

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

9 October to 22 October 2015

(Extract from book 15)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

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Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
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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
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
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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, Mr McGuire, 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 — 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 ¹	Polwarth	LP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Naphthine, Dr Denis Vincent ²	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 ³	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 ⁴	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
Gidley, Mr Michael Xavier Charles	Mount Waverley	LP	Smith, Mr Timothy Colin	Kew	LP
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 3 September 2015

² Resigned 3 September 2015

³ Elected 14 March 2015

⁴ Resigned 2 February 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, 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 Nardella and Ms Ryall.
(*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmar and Mr Melhem.

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

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson, Mr Tilley 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.

9 October to 22 October 2015

Sunbury electorate**Question 390**

Question asked by: Member for Sunbury
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Sunbury for his constituent's question.

The Andrews Labor Government made an election commitment to implement the Fair Go Rates System in its term of government and it is getting on with the job. It is an incredibly popular policy and the Victorian people gave the Andrews Labor Government a strong mandate.

A recent analysis by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) put the average rate increase at 3.8%, the lowest in a decade. This demonstrates that most councils are lowering their rate rises ahead of the Fair Go Rates System's introduction from the 2016-17 financial year.

Ratepayers Victoria have endorsed the policy on their website stating that "ratepayers support the policy 110%." This sentiment was backed up in a media release from the Victorian Farmers Federation that stated "farmers have backed Victorian Labor's plan to cap municipal rate rises." And the Property Council of Australia, Vic Division said in an open letter to the Andrews Labor Government that "The Property Council supports the Government's commitment to hold local councils to account on how much revenue they raise from rates and where that revenue is spent."

This is in contrast to the Liberal Local Government Spokesperson, David Davis, who said on 3AW on the 9th of September, while talking to Tom Elliott, that the Opposition would not be able to make up its mind on the policy for at least 3 years.

With the release of the Essential Services Commission's (ESC) draft report at the end of July, the public and the local government sector have the opportunity to provide feedback on the ESC's recommendations and contribute their ideas to ensure this policy is implemented in an effective and reasonable manner.

Five public consultation events have been held by the ESC at Traralgon (10 August 2015), Melbourne (17 August 2015), Wangaratta (20 August 2015), Bendigo (26 August 2015) and Horsham (26 August 2015). The ESC also invited written submissions by 28 August 2015.

The ESC is due to make its final recommendations to Government by the end of September 2015.

To ensure a quality and well-designed framework, I have also established the Fair Go Rates Reference Group to give councils, communities and stakeholders more opportunity to have their say on the Fair Go Rates System. The Reference Group will also assist the ESC to work through the issues raised by the submissions and advise on a system that will provide fairer rates.

The Government encourages councils, the public and other stakeholders to share their views with the ESC so that the Fair Go Rates system has the best chance of success.

Yuroke electorate

Question 395

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government will champion greater gender equity and increased diversity across Victoria's local councils.

While the number of women in leadership roles within local government is slowly growing, women are still under-represented. The 2012 council elections saw a record number of women candidates and a female councillor on every one of Victoria's 79 councils for the first time. Currently women make up 39 per cent (30) of all Mayors, 35 per cent (217) of all councillors and 18 per cent (14) of all chief executive officers.

The Labor Government will continue to encourage diversity at the next general council elections in October 2016 and to assist this, I recently announced \$50 000 in funding for the Victorian Local Governance Association's (VLGA) GoWomenLG 2016 project, which aims to increase the number of female candidates across the state.

The funding will build on existing work and focuses on encouraging women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to consider nominating as candidates at the next election.

In addition, I announced a \$5000 contribution to a scholarship for a female Director to participate in LGPro's Executive Leadership Program, and a further \$20 000 grant for the Australian Local Government Women's Association to assist in establishing a structured mentoring program for all women in the local government sector, training for women as mentors and a web platform to promote mentoring opportunities.

Malvern electorate

Question 405

Question asked by: Member for Malvern
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

The Burke Road Level Crossing Removal Project is on schedule to be complete by mid 2016. Removing this level crossing will reduce congestion and improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists, tram and train users and drivers.

The project team delivering the level crossing removal at Burke Road is working closely with local traders in order to understand their business needs and provide a high level of support during construction. A specific business engagement plan has been developed to ensure efforts are focussed on minimising impacts to local traders.

Activities to support traders through this consultation process have included:

- Regular individual and group meetings with traders to discuss project works and ways to manage impacts from construction
- Removing the no standing zone out the front of the businesses, which facilitate customer access and parking directly in front of local businesses
- Altering the adjacent required kiss 'n' ride facility to operate only during peak hours, which allows the businesses to use those spaces outside of those times
- Specific advertising and promotion of local businesses in project communications materials distributed to approximately 30 000 residents in the local community.

The project team will continue to promote local businesses throughout delivery of the project through site signage and project publications. A 'buy local' program has also been instigated that will encourage the local workforce to purchase from traders specifically in the Burke Road area near to the level crossing removal works.

A representative from the office of Mr Philip Dalidakis, Member for Southern Metropolitan, and the Project Director from the Level Crossing Removal Authority have been in contact with Kat Vcelka of Academy of Scuba and will be meeting with her in the coming weeks.

Geelong electorate

Question 430

Question asked by: Member for Geelong
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 19 August 2015

REPLY:

The Roadside Weeds and Pests Program provides valuable support to councils to clear weeds and pests from rural roadsides. This roadside treatment is essential to protect the State's \$11.4 billion per annum agricultural production.

That is why so many Victorians were disappointed and confused as to why the previous Liberal Government did not fund the program beyond 2014–15.

I am pleased to announce the Andrews Labor Government is providing \$5.2 million over the next two years for the continuation of the program. Under this program, a number of new initiatives have been approved, including an increase in the maximum grant from \$50 000 to \$75 000 per year and an expansion of eligible weeds to include 'restricted weeds'. This increases the number of weeds that can be treated by 85 across the State.

The City of Greater Geelong will receive an additional \$3906 under the new program, receiving \$19 953 in both 2015-16 and 2016-17. This will be valuable in treating the wide array of weeds that are found across Geelong's rural roads. I understand the City of Greater Geelong treats over 300 kilometres of road for serrated tussock, as well as other weeds such as Chilean needle grass and woody weed. The boost of funding under the 2015–2017 program will be of great assistance in treating weeds and pests in the Geelong electorate.

Increasing this vital funding is just one of many ways in which the Andrews Labor Government is supporting Victorian councils and their communities. This stands in stark contrast to the Federal Government which has cut Financial Assistance Grants, costing Victorian councils over \$200 million over 3 years.

Macedon electorate

Question 432

Question asked by: Member for Macedon
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 19 August 2015

REPLY:

The Roadside Weeds and Pests Program provides valuable support to councils to clear weeds and pests from rural roadsides. This roadside treatment is essential to protect the State's \$11.4 billion per annum agricultural production.

That is why so many Victorians were disappointed and confused as to why the previous Liberal Government did not fund the program beyond 2014-15.

I am pleased to announce the Andrews Labor Government is providing \$5.2 million over the next two years for the continuation of the program. Under this program a number of new initiatives have been approved, including an increase in the maximum grant from \$50 000 to \$75 000 per year and an expansion of eligible weeds to include 'restricted weeds'. This increases the number of weeds that can be treated by 85 across the State.

The Macedon electorate includes five local councils that receive funding under the Roadside Weeds and Pests Program. Each of these councils has received an increase in funding under the 2015-2017 program to treat a range of roadside weeds and pests:

- Hepburn Shire Council - increase of \$5350 over two years with a total grant of \$56 010
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council - increase of \$8708 over two years with a total grant of \$68 596
- Melton City Council - increase of \$1420 over two years with a total grant of \$22 644

Wendouree electorate

Question 437

Question asked by: Member for Wendouree
Directed to: Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Asked on: 20 August 2015

REPLY:

Registered Aboriginal Parties, or RAPs, have significant responsibilities under State legislation (the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010) and are integral to the administration of Victoria's cultural heritage management system.

Earlier this year, I met with staff and members of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation as part of my listening tour of RAPs and Traditional Owner organisations throughout Victoria. Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners shared with me the considerable work they undertake in managing their exceptional cultural heritage. I was particularly impressed with the Dja Dja Wurrung Ranger program, and the environmental and cultural work being undertaken through Dja Dja Wurrung Enterprises.

As part of my tour, I also met with staff and members of the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation, who talked to me about their ideas for expanding the roles of RAPs into areas such as education and cultural awareness.

More recently I met with RAPs from across the State at their June RAP Forum, where we discussed expanding RAP roles and functions and RAP sustainability and capability. I also announced this Government's new investment of \$20.9 million for the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Strategy, and the Government's commitment to amending the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. These funds will strengthen the protection and management of Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage, support sustainable RAPs, and enable RAPs to take on new opportunities to expand their important work in strengthening Aboriginal culture. This significant investment will ensure the voices of Traditional Owners remain at the centre of decision-making which is consistent with our commitment to self-determination.

There is a proven record of effective cultural heritage management where RAPs are appointed. There are currently ten appointed RAPs, which cover approximately 60% of the State. This Government is committed to appointing RAPs over more of Victoria. I have recently worked with the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council to improve the RAP application process. Additionally, amendments to the Act will create a more efficient RAP application process by providing the Council flexibility in its decision making and the ability to mediate dispute resolution.

The Victorian Government is also investing in the successful Right People for Country program, which assists Traditional Owner groups resolve disputes regarding boundaries and group composition, and prepares groups for the challenges and responsibilities of functioning as a RAP.

Croydon electorate

Question 476

Question asked by: Member for Croydon
Directed to: Premier
Asked on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

Grand Final Friday was a great day and an opportunity for all Victorians to get together to celebrate Australia's national game and spend quality time with friends and family.

Regional Tourism reported a bumper weekend and many businesses enjoyed roaring trades.

The public holiday was an election commitment and we keep our promises. Next year will be even bigger and better. I trust many people enjoyed the hospitality and services offered by businesses in the Croydon Main Street precinct.

Buninyong electorate

Question 477

Question asked by: Member for Buninyong
Directed to: Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Asked on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

The Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation has significant responsibilities under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 as a Registered Aboriginal Party, or RAP, and is integral to the administration of Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage management system.

Wathaurung was appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council as the RAP for part of its application area in May 2009. This area was extended as Wathaurung was appointed over its remaining application area in March 2013.

Wathaurung is one of the busiest RAPs in Victoria, covering regional growth areas from outer western Melbourne through to Geelong, Ballarat and the Surf Coast. Since its appointment as a RAP, Wathaurung has approved 281 cultural heritage management plans, with a further 78 plans relating to its RAP area in preparation. In March this year, I met with staff and members of Wathaurung as part of my listening tour of RAPs and Traditional Owner organisations throughout Victoria. They shared with me their ideas for expanding the roles of RAPs into areas such as education and cultural awareness.

There is a proven record in Victoria of effective cultural heritage management where RAPs are appointed. In June this year I met with RAPs from across the State at the bi-annual RAP Forum, where we discussed expanding RAP roles and functions and RAP sustainability and capability. I also announced this Government's new investment of \$20.9 million for the Victorian Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Strategy, and the Government's commitment to amending the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.

These funds will strengthen the protection and management of Victoria's Aboriginal cultural heritage, support sustainable RAPs, and enable RAPs to take on new opportunities to expand their important work in strengthening Aboriginal culture.

I met with the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council in February this year, and with the full Council at its meeting in June. We discussed working collaboratively to create a more efficient RAP application process. Additionally, proposed amendments to the Act will create a more efficient RAP application process by providing the Council flexibility in its decision making and the ability to mediate dispute resolution.

The Council is critical to the successful management of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria, including by providing strategic advice about potential improvements to the cultural heritage management system.

Our significant investment in pursuing an ambitious reform agenda in this area will ensure the voices of Traditional Owners remain at the centre of decision-making which is consistent with this Government's commitment to self-determination.

Ovens Valley electorate

Question 478

Question asked by: Member for Ovens Valley
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to improving country rail and is aware of the issue on the North East rail line.

An extra V/Line locomotive will be converted to standard gauge to improve the reliability of train services on the Albury line. This will boost the fleet to four standard gauge locomotives available on the Albury line, offering a better rail service to the communities of Ovens Valley and the greater North Eastern Victoria region.

The Andrews Labor Government has finished consulting with regional Victorians about improvements to the regional public transport network. For the first time in a long time, regional areas have been consulted extensively about their public transport needs. Feedback from the Regional Network Development Plan (RNDP) consultations will be consolidated into a plan to identify issues and solutions for regional Victoria such as rolling stock and infrastructure.

Eltham electorate

Question 479

Question asked by: Member for Eltham
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

Public libraries are the heart of the community. They provide a non-judgmental, safe space that develops strong and connected communities. That is why the Andrews Labor Government has committed to undertake a critical review of library funding that will determine the best way forward for future funding arrangements. The critical review was necessary because the previous Liberal Government spent 4 years developing the Victorian Library concept, but never committed any money towards it or published a business case to support the concept. The critical review will specifically look at options for shared service delivery that will provide the community with better and more modern libraries that will meet their needs now and into the future.

That is why Victorians were shocked when the former Liberal Government cut funding to the Public Libraries Funding Program in its first budget.

The Public Libraries Funding Program is an ongoing program that supports councils and regional library corporations in providing public library services. I am pleased to announce \$40.51 million in recurrent funding for the Public Libraries Funding Program in 2015-16 as well as an additional \$5.4 million for specific programs.

These programs include the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program (LLIP) and the Premiers' Reading Challenge (PRC) Book Fund Program. The Government has allocated \$4.3 million to the LLIP to assist local government in providing high-quality and accessible public library infrastructure that meets the changing needs of communities. Libraries are invited to submit their applications for new, replacement or modernised public library facilities by October 2015. The PRC Book Fund Program has been allocated \$1.1 million to assist councils and regional library

corporations in purchasing resources that support the Premiers' Reading Challenge. The PRC has been running since 2005 and has enriched the learning of over 2 million young Victorians who have read over 34 million books through the PRC.

The 2015-16 library funding is the highest amount of funding ever provided to libraries in the year and reinforces the Victorian Government's commitment to public libraries.

St Albans electorate

Question 481

Question asked by: Member for St Albans
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that a new bus network was implemented in July 2014 under the former Government in the St Albans area which increased the peak frequency on bus Route 418 and introduced Sunday services on Route 421. However, while many residents have benefitted from the change, PTV does understand that some residents are now required to walk longer to access bus stops, and for some elderly pensioners this is proving difficult.

PTV is investigating options to service the Theodore street area including diverting Route 418 and modifying bus Route 421 on trips from St Albans to Keilor Plains Station.

I have asked PTV to continue to monitor the performance and feedback on the bus network and investigate what can be done to improve the bus network in the St Albans area.

Frankston electorate

Question 483

Question asked by: Member for Frankston
Directed to: Minister for Industrial Relations
Asked on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

The previous Coalition Government eliminated 4600 jobs from the public sector and in doing so encouraged Departments to engage workers indirectly through labour hire and independent contractor arrangements.

Following the Fair Work Ombudsman's inquiry into these practices and finding that engagement of certain workers as independent contractors could increase the risk of non-compliance with the Fair Work Act 2009, I have written to my ministerial colleagues requesting that all Departments and their portfolio agencies undertake a review of their labour engagement policies and practices.

The Government as a model employer must and will strive to ensure that all workers are appropriately classified and receive their correct entitlements in accordance with the Fair Work Act.

This is a Government that treats its workers with respect. We are also restoring the focus to core service delivery after the former government spent 4 years gutting TAFE, abandoning our schools and stretching our health system.

The Government recently established the Central Bargaining Unit (CBU). This new body builds on the Labor Government's commitment to ending the previous Liberal Government's disrespectful and dysfunctional approach to dealing with Victoria's public service.

The formation of the Central Bargaining Unit is a big step forward in restoring fairness and respect between the government and public sector employees. By providing advice and assistance, the Central Bargaining Unit will help put an end to the unproductive, adversarial approach to public sector employees adopted by the previous Liberal Government.

Carrum electorate

Question 498

Question asked by: Member for Carrum
Directed to: Minister for Industrial Relations
Asked on: 2 September 2015

REPLY:

Family violence, in all forms, is a violation of basic human rights. Everyone, regardless of their sex, religion, nationality, race, language, relationship, or living arrangements, has the right to feel safe and be safe in public and at home. Therefore, any family violence, regardless of who the victim and perpetrator are, is unacceptable and cannot be excused.

Workplace environments that are safe, inclusive of women, and receptive to the burden and hardship of family violence are critical to reinforcing the social norms of respect, non-violence and equity. Workplaces are a key setting for both primary prevention and responses to family violence.

The Victorian Government is absolutely committed to create a culture that supports respectful relationships, practices positive attitudes and behaviours, and promotes a culture of non-violence in all workplaces, including the Victorian public sector. The Government is also committed to support all employers to develop and maintain workplaces that support victims of family violence.

As part of the Government's broader policy response to family violence in Victoria, the Government is in the process of developing a family violence policy that will require that all public sector enterprise agreements contain a stand-alone family violence term and in doing so uphold the reputation of the public sector as a model employer. This will also ensure that Victoria does not fall behind other jurisdictions across Australia in tackling the problem of family violence.

The introduction of family violence leave provisions in public sector enterprise agreements will give recognition to family violence as a critical issue with a significant impact on the economy. It will also recognise that both Government and the workplaces have a role in, and responsibility for, responding to family violence.

Family violence provisions in enterprise agreements must ensure an appropriate level of sensitivity, confidentiality and flexibility for employees, including through their implementation and evidentiary requirements.

The model clause will enable employees who are experiencing family violence to have access to a certain number of days of paid special leave per year which can be used for the purpose of medical appointments, legal proceedings and other activities related to family violence.

The model clause will also enable employees who support a person experiencing family violence to take carer's leave to accompany them to court or hospital and to mind children.

Burwood electorate

Question 501

Question asked by: Member for Burwood
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 2 September 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government understands how vital it is for families across the state to enjoy well deserved leisure time with their families and friends. Public holidays provide a crucial and necessary opportunity for families and friends to join together as a community. As the Grand Final public holiday falls within school holidays, it will also help take the pressure off families juggling work and child care, giving Victorian families more time they can spend together.

The introduction of the new public holidays will provide additional coordinated leisure time for people to spend with family and friends and will result in increased social and community benefits for Victorians.

Following the Government's decision to introduce Easter Sunday and the Friday before the Australian Football League (AFL) Grand Final as public holidays via notice in the Victorian Government Gazette, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) to analyse the potential impact of the policy on the Victorian economy as required under the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994.

As part of the RIS process, consultations were had with 16 entities including business groups and industry associations representing members across metropolitan and regional Victoria, as well as small businesses, the AFL and employee unions, to gauge the anticipated impact of the policy. The RIS was then released for a 28 day period of public submissions, and all submissions were considered by me in line with the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994.

On 18 August 2015, following consideration of the submissions, I published a notice of decision to introduce the new public holidays in the Victorian Government Gazette. Subsequently, I published a notice appointing the new public holidays in the Victorian Government Gazette on 19 August 2015.

Victoria has over 532 000 small businesses. Nearly 63% of them are micro businesses that do not employ staff. The RIS process saw 109 submissions from those 532 000 businesses.

As Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade, I look forward to continuing to meet with Chambers of Commerce and industry groups across the state, to discuss how the Labor Government will help small and local business to grow and remain competitive.

Niddrie electorate

Question 504

Question asked by: Member for Niddrie
Directed to: Minister for Industry
Asked on: 2 September 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government strongly supports renewable energy and has recently released Victoria's Renewable Energy Roadmap, which aims to accelerate the development of renewable energy generation in Victoria to reduce emissions, create jobs and put downward pressure on energy prices.

The Victorian Government currently has several policies which provide financial support to businesses and residents investing in renewable energy and energy saving technologies: the Victorian Energy Saver Incentive scheme (known as the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target (VEET) scheme) for energy efficiency investments; feed-in tariffs for small-scale renewable energy generation; and the New Energy Jobs Fund to support renewable energy investments.

Under the Victorian Government's recently expanded VEET scheme, households and businesses investing in energy efficiency products and services can receive rebates based on the greenhouse gas savings associated with the product or service they have purchased.

The Victorian Government's feed-in tariff scheme provides owners of small-scale renewable energy systems of less than 100 kilowatts in capacity with payments for electricity exported to the grid.

In addition, the New Energy Jobs Fund is a \$20 million package focussed on providing targeted financial support to businesses, research institutes and communities to facilitate their development or uptake of renewable energy. Application processes and eligibility criteria are being determined this year in consultation with key industry and community representatives.

On top of this financial support, the Victorian Government also has a number of initiatives which aim to encourage Victorian businesses and households to invest in renewable energy. These initiatives, which were outlined in Victoria's Renewable Energy Roadmap, include:

- enabling all local governments in Victoria to provide Environmental Upgrade Agreements to support environmental upgrades to non-residential buildings;
- improving the connection process for distributed generation systems;
- enabling innovative business models for solar power in Victoria;
- preventing unfair discrimination of solar customers by energy retailers; and
- asking the Essential Services Commission to inquire into the true value of distributed generation for Victorian consumers.

Geelong electorate

Question 529

Question asked by: Member for Geelong
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 3 September 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government appreciates the enormous contribution of small businesses to local communities through economic activities, job creation and social cohesion. I was pleased to visit Geelong on 11 September 2015 to meet with the Committee for Geelong, the Geelong Chamber of Commerce and visit two successful small businesses, Cafe Lorae and SC Technology Group.

The Government is supporting economic growth in regional Victoria, including in Geelong. The \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF) will facilitate new investment to drive job creation across regional Victoria. Of particular note, \$30 million has been committed through the RJIF to the refurbishment and expansion of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre, which will create significant opportunities for local small businesses. In addition, the \$200 million Future Industries Fund will fast-track the development of high-growth, high-value industry sectors that are capable of driving significant jobs growth and attracting new investment. Furthermore, the Back to Work plan provides \$100 million in payroll tax relief and payments to companies hiring unemployed youth, the long term unemployed and retrenched workers.

The Andrews Labor Government's commitments for small business include establishing a Victorian Small Business Commission, as well as developing a small business deregulation agenda that will help reduce regulatory burden by 25 per cent. The Andrews Labor Government's Plan for Jobs and Growth: A Focus on Geelong specifically highlighted a variety of actions to harness Geelong's highly skilled and adaptive workforce and foster economic growth.

The Small Business Ministerial Council will include at least one member from Geelong. This commitment will ensure that the specific needs of small business in Geelong, and more broadly regional Victoria, are regularly heard at the highest levels of Government. The Small Business Ministerial Council will also receive an annual update from the Small Business Mentoring Service to better understand the needs and issues of small businesses from areas across the State, including Geelong.

Small Business Victoria provides a range of assistance to small businesses in Geelong. The Small Business Bus enables time-poor business operators to undertake free, one-on-one mentoring on-board with experienced professionals from the Small Business Mentoring Service — all of whom have either run their own small business or worked in senior management. The Small Business Bus has visited Geelong four separate times so far this year.

The Small Business Victoria's Workshops and Seminars program runs throughout the year right across the state, including in Geelong. The program provides low-cost and local access to information and business skills

development for people starting or running a business, including a franchise. The range of topics includes business planning and organisation, running a business efficiently, budgeting and forecasting, improving marketing and how to get a business online.

In August this year the Geelong Small Business Festival celebrated its fifth year as part of the annual Small Business Victoria program. Run by Enterprise Geelong, the event ran from 1 to 31 August with seminars and networking events in Geelong, North Geelong, Torquay and Queenscliff.

In addition, the business.vic.gov.au website provides a one-stop shop where businesses can find free information, templates, tools, calculators, and other resources.

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to develop a supportive environment for small businesses that encourages growth and employment opportunities right across Victoria.

Brighton electorate

Question 530

Question asked by: Member for Brighton
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 3 September 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government committed to use camera technology as part of a trial on Beach Road to identify trucks breaching the existing curfew. I am pleased to advise that VicRoads is finalising plans to trial this camera technology.

These cameras will assist targeted enforcement of the curfew along the Beach Road corridor. In addition, the data collected during this trial will be used to determine the merits of extending truck curfews and possible impacts on other roads.

Any consideration to a change in the existing curfews will be done in partnership with relevant stakeholders, including the freight industry and councils. Data collected from the trial and other relevant data will be presented to stakeholders such as councils, the Victorian Transport Association, the Transport Workers' Union and Victoria Police.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 531

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 3 September 2015

REPLY:

I understand that Mr Vince Punaro, VicRoads' Regional Director of Metropolitan North West Region met with you on 11 September 2015, and provided an updated status of the project proposal.

The proposal, which includes the installation of a 40km/h speed limit and additional infrastructure improvements on Bell Street between Service Street and Budds Street and also on Sydney Road between Bell Street and O'Hea Street, has been submitted for funding consideration under the Safe System Road Infrastructure Program.

While initial consultation with the City of Moreland, Victoria Police, Coburg Traders' Association, Public Transport Victoria and Yarra Trams has occurred, further consultation is proposed to better understand the impacts of the proposed reduced speed limit on Bell Street and Sydney Road. The feedback from stakeholders and the community, including the Coburg Primary School, will be used to determine whether a permanent or part time 40km/h speed limit zone is appropriate.

I understand that VicRoads also committed to review the operation of the existing pedestrian traffic signal phasing to determine if there are opportunities to further reduce the pedestrian waiting time.

Bentleigh electorate

Question 533

Question asked by: Member for Bentleigh
Directed to: Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Asked on: 3 September 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013-2017 (VAAF) commits to an ambitious but achievable set of targets to close the gap in outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victorians across all the close the gap measures. Victoria is also the only Australian jurisdiction to have close the gap targets for the justice portfolio.

The Victorian Government is deeply concerned about the over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people in the out-of-home care system. The Minister for Families and Children and I are committed to tackling this issue.

The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013–2017 commits to a target to reduce the gap in the rate of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal child protection substantiations by 75% by 2023.

The Minister for Families and Children has already made a number of announcements that demonstrate the Government's commitment to rebuilding the system from the ground up informed by the very best of advice.

The Roadmap for Reform: Strong Families, Safe Children will review the entire child protection and family services system and develop recommendations to strengthen and improve it. The Government is receiving specialist advice on the development of the Roadmap by a wide-ranging Expert Advisory Group which met for the first time on 11 September 2015.

The Minister will also receive expert advice specifically on the needs of Aboriginal children and young people from a new Aboriginal Children's Forum that will meet quarterly.

But the Government is not waiting for these processes to run their course before we act. Shortly after coming to office and confronted with the gross over-representation of Aboriginal children and the reports of findings within the residential care system, the Government made significant new investments to address pressing issues in the existing system.

This investment includes \$8 million over four years committed in December 2014 to strengthen placement prevention and reunification services for Aboriginal children and young people.

The Department of Health and Human Services and the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People are working together to undertake individual reviews of every Aboriginal child and young person in out-of-home care in Victoria.

The outcomes of these reviews will inform a final report that will provide the basis for future action at a state-wide level. The Government has committed an additional \$1.75 million as part of the 2015-16 to fund an initial response to the findings.

Meeting the needs of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care means ensuring that every Aboriginal child in the care system has access to culturally appropriate services that promote kinship and community connections.

Recent amendments to the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 that come into force in March 2016 will introduce new obligations on the Department of Health and Human Services in meeting the cultural support needs of Aboriginal children in out-of-home care.

The Roadmap, Taskforce 1000 and the advice of the Aboriginal Children's Forum will inform the Government's next steps.

I have met with many local and statewide Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. These organisations are driven by an overwhelming commitment to the safety and development of Aboriginal children. I am heartened and thankful of their level of practical commitment in this area.

The Minister for Families and Children can provide further details on these and other actions.

Eildon electorate

Question 766

Question asked by: Member for Eildon
Directed to: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Asked on: 15 September 2015

REPLY:

As the regulation of the sale of raw milk falls under the portfolio responsibility of the Honourable Jaala Pulford MLC, Minister for Agriculture, you may wish to refer your question accordingly.

However, I can provide the information below on the Victorian Government's position on the sale of raw milk.

It is already illegal in Victoria for unpasteurised milk to be packaged or sold for human consumption. Nevertheless some people have been consuming unpasteurised milk labelled "not for human consumption".

On 2 December 2014 Victoria's Chief Health Officer publicly warned that raw milk should never be consumed as it has an increased risk of individuals acquiring gastrointestinal illness. Her warning followed several children becoming seriously ill after consuming raw milk.

From 1 January 2015, Dairy Food Safety Victoria, commenced implementing measures to strengthen the existing regulation of the sale of raw milk to protect public health. Raw milk can be sold to licensed dairy food producers and other processors, but not into the retail market, unless it has been treated to make it unpalatable for human consumption and not able to be mistaken for food.

These controls on the sale of raw milk will not impede the availability of genuine cosmetic products such as soap, bath milk and face cream. However, these products will need to have been treated prior to sale to deter their consumption.

For dairy licensees who process milk for cosmetic purposes, there is a cost in meeting the new conditions. However, those costs are outweighed by the community benefit of clearly differentiating and treating products intended for cosmetic use. Dairy farmers also have the option of providing all of their milk to a processor for human consumption.

The sale of raw cows' milk for human consumption is illegal in all states and territories. Dairy industry regulators, departments of health, and consumer protection agencies are working at a national level to ensure that cosmetic products made from raw cows' milk are managed in a way that will protect public health.

The Victorian Government's position on the sale of raw milk is consistent with the Food Standards Australia New Zealand risk assessment produced in 2009, which found that for raw drinking milk the risks could not be sufficiently controlled and that the product poses a high risk to public health and safety.

Ovens Valley electorate

Question 768

Question asked by: Member for Ovens Valley
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 15 September 2015

REPLY:

The introduction of the new public holiday provided additional coordinated leisure time for people to spend with family and friends, and resulted in increased social and community benefits for Victorians.

Furthermore, there were no trading restrictions imposed on Grand Final Friday, so business opening hours were a matter for individual owners and operators.

Wendouree electorate

Question 769

Question asked by: Member for Wendouree
Directed to: Minister for Industrial Relations
Asked on: 15 September 2015

REPLY:

Family violence, in all forms, is a violation of basic human rights. Everyone, regardless of their sex, religion, nationality, race, language, relationship, or living arrangements, has the right to feel safe and be safe in public and at home. Therefore, any family violence, regardless of who the victim and perpetrator are, is unacceptable and cannot be excused.

Workplace environments that are safe, inclusive of women, and receptive to the burden and hardship of family violence are critical to reinforcing the social norms of respect, non-violence and equity. Workplaces are a key setting for both primary prevention and responses to family violence.

The Victorian Government is absolutely committed to create a culture that supports respectful relationships, practices positive attitudes and behaviours, and promotes a culture of non-violence in all workplaces, including the Victorian public sector. The Government is also committed to support all employers to develop and maintain workplaces that support victims of family violence.

As part of the Government's broader policy response to family violence in Victoria, the Government is in the process of developing a family violence policy that will require that all public sector enterprise agreements contain a stand-alone family violence term and in doing so uphold the reputation of the public sector as a model employer. This will also ensure that Victoria does not fall behind other jurisdictions across Australia that also tackling the problem of family violence.

The introduction of family violence leave provisions in public sector enterprise agreements will give recognition to family violence as a critical issue with a significant impact on the economy. It will also recognise that both Government and the workplaces have a role in, and responsibility for, responding to family violence.

Family violence provisions in enterprise agreements must ensure an appropriate level of sensitivity, confidentiality and flexibility for employees, including through their implementation and evidentiary requirements.

The model clause will enable employees who are experiencing family violence to have access to a certain number of days of paid special leave per year which can be used for the purpose of medical appointments, legal proceedings and other activities related to family violence.

The model clause will also enable employees who support a person experiencing family violence to take carer's leave to accompany them to court or hospital and to mind children.

Brighton electorate

Question 770

Question asked by: Member for Brighton
Directed to: Premier
Asked on: 15 September 2015

REPLY:

Grand Final Friday was a great day and an opportunity for all Victorians to get together to celebrate Australia's national game and spend quality time with friends and family.

Regional Tourism reported a bumper weekend and many businesses enjoyed roaring trades.

The public holiday was an election commitment and we keep our promises. Next year will be even bigger and better. I trust many people enjoyed the hospitality offered by businesses in Brighton and Elwood.

Yuroke electorate

Question 771

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 15 September 2015

REPLY:

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

Mickleham Road

Mickleham Road is a primary north-south arterial road in Melbourne's outer north, which provides a connection between Tullamarine and Mickleham. The Metropolitan Planning Authority's (MPA) North Growth Corridor Plan identifies Mickleham Road as a key route that will support development in the northern growth area.

VicRoads has recently completed a planning investigation of the Mickleham Road Corridor between Somerton Road and Donnybrook Road in close consultation with the Hume City Council, Public Transport Victoria (PTV) and the MPA. The investigation has identified the road reservation requirements for a six-lane cross section of Mickleham Road, which will include off-road walking and cycling facilities in both directions.

Craigieburn Road

VicRoads is also working closely with the Hume City Council on a Corridor Study for Craigieburn Road.

The purpose of the study is to identify a suitable road layout that meets the future vehicle traffic, pedestrian, bicycle and public transport requirements for the length of Craigieburn Road between the Hume Highway and the future Outer Metropolitan Ring Road. The Study will also assist in determining priorities for future investment.

VicRoads provided comments to the Hume City Council in late August 2015, regarding the draft Craigieburn Road Functional Design Working Paper.

A second stakeholder Design Workshop, which VicRoads will be a part of, has been scheduled for early October 2015.

The Study, which is jointly funded by the Hume City Council and VicRoads, commenced in June 2015 and is expected to be completed by late 2015.

Somerton Road

Sufficient road reservation is available for the future widening of Somerton Road between Roxburgh Park Drive and Mickleham Road to provide for a six lane cross section.

South Barwon electorate**Question 774**

Question asked by: Member for South Barwon
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 15 September 2015

REPLY:

Thank you for your advocacy on behalf of Ceres Primary School. I appreciate you bringing the concerns of the school to my attention.

As the area in question is outside school boundaries, and traffic management is a local authority issue, I encourage the school to further consult with VicRoads and the City of Greater Geelong to resolve any maintenance or safety issues affecting the public carpark.

Where site conditions permit provision will be made in accordance with long-term enrolment numbers. The Department does not provide parking for parents or other non-staff vehicles. While parents may prefer to park close to school entrances, parking in surrounding streets is often safer, and reduces the risks associated with traffic congestion.

I have asked the Department to assist the school to manage this issue to ensure a safe outcome for all.

Nepean electorate**Question 921**

Question asked by: Member for Nepean
Directed to: Premier
Asked on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

Grand Final Friday was a great day and an opportunity for all Victorians to get together to celebrate Australia's national game and spend quality time with friends and family.

Regional Tourism reported a bumper weekend and many businesses enjoyed roaring trades.

The public holiday was an election commitment and we keep our promises.

Niddrie electorate**Question 922**

Question asked by: Member for Niddrie
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

I was honoured to be invited to speak at the Melbourne West Hepatitis Action Forum on 28 August and pleased to be joined by the Member for Niddrie, representing the Minister for Corrections at this important event.

Viral hepatitis is a significant and complex health issue so I was delighted to be able to announce at the forum that the Victorian Government will develop a standalone strategy to address the burden of disease that comes from hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

The scope of the strategy includes prevention, vaccination, testing, treatment, community-based care and support, management of chronic disease and directly addressing the stigma and discrimination experienced by people living with viral hepatitis.

The strategy will support the Victorian Government in fully addressing the needs of those who are most affected by viral hepatitis, including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities, gay and bisexual men, prisoners, people born in high prevalence countries and people who inject drugs.

On 29 July 2015, at the Victorian Government's function to observe World Hepatitis Day, I announced that I will convene a high level Viral Hepatitis Roundtable. This Roundtable will include representation from the fields of research, clinical practice, community agencies and, of course, from people who are living with viral hepatitis.

The purpose of the Roundtable will be to hear first-hand from senior stakeholders and communities affected by viral hepatitis about the key actions Government needs to pursue to ensure a targeted, effective response to viral hepatitis in Victoria.

The Roundtable will build on the results of consultation workshops recently held on both hepatitis B and C. The workshops brought together over 70 people from across the health and research system, including people living with hepatitis B or C to determine key priorities and actions for the Victorian response.

It is my intention that once the Roundtable has concluded, and the formal advice of the workshops has been finalised, my department will develop a bold, innovative standalone strategy for viral hepatitis for Victoria.

Gippsland East electorate

Question 923

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland East
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

There has been significant community concern about the rise in camping fees in national parks put in place by the former Coalition Government. During that process 36 of 70 camping grounds in Gippsland had fees introduced for the first time on 1 July 2014.

In April, the Andrews Labor Government removed camping fees at over 500 basic camping sites in 20 parks throughout regional Victoria, including removing fees in 34 of the 36 camping grounds in Gippsland mentioned above. Parks Victoria has issued refunds for all affected customers.

Parks Victoria, with support from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, is currently reviewing all camping fees, to ensure the right balance between affordable family holidays and funding for facilities in parks.

A number of key objectives have been identified for the review:

- affordable camping experiences;
- funding to sustain camping facilities in parks;
- camping experiences that allow families to explore and connect with parks; and
- protecting park values.

Forest Hill electorate

Question 925

Question asked by: Member for Forest Hill
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

The installation of a school crossing in Orchard Grove, Blackburn is the responsibility of local council as this is a local road.

State Government subsidies are provided to municipalities for adult supervision at a school crossing. The appointment of a children's crossing supervisor is not dependant on a State subsidy and the local Council may appoint a supervisor at any time on a voluntary or paid basis providing the person is properly trained and equipped.

Applications for State subsidy has now closed and funding will be open for consideration again in October 2015 for the 2016/2017 financial year.

Shepparton electorate

Question 927

Question asked by: Member for Shepparton
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

I thank the honourable member for her question and acknowledge her interest in Barmah National Park.

The following fire prevention measures are regularly undertaken in and around Barmah National Park to reduce bushfire risk:

- maintenance of tracks and access to water for firefighting appliances
- construction and maintenance of perimeter fuel breaks
- slashing around picnic and camping areas
- maintenance of campfire sites
- enforcement of fire regulations
- public education through ranger patrols
- targeted planned burns.

Vegetation slashing around Barmah Township to reduce fire risk is scheduled in the lead up to the summer season, and funding has been allocated for further slashing works on Boundary Track running along the interface between the park and private property.

All strategic fire access tracks in Barmah — the Sand Ridge Track, River Road, Gulf Track and South Boundary Road — are open and accessible to fire agency vehicles.

For the upcoming fire season DELWP and Parks Victoria have burns planned near Barmah Township. A CFA roadside burn is also planned for Moira Lakes Road. Their delivery will be subject to adequate spring rainfall before the summer season, with conditions currently too dry to burn.

The community has a central role in partnering with fire agencies to manage bushfire, with engagement being a key part of supporting the community's preparedness. In August, at a community meeting led by the CFA, DELWP and

Parks Victoria representatives presented their current Fire Operations Plan — including for Barmah National Park — and gave an update on preparation works. The CFA has also doorknocked areas of Barmah Township as part of its Fire Ready program, with strong input from DELWP and Parks Victoria.

DELWP's Chief Fire Officer, Alan Goodwin, will also be meeting with community members and local MPs in November, to discuss fire management in Barmah National Park.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 928

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 16 September 2015

REPLY:

Bakers Road is a local road managed by the Moreland City Council. The Council is responsible for investigating appropriate treatments and speed limits to address road safety issues.

Accordingly, this enquiry has been referred to the Council for its investigation and direct response to you.

Bundoora electorate

Question 1085

Question asked by: Member for Bundoora
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 17 September 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to improve public transport for all Victorians.

The Parkiteer Bike Cage Program provides secured bike facilities at rail stations. The location of bike cages are based on a range of criteria including bike parking available around the station, site availability, and bicycle network access to the station.

Currently, there are 80 Parkiteer Bike Cages across Victoria's metropolitan and regional rail networks at a variety of locations.

By the end of October 2015, additional new bike cages will be available at Belgrave, Highett, Greensborough and Yarraville stations. This will bring the total number to 84 Parkiteer bike cages across the network. To meet demand the Government is extending the capacity of the bike cages at Williams Landing and Hoppers Crossing stations.

The Government is also planning to deliver bike cages at Woodend, Gisborne, Kangaroo Flats, Wallan and Traralgon by mid-2016 and will continue to review Parkiteer bike cages provision at stations across Victoria.

Parkiteers Bike Cages as 24 September 2015

Parkiteers Bike Cage at Metropolitan Rail Stations		
Bayswater	Bentleigh	Berwick
Brighton Beach	Broadmeadows	Cardinia
Caulfield	Chelsea	Cheltenham
Coburg	Coolaroo	Craigieburn
Cranbourne	Croydon	Dandenong
Diggers Rest	Doncaster Park n Ride	East Malvern
Eltham	Epping	Fawkner
Ferntree Gully	Footscray	Frankston - 2 cages

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

4058

ASSEMBLY

9 October to 22 October 2015

Glen Waverley	Glenroy	Hallam
Heidelberg	Holmesglen	Hoppers Crossing
Huntingdale	Laverton - North	Laverton - South
Lilydale	Lynbrook	Melton
Mitcham	Mordialloc	Narre Warren
Newport	Noble Park	Nunawading
Oakleigh	Ormond	Pakenham
Preston	Reservoir	Roxburgh
Sandringham	Seaford	South Morang
Springvale	Sunbury	Sunshine - Monash St
Surrey Hills	Thomastown	Watergardens
Werribee - 2 cages*	West Footscray Cross St	West Footscray Sunshine Rd
Westall		
Parkiteers Bike Cage at Regional Rail Stations		
Bacchus Marsh	Ballarat	Bendigo
Castlemaine	Geelong	Kyneton
Marshall	Moe	Morwell
South Geelong	Tarneit	Warragul
Waurm Ponds	Wyndham Vale	

Bass electorate

Question 1088

Question asked by: Member for Bass
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 17 September 2015

REPLY:

I thank Mr Paynter for the invitation to visit Wonthaggi Secondary College and I am pleased to advise that I will be visiting the school this month.

The capital redevelopment of Wonthaggi Secondary College was not an election commitment made by the Labor Party.

The 2015-16 State Budget focuses on delivering resources to commitments made during the state election. Through the Budget, \$730 million will be invested in school infrastructure to ensure that our students are educated in high quality learning environments.

The funding provided through the State Budget represents a crucial first step in creating the Education State, and the Government will continue to invest in education infrastructure throughout this term of government. The capital needs of all schools, including Wonthaggi Secondary College, will continue to be considered when determining future priorities for the Government's capital works program.

Frankston electorate**Question 1089**

Question asked by: Member for Frankston
Directed to: Minister for Mental Health
Asked on: 17 September 2015

REPLY:

The sale and display of ice pipes is illegal in Victoria under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981. Under this legislation, Victoria Police has the power to seize drug paraphernalia such as bongos, ice pipes and cocaine kits that are being sold and displayed in a retail outlet. If your constituent has witnessed the sale or display of such items, I would encourage her to report this to the police.

Addressing the devastating effects of ice use in Victoria is of critical importance for the Andrews Labor Government. The Andrews Labor Government's Ice Action Plan delivers \$45.5 million in new investment to reduce the demand, supply and harms from Ice. We are committed to supporting families, treating users and making our community safer.

As part of this investment, Peninsula Health will receive \$200 000 over four years to expand family support services in the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula catchment. They will work closely with local service providers to provide families and significant others of people using ice and other drugs with access to a range of services including family counselling and group and peer based support. The harm reduction activities of Peninsula Health will also be enhanced by additional funding for its needle and syringe program.

In 2015–16 the Andrews Labor Government is investing \$3.06 million into the Frankston and Mornington Peninsula area for community based drug and alcohol programs. These programs include intake and assessment, care and recovery programs, non-residential withdrawal, counselling and needle and syringe programs to minimise harm associated with injection of drugs. As part of this investment, the Government also provides supported accommodation, assertive outreach, prevention and education for young people in Frankston with alcohol and drug issues. In addition, the Government also funds Bunjilwarra, an Aboriginal Youth Alcohol and Drug Healing Service located in Hastings. This is a state-wide service that can be accessed by Frankston residents.

As part of the Andrews Labor Government's Frankston Train Station Precinct Redevelopment, the Department of Health & Human Services, in conjunction with other key stakeholders including Frankston City Council, Victoria Police and the University of Melbourne, has developed an action framework that will examine alcohol and other drug issues in Frankston to help create a more liveable and safe community.

Kew electorate**Question 1090**

Question asked by: Member for Kew
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 17 September 2015

REPLY:

As you are aware, the former Minister for Planning, the Hon. Matthew Guy MP, refused the application and I strongly defended the refusal at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), for the construction of a five level apartment building at the Kew Residential Services site. However, the VCAT Order set aside the refusal of the application and directed that a permit be granted for the construction of the apartment building.

On 17 May 2015, the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, under the Heritage Act 1995, issued a Permit Refusal for the subject construction. I understand that the proponent, the Walker Corporation, has appealed this decision to the Heritage Council. The Executive Director of Heritage Victoria, will be defending his position, at the Heritage Council hearing.

The Heritage Council is an independent body and I am unable to guarantee that it will uphold the decision of refusal by Heritage Victoria.

Yan Yean electorate

Question 1287

Question asked by: Member for Yan Yean
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

I refer to the matter raised during Legislative Assembly on 6 October 2015 regarding Diamond Valley College.

Thank you for informing me of the community anticipation and support for the new schools in Mernda, Mernda South, Hazel Glen and Wallan. I also note your comment regarding the opportunities and challenges to support a great future for a neighbouring existing school, Diamond Valley College.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure, has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million to school facilities in the 2015–16 State Budget. The funding provided through the State Budget represents a crucial first step in creating the Education State, and we will continue to invest in school infrastructure throughout this term of government.

I would be pleased to visit Diamond Valley College to see the wonderful work of the staff, students and community of the school. I will arrange for my office to be in contact with you shortly to arrange a suitable time to visit.

If you would like further information, you may contact Ms Rebecca Haig, Senior Advisor Regional Performance and Planning, North-Western Victoria Region, Department of Education and Training, on 9488 9432 or by email haig.rebecca.r@edumail.vic.gov.au