

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS**

**21 August to 3 September 2015**

**(Extract from book 12)**

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**Deputy Speaker:**

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Ms Kilkenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr McGuire, Ms McLeish, Mr Pearson, Ms Ryall, Ms Thomas,  
Mr Thompson, Ms Thomson, Ms Ward and Mr Watt.

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The Hon. M. J. GUY

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

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**Leader of The Nationals:**

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

**Deputy Leader of The Nationals:**

Ms S. RYAN

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

<b>Member</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Party</b>
Allan, Ms Jacinta Marie	Bendigo East	ALP	McLeish, Ms Lucinda Gaye	Eildon	LP
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McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Ovens Valley	Nats	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP
McGuire, Mr Frank	Broadmeadows	ALP			

<sup>1</sup> Resigned 3 September 2015

<sup>2</sup> Resigned 3 September 2015

<sup>3</sup> Elected 14 March 2015

<sup>4</sup> 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.

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(*Council*): Mr Elasmir 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 and published in the questions on notice database in the period shown.*

**21 August to 3 September 2015****Nepean electorate****Question 177**

**Question asked by:** Member for Nepean  
**Directed to:** Minister for Agriculture  
**Asked on:** 5 May 2015

**REPLY:**

The government's intention is to remove commercial net fishing from Port Phillip Bay, including Corio Bay, over an eight year period concluding in 2022. This commitment will be delivered using \$20 million of new funding. Formal consultation has recently commenced on an initial phase of this process to put in place a catch cap on commercial catch in order to ensure that catch reduces as netting entitlements are removed.

The time line and process for implementing the commitments will be supported by legislation. I intend to introduce this legislation into the House in the spring session.

**Malvern electorate****Question 370**

**Question asked by:** Member for Malvern  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 4 August 2015

**REPLY:**

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibilities and should be raised with the Minister for Public Transport.

**Dandenong electorate****Question 371**

**Question asked by:** Member for Dandenong  
**Directed to:** Minister for Education  
**Asked on:** 4 August 2015

**REPLY:**

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Victorian Government. The Government has used its first Education State Budget to allocate \$730 million to school infrastructure to build, upgrade and maintain schools across the state. This is the first step in addressing the chronic under investment in school infrastructure under the previous government.

State Budget constraints, however, do not allow for all school building projects to be immediately funded, and the needs of over 1500 government schools must be balanced and prioritised accordingly.

The Government is aware that schools, such as Dandenong West Primary School, may have maintenance or capital needs. While the recent Budget primarily focused on resourcing our election commitments, the capital needs of all schools will be considered when determining future priorities for the Victorian Government's capital works program, and when allocating funding in future State Budgets.

If Dandenong West Primary School has urgent maintenance or repair issues which are beyond its budget capacity and directly impact on student or staff safety, an application for funding can be made under the Emergency Maintenance program. I encourage Dandenong West Primary School to contact the South-Eastern Victoria regional office for further assistance or advice.

I thank you for raising the concerns of Dandenong West Primary School with me.

### **Evelyn electorate**

#### **Question 374**

**Question asked by:** Member for Evelyn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 4 August 2015

#### **REPLY:**

Amendment C146 to the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme proposed to remove the prohibition on the use of land for 'Intensive animal husbandry' in the Green Wedge Zone - Schedules 1, 2 and 3 which apply in parts of Wandin North, Silvan, Monbulk, Coldstream, Gruyere, Macclesfield, Belgrave South, Sassafras, Narre Warren East, Yellingbo and Hoddles Creek. This amendment included the land occupied by the Happy Valley Free Range pig farm.

I understand that several submissions were received in response to the amendment and it was considered by Yarra Ranges Shire Council at its meeting on 11 August 2015. Council resolved to abandon Amendment C146, which means that the current prohibition on all forms of intensive animal husbandry in the Green Wedge Zone - Schedules 1, 2 and 3 will continue to apply in the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme.

I am aware that the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR), in partnership with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Environment Protection Authority, is conducting a review of the issues relating to such farms and the intensive animal husbandry definition.

During the review, DEDJTR will be consulting with councils, industry and other stakeholders to consider revised options for the definition. Yarra Ranges Shire Council will be included in this consultation process. This project may eventually result in changes to the current definition of intensive animal husbandry in the Victoria Planning Provisions.

### **Preston electorate**

#### **Question 375**

**Question asked by:** Minister for Finance  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 4 August 2015

#### **REPLY:**

Funding of \$20 million was provided in the 2015-16 Budget to fulfil the Andrews Labor Government's 2014 election commitment to upgrade ambulance stations across Victoria and a further \$20m has been committed to upgrade ambulance vehicles and equipment across the state.

These commitments will enable the rebuilding of existing high priority ambulance stations at metropolitan and rural locations, including Preston.

The existing ambulance stations to be addressed are no longer fit for the delivery of modern ambulance services and will be replaced with state of the art, purpose built facilities with the necessary functionality and flexibility to deliver ambulance services into the future.

Work on both the \$20m station upgrade commitment and \$20m vehicle upgrade will commence this year.

**Yan Yean electorate****Question 378**

**Question asked by:** Member for Yan Yean  
**Directed to:** Minister for Families and Children  
**Asked on:** 4 August 2015

**REPLY:**

Victorian Government funding for men's sheds has traditionally been provided for the construction of new men's sheds and the refurbishment of existing sheds.

As you have highlighted, the funding guidelines under the previous government precluded men's sheds from applying for funding if they had received more than \$25,000 through any prior rounds of the men's shed program.

In the recent 2015-16 men's shed funding round, the guidelines were revised to enable men's sheds to apply for funding provided that they hadn't received funding of more than \$25,000 from the men's shed program in the past five years.

Based on your strong and logical representation of the issues faced in the example you have provided, I am prepared to consider a review of the eligibility criteria for men's shed funding in the future. Such a review would also require the support of the men's shed sector. I will ask the Department of Health & Human Services to raise this issue in future discussions with the Victorian Men's Shed Association, the peak body for men's sheds in Victoria.

**Bass electorate****Question 383**

**Question asked by:** Member for Bass  
**Directed to:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is committed to using a consistent, state-wide and risk-based approach when considering the effects of coastal hazards and any related risks to public assets. A key aspect of this are the partnerships between DELWP, local councils, catchment management authorities and land managers to guide adaptation planning. Many adaptation options to coastal hazards are possible, and options will vary from place to place. Adaptation planning along the coast focuses on understanding the potential extent of future erosion, working with the communities to understand the important values of the area and assessing and managing the risks to these values.

A number of studies and option papers have been prepared in past years for the Grantville foreshore area. Implementation of remedial and protective works depends on assessment using the risk based approach as mentioned above. DELWP will work with Bass Coast Shire Council and the Grantville and District Foreshore Committee of Management to investigate potential options for addressing erosion on the Grantville foreshore.

**St Albans electorate****Question 384**

**Question asked by:** Member for St Albans  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

W-Class trams are an important and iconic part of Melbourne's transport history and the Andrews Labor Government wants to see as many trams as possible retained for future generations to enjoy.

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) is working on a plan for their future, including a process and criteria for determining how the retired trams could be used or offered to the community.

I have passed on the Bicycle Education Centre's request and contact details to PTV and asked that it add the Member for St Albans' request to its expression of interest list. PTV will contact the centre directly once this process has been finalised.

### **Gippsland East electorate**

**Question 385**

**Question asked by:** Member for Gippsland East  
**Directed to:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

Southern Rural Water (SRW) has investigated an option to construct a 17,000 ML off-stream storage near Lindenow (18km north west of Bairnsdale) under the Lindenow Valley Water Security Project.

Following the completion of this investigation it was determined that a more detailed business case would be required if the project is to be further considered. The preparation of a business case would involve significant extra work and could cost in the order of \$3 million. No funding was allocated by the former Coalition Government to enable the work to commence.

The Commonwealth Government has identified the Lindenow Valley Water Security Project as warranting possible Commonwealth consideration for funding as outlined in the Agricultural Competitiveness Green Paper and Water Infrastructure Options Paper. At this stage the Commonwealth Government has not outlined a process for accessing infrastructure funds.

The Victorian Government will continue to explore strategic opportunities to enhance water security across regional Victoria.

### **Geelong electorate**

**Question 386**

**Question asked by:** Member for Geelong  
**Directed to:** Minister for Women  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

I would like to thank the Member for inviting me back to Geelong to provide an update on the Royal Commission into Family Violence. I would also like to acknowledge the Member's dedication to her local community and for her commitment to addressing family violence in her community.

Earlier this year I was honoured to have the opportunity to join the Member in Geelong with representatives of Victoria Police, Minerva Community Services and members of the public at a forum on family violence. While there is no community that has not been impacted by this harm, we know that regional and rural areas experience family violence at higher rates. Data from the Crime Statistics Agency found that between April 2014 and March 2015 police attended 1,308 incidents of family violence in Greater Geelong for every 100,000 people.

Family violence is a whole-of-community harm, and in order for it to be eradicated a whole-of-community response is essential. I would be delighted to again join the Member in Geelong to provide an update on the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the work of the Andrews Labor Government in addressing this harm.

**South Barwon electorate****Question 387**

**Question asked by:** Member for South Barwon  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

As you are aware, Regional Rail Link (RRL) opened on 21 June 2015. This project has unlocked capacity to operate more trains on the Geelong line by providing a dedicated set of tracks between West Werribee and Southern Cross and additional services have been added to the Geelong line as part of the timetable change.

The former government's patronage forecasts showed extra carriages were desperately needed for the regional passenger rail network, yet it failed to order a single carriage for two years.

The Andrews Labor Government has swiftly addressed this issue by ordering 21 new V/Locity carriages in its first Budget and developing a long-term rolling stock strategy to ensure demand on Victoria's regional rail network is met.

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) and V/Line will continue to monitor the situation closely and work towards resolving these issues.

**Ripon electorate****Question 389**

**Question asked by:** Member for Ripon  
**Directed to:** Minister for Education  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

Families have the right to exercise their choice of government school, where that school has the capacity to enrol. In rural locations, bus transport is provided to facilitate attendance at designated neighbourhood schools. The designated neighbourhood school for students who live in Creswick is the Wendouree Campus of Ballarat Secondary College. There are no plans to alter the present zoning arrangements for schools in this district.

I encourage families impacted by the zoning to contact their school of choice to discuss arrangements.

**Eildon electorate****Question 391**

**Question asked by:** Member for Eildon  
**Directed to:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Asked on:** 5 August 2015

**REPLY:**

I am advised that:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Country Fire Authority volunteers including those of the Eildon electorate, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community.

The Government has made a commitment to introduce legislation to give career and volunteer firefighters presumptive rights to compensation for cancer claims arising from their service. This means Victoria's workers and volunteer compensation schemes will be amended to create a legal presumption that if a firefighter contracts certain types of cancer after defined service periods (or turnouts), their firefighter work will be taken to have contributed to the contraction of the disease, unless proven otherwise. This new presumption will make it simpler for firefighters to access compensation in the unfortunate event that they contract certain cancers.

In making the commitment, the Premier announced that the new Victorian scheme would reflect the scheme that is currently in place in Tasmania, and the government is in the preliminary stages of developing a Bill. In Tasmania, presumptive legislation applies to volunteer firefighters subject to them having attended a minimum of 150 fire events. Details of the new Victorian scheme will be made available as the design process progresses.

The Victorian Government has made the development of this legislation a priority for this term.

### **Macedon electorate**

**Question 392**

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

**REPLY:**

I thank the Member for Macedon for her question. The Commonwealth Government has "paused" or, to be more accurate, "frozen" the indexation of local government financial assistance grants until 2016-17. This funding is vital to all Victorian councils, particularly those in rural areas with small rate bases and significant infrastructure and service delivery challenges. The Victoria Grants Commission has estimated that, by the time indexation recommences in 2017-18, Victorian councils will have foregone \$200 million in funding. I have expressed my concern about the reduction in financial assistance grants to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development and am awaiting a response.

In addition to the significant loss of funds over time resulting from the freeze on indexation, the Commonwealth has decided to change the timing of payments to councils for 2015-16. This action has resulted in a further reduction in funding to Victorian councils of an estimated \$0.6 million.

### **Caulfield electorate**

**Question 394**

**Question asked by:** Member for Caulfield  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 6 August 2015

**REPLY:**

The level crossing at North Road will be removed as part of the Andrews Government's Level Crossing Removal Project, which will remove 50 level crossings in metropolitan Melbourne.

The project team are developing the detailed design for the North Road project, and are considering all the community feedback heard at the successful community consultation in July, including the feedback about Dorothy Avenue. The importance of keeping the Dorothy Avenue underpass open has been fully understood by the project team and every effort will be made to keep this piece of community infrastructure in place.

### **Brighton electorate**

**Question 398**

**Question asked by:** Member for Brighton  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 6 August 2015

**REPLY:**

The Member for Brighton raised a matter regarding safety issues with Middle Brighton station and, as she described them, the tragic deaths of two people at that location. Our thoughts and sympathies go to both families at the loss of their loved ones. The Member for Brighton asked for a safety audit to be undertaken at this location. I am happy to advise the Member that we will undertake that work. As VicTrack is the custodian of that facility, I have asked that it follow this matter up. I have also suggested that it talk with the Member for Brighton on how to



have this done expeditiously and with a view to ascertaining what improvements can be made in that station precinct.

### **Macedon electorate**

**Question 399**

**Question asked by:** Member for Macedon  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 6 August 2015

**REPLY:**

The \$6.66M project for the upgrade of Station Road (also known as the Gisborne Kilmore Road) at the Calder Freeway in Gisborne, is funded through the Victorian State and Commonwealth Governments, apportioned as 25 and 75 per cent, respectively.

The project involves the upgrade of the existing ramp intersections to roundabouts at the Calder Freeway and Station Road Interchange.

VicRoads advises me that preconstruction works are well advanced in preparation for calling tenders in late 2015. Pavement and geotechnical investigations have been completed and arrangements are progressing with the relevant service authorities to undertake appropriate service relocations.

Detailed designs are being finalised and landscape concept plans developed to a stage for presentation to the Macedon Ranges Shire Council and the community in the coming months.

VicRoads also advises me that the project estimate was based on a risk based estimate which covers activities for the interchange works only. As the works are yet to go to tender and the full cost of service relocations unconfirmed, VicRoads envisages that all of the budget will be required to complete these important interchange works.

In relation to the Saunders Road/Station Road intersection, VicRoads further advises me that the future upgrade of this intersection was identified in the VicRoads planning investigation for Station Road, completed in early 2014. The study indicated that, at a concept level, both traffic lights and a roundabout would operate satisfactorily.

No further development work or costings have been undertaken on either these options.

To ensure an accurate estimate, a more detailed analysis on these options would need to be undertaken.

### **Box Hill electorate**

**Question 402**

**Question asked by:** Member for Box Hill  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 6 August 2015

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government has committed to forming a Ministerial Advisory Group for the Box Hill Transit Interchange to provide direction on the future of the Box Hill Interchange and opportunities to create jobs.

On 21 June 2015, Shaun Leane MP Member for Eastern Metro Region was appointed as Chair for the Ministerial Advisory Group.

I am advised that Officers from the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resource are working with the Chair to progress the establishment of the Ministerial Advisory Group, in line with our election commitment, and further announcements will be made once the group membership has been finalised.

**Ovens Valley electorate****Question 407**

**Question asked by:** Member for Ovens Valley  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 18 August 2015

**REPLY:**

Addressing the devastating effects of ice use in Victoria, particularly in our rural and regional areas, is of critical importance for the government. Our Ice Action Plan delivers \$45.5 million in new investment to reduce the demand, supply and harms from ice.

The matter you seek a commitment on falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Mental Health, Martin Foley MP. I will raise the matter with Minister Foley on your behalf.

**Caulfield electorate****Question 425**

**Question asked by:** Member for Caulfield  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 19 August 2015

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government has committed to conduct an independent review of the process of applying the residential zones. The review will commence in the second half of the year. This will allow the current zones to settle and to ensure relevant data is available to provide a more holistic response to municipal housing needs.

It is anticipated that outcomes of the review will also provide protocols for best practice consultation and the appropriate role of the Minister, councils and the community in the planning process. The government will ensure that any future application of the residential zones throughout Glen Eira and other municipalities will be undertaken in a clear, consultative and transparent manner.