultation with communities across the state, on its Network Development Plan - Regional Victoria. The Network Development Plan – Regional Victoria will take a considered approach to the public transport network in regional Victoria, and review and plan for services based on community needs.

Given the integrated nature of the public transport network, it is important that planning occurs in a holistic and cohesive manner. Ad-hoc changes create an inefficient and inconsistent network.

Community consultation will be an essential part of the Network Development Plan – Regional Victoria and I look forward to speaking to Echuca residents and businesses about how we can continue to improve public transport in that area in a well-planned, orderly manner.

The Network Development Plan – Regional Victoria will place customers first and provide communities with the opportunity to have a say on how public transport can best meet the needs of rural and regional Victorians.

Gembrook electorate**Question 161**

Question asked by: Member for Gembrook
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 16 April 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) volunteers, including volunteers of the Emerald SES unit who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community.

The Emerald SES unit has 52 volunteer members and is headed up by a Unit Controller. The Unit responded to an average of 1,000 requests for assistance over the last three years. It has two rescue trucks, one four wheel drive, a storm trailer and a multi-purpose trailer.

Under the present arrangements, local government is primarily responsible for the provision of SES Unit accommodation, and I would encourage the Unit to continue to work with the council on this matter. Day-to-day operations costs for SES Units is provided by the Victorian Government through a municipal subsidy, with an understanding that local councils will match the Government's subsidy.

Furthermore, the Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP) is an ongoing program funded by the Victorian Government, which provides local emergency services volunteer groups including SES Units access to grants of up to a maximum of \$100,000 excluding GST, for operational equipment, vehicles, trucks, tankers, watercraft, trailers and minor facility improvements.

The Victorian Government is currently working on a State-wide framework that will ensure the best use of its resources to support emergency service organisations. Emergency Management Victoria is developing an asset strategy to identify the current and future equipment and facility needs of emergency service organisations. This strategy will include identification of service co-location opportunities and will take a sector-wide approach to achieve joined up outcomes that are community focused.

Rowville electorate**Question 163**

Question asked by: Member for Rowville
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 16 April 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of volunteer firefighters of the Scoresby Country Fire Authority (CFA) Brigade who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the Scoresby, Knoxfield and Wantirna South community as well as providing support to surrounding CFA brigades at Boronia, Rowville and Ferntree Gully. The brigade also provides support to the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB).

The government has committed to a range of measures to better support firefighters, including the recruitment of 350 CFA career firefighters; new CFA stations and upgrades; installation of toilet and washroom facilities at up to 100 rural CFA stations; delivery of 50 Medium Tankers; and expansion of the Emergency Medical Response Program.

Furthermore, the government has committed to implementing presumptive legislation for career and volunteer firefighters.

Dandenong electorate**Question 166**

Question asked by: Member for Dandenong
Directed to: Minister for Police
Asked on: 16 April 2015

REPLY:

Victoria Police is piloting a program where police officers and protective services officers issue a written record, or 'receipt', of their interaction with members of the public. This is a Victoria Police initiative and is part of a range of commitments made by Victoria Police following a review of its operational policies, initiated in 2013.

The receipting trial commenced across the local government areas of Greater Dandenong and Moonee Valley on 29 March 2015. I understand that stage two of the trial is scheduled to commence on 29 June 2015, with receipting to commence in Mildura and the local government area of Boroondara.

I am advised by the Acting Chief Commissioner that local working groups, comprised of community stakeholders and local police representatives, were established to assist with the design and introduction of receipting. Victoria Police representatives are continuing to meet and consult with these groups throughout the proof of concept and they continue to be a valuable source of feedback throughout the program. I understand that Victoria Police is in the process of identifying additional local community groups across the pilot sites to provide further information on receipting and feedback on the value of receipting to the community.

Victoria Police has established a webpage to provide a range of information for the community on the trial. The webpage includes multi-lingual information and invites people to provide feedback on their interactions with police and protective services officers. The webpage also includes the contact details of police unit and community organisations that are represented on the local working groups.

In addition, Victoria Police has engaged with local media outlets, including culturally and linguistically diverse media, across Dandenong and Moonee Valley to provide information on the trial.

Victoria Police will undertake an extensive evaluation of the trial. That evaluation will consider the extent to which the trial has been effective in promoting trust and transparency between police and the local communities in the trial sites, including Dandenong.

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Wednesday, 6 May 2015

Dandenong electorate**Question 79**

Question asked by: Member for Dandenong
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 25 February 2015

REPLY:

Over the next eight years, the Victorian Government will remove 50 of the most dangerous and congested level crossings in Melbourne. This significant program is a key step to transforming our public transport system into an international-style metro, while removing congestion on our road network. As you noted, the Abbots Road level crossing will be removed by 2022 as well as the nearby Thompsons Road level crossing which is also on the Cranbourne line. These level crossing removals will provide welcome relief and support regional and local productivity.

These two level crossings will complement the Cranbourne Pakenham Rail Upgrade that will include the removal of nine level crossings, 37 new high-capacity trains, four station rebuilds, upgraded signalling and a new depot at Pakenham. Removing these level crossings will eliminate congestion at some of the worst level crossings in Melbourne, with some boom gates staying down for up to 80 minutes during the morning peak. This project will also boost capacity by up to 42 per cent on the Cranbourne-Pakenham line every day, accommodating an extra 11,000 passengers in the morning peak.

To facilitate the level crossing removals, the Government has brought forward funding of \$100 million to establish the Level Crossing Removal Authority. The Authority is developing a strategic plan for the efficient removal of the 50 level crossings, including optimal planning, procurement and construction methods and best practice community and stakeholder engagement. This will include engaging the local business community at Abbott's Road to ensure the solution meets the needs of the community and delivers maximum benefit.

Oakleigh electorate**Question 81**

Question asked by: Member for Oakleigh
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 25 February 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that, as that the date the question was raised:

Over the next eight years, the Victorian Government will remove 50 of the most dangerous and congested level crossings in Melbourne. This significant program is a key step to transforming our public transport system into an international-style metro, while removing congestion on our road network.

As you noted, the level crossings at Grange, Koornang, Murrumbeena and Poath roads are amongst Melbourne's worst. These four level crossings will be removed as part of the recently announced Cranbourne Pakenham Rail Upgrade which will also rebuild the stations at Carnegie, Murrumbeena, Hughesdale and Clayton.

The Cranbourne Pakenham Rail Upgrade will have far reaching benefits across our road and rail network and will include the removal of nine level crossings, 37 new high-capacity trains, four station rebuilds, upgraded signalling and a new depot at Pakenham. Removing these level crossings will eliminate congestion at some of the worst level

crossings in Melbourne, with some boom gates staying down for up to 80 minutes during the morning peak. This project will also boost capacity by up to 42 per cent on the Cranbourne-Pakenham line every day, accommodating an extra 11,000 passengers in the morning peak.

To facilitate the level crossing removals, the Victorian Government has brought forward funding of \$100 million to establish the Level Crossing Removal Authority. The Authority is developing a strategic plan for the efficient removal of the 50 level crossings, including optimal planning, procurement and construction methods and best practice community and stakeholder engagement.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 84

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 26 February 2015

REPLY:

Over the next eight years, the Victorian Government will remove 50 of the most dangerous and congested level crossings in Melbourne. This significant program is a key step to transforming our public transport system into an international-style metro, while removing congestion on our road network.

As you noted, the Glenroy Road level crossing will be removed by 2022 as well as the Buckley Street level crossing which is also on the Craigieburn line, and the nearby Bell Street level crossing in Coburg. This will provide significant benefit to the respective communities by reducing congestion, allowing additional train services and improving safety.

To facilitate the level crossing removals, the Government has brought forward funding of \$100 million to establish the Level Crossing Removal Authority. The Authority is developing a strategic plan for the efficient removal of the 50 level crossings, including optimal planning, procurement and construction methods and best practice community and stakeholder engagement.

Polwarth electorate

Question 139

Question asked by: Member for Polwarth
Directed to: Minister for Police
Asked on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

The government recognises that Victoria Police requires appropriate facilities to support police in the work that they do, in keeping our communities safe.

I am happy to receive feedback from Victoria Police and the Department of Justice and Regulation about future priorities for station upgrades, including Colac.

The operational need for new and upgraded police stations is established through the Victoria Police Strategic Facilities Development Plan, where projects are considered in the context of other priorities across the State. Where the need for additional police infrastructure funding is identified, the status of projects is determined by government through the Budget process.

Eltham electorate**Question 142**

Question asked by: Member for Eltham
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Eltham for her ongoing support for Melbourne's valued green wedges.

Melbourne's sustainability remains at the forefront of our liveability agenda. To that end we have committed to lock down the urban growth boundary and develop appropriate policies and mechanisms in consultation with the community to ensure our green wedge areas are not subject to any further encroachment and there is greater certainty about what can happen in these areas.

Green wedges contain significant native species, picturesque landscapes and open spaces that have health and well-being benefits for our residents and are important drawcards for visitors to our city. They are also the location of essential resources such as water catchments, productive agricultural land, quarries and major infrastructure that contribute enormously to the state's economy and are strategically important to the functioning of our city and surrounding region.

Our unique and diverse green wedges have been part of Melbourne's planning legacy for over 40 years. It is critical that these areas are sustainably managed and protected from the ongoing pressure of urban encroachment and inappropriate development. Green wedges are enshrined in the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and I am committed to working with Councils and all key stakeholders in taking action to ensure green wedges are preserved for future generations of people to enjoy and experience.

Nepean electorate**Question 165**

Question asked by: Member for Nepean
Directed to: Minister for Environment Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 16 April 2015

REPLY:

Dog walking is a very popular activity on the Mornington Peninsula and a significant proportion of the community support the ongoing access to the national park for dog walking. As such, dog walking continues to be allowed in a number of beach locations in the Mornington Peninsula National Park.

Dog walking in the park is subject to regulations that minimise the impact of dogs on the Hooded Plovers breeding habitat and the other natural values in the park. Dogs are not permitted on 35 kilometres of the 40-kilometre coastline of the national park. Moreover, Dogs on leash are only allowed between sunrise and 9am.

The management practices relating to dog walking within the Mornington Peninsula National Park were reviewed by Parks Victoria in 2013, predominantly for the protection of Hooded Plovers. This review involved extensive community consultation over a number of months and resulted in additional restrictions on where dogs can be walked.

Research conducted by Birdlife Australia over many years in the Mornington Peninsula National Park demonstrates that there are many other factors that impact on Hooded Plover survival and breeding success including king tides, storm surge, human activity and predation by other birds, cats and foxes.

Parks Victoria staff work in partnership with Birdlife Australia and the Friends of the Hooded Plover to undertake priority Hooded Plover protection activities each breeding season, including regular compliance patrols, to enforce breaches to the dog walking regulations.