

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

5 May to 26 May 2016

(Extract from book 7)

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HANSARD¹⁵⁰



1866–2016

Following a select committee investigation, Victorian Hansard was conceived when the following amended motion was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 23 June 1865:

That in the opinion of this house, provision should be made to secure a more accurate report of the debates in Parliament, in the form of *Hansard*.

The sessional volume for the first sitting period of the Fifth Parliament, from 12 February to 10 April 1866, contains the following preface dated 11 April:

As a preface to the first volume of “Parliamentary Debates” (new series), it is not inappropriate to state that prior to the Fifth Parliament of Victoria the newspapers of the day virtually supplied the only records of the debates of the Legislature.

With the commencement of the Fifth Parliament, however, an independent report was furnished by a special staff of reporters, and issued in weekly parts.

This volume contains the complete reports of the proceedings of both Houses during the past session.

In 2016 the Hansard Unit of the Department of Parliamentary Services continues the work begun 150 years ago of providing an accurate and complete report of the proceedings of both houses of the Victorian Parliament.

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry (to 22 May 2016)

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Education	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Employment	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Industry, and Minister for Energy and Resources	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. J. F. Garrett, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Training and Skills	The Hon. S. R. Herbert, MLC
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Police and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
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
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Kairouz, MP

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Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, 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 ²	Polwarth	LP
Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Naphthine, Dr Denis Vincent ³	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
Britnell, Ms Roma ¹	South-West Coast	LP	Noonan, Mr Wade Matthew	Williamstown	ALP
Brooks, Mr Colin William	Bundoora	ALP	Northe, Mr Russell John	Morwell	Nats
Bull, Mr Joshua Michael	Sunbury	ALP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ⁴	Gippsland South	Nats
Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
Burgess, Mr Neale Ronald	Hastings	LP	Pakula, Mr Martin Philip	Keysborough	ALP
Carbines, Mr Anthony Richard	Ivanhoe	ALP	Pallas, Mr Timothy Hugh	Werribee	ALP
Carroll, Mr Benjamin Alan	Niddrie	ALP	Paynter, Mr Brian Francis	Bass	LP
Clark, Mr Robert William	Box Hill	LP	Pearson, Mr Daniel James	Essendon	ALP
Couzens, Ms Christine Anne	Geelong	ALP	Perera, Mr Jude	Cranbourne	ALP
Crisp, Mr Peter Laurence	Mildura	Nats	Pesutto, Mr John	Hawthorn	LP
D' Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Richardson, Mr Timothy Noel	Mordialloc	ALP
Dimopoulos, Mr Stephen	Oakleigh	ALP	Richardson, Ms Fiona Catherine Alison	Northcote	ALP
Dixon, Mr Martin Francis	Nepean	LP	Riordan, Mr Richard ⁵	Polwarth	LP
Donnellan, Mr Luke Anthony	Narre Warren North	ALP	Ryall, Ms Deanne Sharon	Ringwood	LP
Edbrooke, Mr Paul Andrew	Frankston	ALP	Ryan, Mr Peter Julian ⁶	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

¹Elected 31 October 2015

²Resigned 3 September 2015

³Resigned 3 September 2015

⁴Elected 14 March 2015

⁵Elected 31 October 2015

⁶Resigned 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, Mr Clark, 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 Elasmr 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 Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto. (*Council*): Ms Bath and 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.

5 May to 26 May 2016

Caulfield electorate**Question 6798**

Question asked by: Member for Caulfield
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 23 February 2016

REPLY:

As the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation told the House of Assembly on 10 December 2015, the government has introduced a Bill to improve the operation of rooming houses by implementing a licensing scheme for rooming house operators. The Rooming House Operators Bill 2015 also introduces various other measures aimed at fostering professionalism and holding rooming house operators to account for their conduct and the conduct of persons involved in the management or operation of their rooming houses, as well as protecting the rights of rooming house residents.

Your question also referred to the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 applying to the operators of rooming houses and backpacker hostels. Local government enforces the relevant requirements under that legislation. The Department of Health and Human Services has notified the City of Glen Eira about the issues raised by your constituents. The Department will continue to liaise with the council regarding this matter.

Niddrie electorate**Question 6814**

Question asked by: Member for Niddrie
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 24 February 2016

REPLY:

The \$10.9 billion Melbourne Metro is a project for all Victorians, expanding the rail network, increasing capacity and connecting our rail system to some of the State's key medical, education and commercial precincts for the first time.

Upon completion of Melbourne Metro, commuters on the Craigieburn line will enjoy more frequent and reliable services.

Melbourne Metro creates a new dedicated pathway through the heart of the city for two of our busiest rail lines — Cranbourne/Pakenham and Sunbury — thereby freeing up space in the congested City Loop for more Craigieburn line services.

From the first day of Melbourne Metro operations, an additional 39 000 passengers will be able to travel on Melbourne's rail network during each peak period.

Around 27 000 of the extra 39 000 passengers will be accommodated on the Craigieburn, Upfield, Frankston, Sandringham, and Werribee lines.

Melbourne electorate**Question 6835**

Question asked by: Member for Melbourne
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 25 February 2016

REPLY:

The 2016-17 Budget delivers the largest ever investment in Victorian school infrastructure, allocating \$1.1 billion to build, upgrade and maintain schools across the state. To deal with this major new investment, combined with our investment in the 15/16 budget which was also historic, \$730 million, we have created a new Victorian School Building Authority.

Victoria is experiencing unprecedented population which is leading to overcrowding at existing schools. It is anticipated that the total school age population (5-17) in Victoria will increase by over 90 000 student enrolments between 2016 and 2021.

Many schools across Victoria are facing enrolment pressures. This pressure is being experienced in the regions, across our growth areas, and as you are well aware, across the inner city.

The latest budget including funding to buy land, build or complete 23 new schools. This additional funding means that 42 new school projects are now in the pipeline which will come online in the next few years.

The Government is delivering on its commitment to undertake a school provision review in Docklands and the immediate surrounding suburbs of North Melbourne, West Melbourne, Melbourne, Parkville and Flemington. Stage One of the school provision review in Docklands is now complete. Stage One of the review found that more capacity will be needed by 2031 to meet the expected increase in demand for Government primary and secondary school places.

Stage One of the review assessed the level of need generated from the Docklands community for primary and secondary school education. As part of Stage One, the Department undertook community consultation to explore local issues and perspectives.

Stage Two of the review is underway and will look at options to better meet the needs of the Docklands residents. This will involve further consultation with the community and key stakeholders. This review will contribute to our decision making on school provision across the inner city into the future.

Ovens Valley electorate**Question 6906**

Question asked by: Member for Ovens Valley
Directed to: Attorney-General
Asked on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

I recognise the level of concern expressed by the people that marched in Wangaratta recently and the tragic loss of life in these cases. I am unable to comment on any aspect of these two cases as they are currently before the courts and the criminal process must operate independently of government.

There are a number of recent initiatives that the Victorian Government has introduced to reform aspects of the justice system.

The Government recently passed the Bail Amendment Act 2016. The Act:

- requires that people charged with terrorism-related offences be refused bail unless there are exceptional circumstances, and allows consideration of public expressions of support for terrorism to be taken into account in assessing the risk of releasing an accused on bail;
- doubles the maximum penalty for ‘failure to appear’ to two years; and
- adds people charged with serious offences who have been convicted of failing to appear in the last five years to the ‘show cause’ bail category.

Following a Court of Appeal decision in November 2015 to strike down baseline sentencing, I asked the Sentencing Advisory Council for advice on the most effective legislative mechanism to provide sentencing guidance to the courts in a way that promotes consistency of approach in sentencing offenders and promotes public confidence in the criminal justice system. The Council has now provided its report, which is being carefully considered by the Government.

In addition, the parole system has undergone significant change, following the Review into the Parole System in Victoria by former High Court Justice, the Hon Ian Callinan AC. In April 2015, the Government announced three new reforms arising out of the report.

- No violent or sexual offender can be granted parole who has not undertaken the required prison programs and behaved satisfactorily for at least the second half of that person’s time in prison;
- The introduction of a new dedicated stream of more experienced officers to exclusively manage parolees; and
- That the Adult Parole Board now treat the expiration of a non-parole period as a target date only and take into account all relevant material before parole is granted.

The Government will continue to monitor the operation of sentencing and criminal laws and adopt an evidence-based approach when considering whether further reform is necessary.

Yuroke electorate

Question 6909

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 8 March 2016

REPLY:

The \$10.9 billion Melbourne Metro is a project for all Victorians, expanding the rail network, increasing capacity and connecting our rail system to some of the state’s key medical, education and commercial precincts for the first time.

Upon completion of Melbourne Metro, commuters on the Craigieburn line will enjoy more frequent and reliable services.

Melbourne Metro creates a new dedicated pathway through the heart of the city for two of our busiest rail lines—Cranbourne/Pakenham and Sunbury—thereby freeing up space in the congested City Loop for more Craigieburn line services.

From the first day of Melbourne Metro operations, an additional 39 000 passengers will be able to travel on Melbourne’s rail network during each peak period.

Around 27 000 of the extra 39 000 passengers will be accommodated on the Craigieburn, Upfield, Frankston, Sandringham, and Werribee lines.

Sandringham electorate**Question 6964**

Question asked by: Member for Sandringham
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Government is removing 11 level crossings on the Frankston line. The former Liberal Government did not remove any crossings on the Frankston line.

When the Government committed to removing the level crossings before the election there were no solutions determined for any sites. The Government has established the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) to undertake the necessary investigations, engineering, design and consultation to determine the best solution for each site.

The Authority is consulting with local residents, traders and special interest groups along the Frankston line throughout this year.

The first round of community consultation is underway. Nine community drop-in sessions have been held, there have been 10 pop-ups at stations and shopping centres, traders in each area have been spoken with individually, as have special interest groups.

Geelong electorate**Question 6965**

Question asked by: Member for Geelong
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 9 March 2016

REPLY:

The 2014-15 Commonwealth Budget announced significant changes to public hospital funding arrangements under the National Health Reform Agreement, including cessation of funding guarantees, and revising indexation arrangements from 1 July 2017 (achieving savings to the Commonwealth of \$1.8 billion nationally over four years from 2014-15).

On 1 April 2016, the Council of Australian Governments signed a Heads of Agreement which substantially rolls over existing National Health Reform Agreement arrangements from 2017-18 to 2019-20, and commits to deliver reforms designed to improve health outcomes for patients and decrease avoidable demand for public hospital services.

The Agreement struck was that from 2017-18 to 2019-20, Commonwealth funding growth for public hospitals is to be capped at 6.5 per cent annually and the Commonwealth contribution to efficient growth funding will remain at 45 per cent.

Modelling suggests the new agreement will provide substantially more funding for Victorian public hospital services over the life of the agreement (2017-18 to 2019-20) compared to what would have been received as a result of the 2014-15 Budget cuts.

However, the new deal does not completely reverse the 2014-15 cuts as the maximum funding Victoria could receive from the Commonwealth is still significantly less than what Victoria could have received under the original Health Reform Agreement, for the same period.

Further to these cuts, the acting Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool has advised the Commonwealth Treasurer to reduce Commonwealth funding for public hospitals in Victoria by an additional \$73.2 million in 2015-16 and \$36.6 million ongoing from 2016-17. This is due to the Administrator overturning a previous decision

to exclude activity funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Public Hospital Services in growth calculations for Victoria.

The proposed reduction will impact all Metro and Rural Health Services but not Small Rural Hospitals.

The Department of Health and Human Services is still currently working with the Commonwealth Health Department, Treasurer and the Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool to resolve this issue.

Recent modelling undertaken by the Department shows that following all of the funding decisions made by the Commonwealth Liberal Government since its election in 2013, Victorian hospitals will be \$15.4 billion worse off over the next 10 years. These cuts are severe and will have a huge impact on the capacity of hospitals to meet the pressing health care needs of their communities.

In contrast to the Liberal's cuts, the Andrews Labor Government have invested a further \$1.3 billion as part of the 2016-17 Victorian budget for acute health services over the next 4 years. This funding will be distributed to health services across Victoria, including Barwon Health, to ensure service levels are maintained and improved.

Croydon electorate

Question 6997

Question asked by: Member for Croydon
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that the land was acquired in the 1970s for the purpose of the Healesville Freeway project. The land is predominantly vacant and has a mixture of residential and public use zonings.

A strategic study of the Healesville Freeway was completed by VicRoads in 2009. The outcome of the study was that the subject land would be retained for future road purposes.

Accordingly, VicRoads advises me that it is not undertaking, nor is aware of any proposals to rezone or develop the subject land.

Narre Warren South electorate

Question 6998

Question asked by: Member for Narre Warren South
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

As you know, investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Andrews Labor Government, and I was very pleased to provide Berwick Fields Primary School with \$100 000 for their Eco Cubby. I am advised that a Department of Education and Training representative has been working with the school since 2015 to finalise the proposal for the cubby (prepared by the school's architect).

The Department has advised me that full documentation for submission is nearly complete. Once this has been received and reviewed, the project will be tendered and construction will commence.

I have asked the Department to work closely with the school to ensure the successful delivery of this exciting and innovative project.

Caulfield electorate**Question 7001**

Question asked by: Member for Caulfield
Directed to: Acting Minister for Police
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on our promise to give police the resources and the powers they need to fight crime and keep the Victorian community safe. The 2016–17 State Budget included an investment of \$661.3 million to give Victoria Police the necessary resources to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This includes \$19.4 million of new funding to continue and expand the Community Crime Prevention Program.

An extra 300 frontline general duties police will be deployed across Victoria. The Chief Commissioner has indicated that deployment will focus on responding to local crime issues in growth corridors and other areas of greatest need, to be determined in consultation with The Police Association. A further 106 specialist police officers and 52 support personnel will be recruited and trained for specialist areas like the Public Order Response Team, Special Operations Group, forensics and fingerprint unit. This brings the total number of new police personnel funded by the Andrews Government since it came to office to 1156.

We are making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget will be fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline.

An independent police force is best placed to determine where, when and how police are deployed. The Police Act 2013 gives the Chief Commissioner of Police the autonomy to make these crucial decisions. The Chief Commissioner has made it clear that the resources of Victoria Police will be deployed to where they are needed — on the frontline tackling important issues such as gang-crime, family violence and responding to emerging threats. The Chief Commissioner has also said police stations play an important role in policing and they will continue to do so. But officers in a car on the road can respond to incidents much quicker than if they are back at the station, and in policing, minutes can save lives.

The Glen Eira community continues to receive a 24 hour police response from across the Glen Eira Police Service Area. Police are proactively engaging with the community and actively patrolling the local area.

Targeted policing activities, led by local intelligence, have been focused on specific persons and locations. I am advised that this process has proven highly successful in the disruption of criminal activity in the Glen Eira Police Service Area, resulting in a substantial increase in the apprehension and processing of offenders in 2015.

There has been an increased focus on drug enforcement within the Glen Eira Police Service Area with protracted investigations by local units. The crime category of theft accounts for over half the increase in crime, with theft from and of motor vehicles the main contributor to the increase in offences. Theft from motor vehicles is primarily about theft of tools, in particular power tools.

Community engagement activities include the recent Operation Calamity display focused on prevention of theft from motor vehicles. Police are reinforcing the importance of crime prevention by owners to ensure vehicles are locked and property removed, as at least half of the members of the local community that were victims of property crime could easily have taken steps to prevent this occurring.

Sandringham electorate**Question 7003**

Question asked by: Member for Sandringham
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 22 March 2016

REPLY:

Under the four Coalition state budgets, from 2011-12 to 2014-15, a mere \$6.3 million was provided in school infrastructure funding to schools in the Sandringham electorate.

In our first two budgets, the Andrews Labor Government has already provided \$22 million in school infrastructure funding to schools in the Sandringham electorate.

In the 2015-16 Andrew Labor Government budget we provided \$2 million for Sandringham College and \$6.5 million for a new stand-alone secondary school at the former Beaumaris campus of Sandringham College. In the 2016-17 Andrew Labor Government budget we provided a further \$13.5 million for the new stand-alone secondary school in Beaumaris.

In addition, I am pleased to announce that Sandringham East Primary School will share in \$12 million of planning funding that has been allocated to 35 schools across the State in the 2016-17 State Budget. This funding will allow the school to work with the Department to further plan its capital projects, ensuring works can commence immediately when further funding is provided in a future State Budget.

Investment in education and school infrastructure continues to be a priority for the Andrews Labor Government. Labor's first two budgets are addressing the future education needs of our state through an unprecedented \$1.8 billion package to build, upgrade and maintain school infrastructure across the state, ensuring that every community has access to a great local school, and every child gets the chance to succeed.

The Victorian School Building Authority will be established to deliver this construction boom that will not just benefit students, but also create jobs for construction workers and local tradies.

Labor has invested \$730 million in 2015-16 and \$1.1 billion in 2016-17 in school infrastructure. Labor is investing more to build our government schools in 2 years, than the Liberals did in 4 years.

This record funding boost to school infrastructure is repairing the damage done by four years of chronic under-investment by the previous government.

School infrastructure funding fell under the Baillieu/Napthine Government reign to a mere \$200 million a year.

Essendon electorate**Question 7017**

Question asked by: Member for Essendon
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 23 March 2016

REPLY:

The State Government has committed \$20 million to identify available rail land to deliver new commuter car parking spaces.

Public Transport Victoria and VicTrack are currently finalising a review of landholdings across Melbourne and country Victoria to identify underutilised rail land that could be converted to make available free commuter parking.

This commitment, combined with the construction of new station car park spaces under Public Transport Victoria's Station Car Park Upgrade projects, will deliver a greater number of free commuter car parking spaces for more Victorians.

Malvern electorate

Question 7028

Question asked by: Member for Malvern
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

The former Liberal Government, for which the member for Malvern served as Treasurer, did not remove any level crossing in the seat of Malvern. In contrast the Andrews Labor Government has already removed the level crossing at Burke road in Glen Iris as the first removed under our plan to remove 50 of the worst level crossings in Victoria.

The level crossing at Toorak Road in Kooyong is included in the list of 50 that Victorians voted for at the last election. At that election the Liberal Party decided to not make a commitment to remove the Toorak road level crossing.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) have been conducting preliminary works in the Toorak Road, Kooyong level crossing area, specifically assessing its geography, ground conditions, nearby infrastructure, traffic movements and the location of services such as gas, water and electricity. Significant planning still needs to be undertaken for the Toorak Road, Kooyong project to assist in developing a design.

Lowan electorate

Question 7030

Question asked by: Member for Lowan
Directed to: Acting Minister for Police
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

I am advised that:

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

Murtoa police station has been announced as a one of seven police stations that will be replaced in a \$36.8 million package for regional areas in the recent 2016-17 Victorian Budget. This package also includes funding to upgrade a further 15 police stations and 10 police residences.

Replacing Murtoa Police Station will support effective offender processing. The new station will mean offenders can be held and processed in Murtoa, rather than requiring transportation to the nearest police station in Horsham (29 km from Murtoa). This will enhance police response capability for the local Murtoa community.

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on our promise to give police the resources and the powers they need to fight crime and keep the Victorian community safe. The 2016-17 State Budget included an investment of \$661.3 million to give Victoria Police the necessary resources to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence.

An extra 300 frontline general duties police will be deployed across Victoria. The Chief Commissioner has indicated that deployment will focus on responding to local crime issues in growth corridors and other areas of greatest need, to be determined in consultation with The Police Association. A further 106 specialist police officers and 52 support personnel will be recruited and trained for specialist areas like the Public Order Response Team,

Special Operations Group, forensics and fingerprint unit. This brings the total number of new police personnel funded by the Andrews Government since it came to office to 1156.

We are making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The Government is also investing \$148.6 million over four years to free up police to undertake frontline duties protecting our community where they are needed. This will occur by recruiting, training and deploying custody officers to supervise prisoners at around 22 police stations across Victoria, including Horsham Police Station.

The government is supporting rural and regional communities across Victoria. In the 2015–16 State Budget, the government invested \$11.5 million to deliver on its commitment for a new encrypted digital radio network and new radios in regional areas. The upgrade will enable police working in regional areas to communicate more securely, preventing members of the public listening in on police communications, as could occur with the use of analogue radios.

The community safety package will ensure police officers stationed in regional areas have secure and modern facilities and equipment.

Yuroke electorate

Question 7031

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government's Interface Growth Fund supplementary round is contributing \$600 000 towards the development of a fully inclusive play space at Craigieburn Park. This accessible facility will cater to families with children of all abilities and will feature slides, tunnels, swings, bridges, climbing ropes, and an all-abilities carousel.

This funding is in addition to the \$500 000 contributed towards the Annadale Interim Community Facility. The Annadale Interim Community Facility will include a pre-school room, maternal and child health room, kitchen, multi purpose community meeting space, and staff resource area.

Residents of the Yuroke electorate will also benefit from the nearby John Ilhan Reserve Development Stage 2. The Victorian Government's Interface Growth Fund is contributing \$500 000 towards this project which will incorporate a multi-purpose meeting space with an enhanced community-use component, upgraded change facilities, storage, office space, sports lighting, car parking and landscaping.

Through the Interface Growth Fund, the Victorian Government is helping outer-suburban communities build local infrastructure that is vital for a growing community to thrive into the future.

Hawthorn electorate

Question 7032

Question asked by: Member for Hawthorn
Directed to: Acting Minister for Police
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on our promise to give police the resources and the powers they need to fight crime and keep the Victorian community safe. The 2016–17 State Budget included an investment of \$661.3 million to give Victoria Police the necessary resources to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This includes \$19.4 million of new funding to continue and expand the Community Crime Prevention Program.

An extra 300 frontline general duties police will be deployed across Victoria. The Chief Commissioner has indicated that deployment will focus on responding to local crime issues in growth corridors and other areas of greatest need, to be determined in consultation with The Police Association. A further 106 specialist police officers and 52 support personnel will be recruited and trained for specialist areas like the Public Order Response Team, Special Operations Group, forensics and fingerprint unit. This brings the total number of new police personnel funded by the Andrews Government since it came to office to 1156.

We are making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget will be fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline.

An independent police force is best placed to determine where, when and how police are deployed. The Victoria Police Act 2013 gives the Chief Commissioner of Police the autonomy to make these crucial decisions. The Chief Commissioner has made it clear that the resources of Victoria Police will be deployed to where they are needed — on the frontline tackling important issues such as gang-crime, family violence and responding to emerging threats. The Chief Commissioner has also said police stations play an important role in policing and they will continue to do so. But officers in a car on the road can respond to incidents much quicker than if they are back at the station, and in policing, minutes can save lives.

The Boroondara community continues to receive a 24 hour police response from across the Boroondara Police Service Area. Police are proactively engaging with the community and patrolling the local area.

I am informed that police in the Boroondara area are targeting local issues such as public order and liquor licensing, assaults, burglaries and theft from motor vehicles. Police are focusing on education and crime prevention by working with the local council, community groups, business, schools, venue operators and in utilising Facebook and Eyewatch.

The increase in crimes against the person within the Boroondara police service area, is driven by an increase in assault related offences. Family violence related assaults continues to be a contributing factor.

Local Command has advised that the establishment of the Family Violence Unit in Eastern Region Division 1, offers significant support to police officers when assessing family violence incidents. Police believe that continued increases in recorded family violence and sexual assault offences indicates increased confidence within the community to report these crimes to police.

Community engagement activities such as the Boroondara Liquor Accord, and targeted police operations focussing on entertainment precincts and licensed premises in and around Hawthorn, have assisted in reducing assaults in these areas.

Victoria Police has advised that the slight increase in non-family violence related assaults can largely be attributed to the increase in assaults occurring in residential areas, by parties that are known to each other, and road rage related assaults.

South Barwon electorate**Question 7036**

Question asked by: Member for South Barwon
Directed to: Acting Minister for Police
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on our promise to give police the resources and the powers they need to fight crime and keep the Victorian community safe. The 2016–17 State Budget included an investment of \$661.3 million to give Victoria Police the necessary resources to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This is in addition to our commitment in the 2015–16 State Budget of \$7.8 million over four years to provide for 15 new police to be stationed in the growing areas of Bellarine and Geelong.

An extra 300 frontline general duties police will be deployed across Victoria. The Chief Commissioner has indicated that deployment will focus on responding to local crime issues in growth corridors and other areas of greatest need, to be determined in consultation with The Police Association. A further 106 specialist police officers and 52 support personnel will be recruited and trained for specialist areas like the Public Order Response Team, Special Operations Group, forensics and fingerprint unit. This brings the total number of new police personnel funded by the Andrews Government since it came to office to 1156.

We are making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The Government is also investing \$148.6 million over four years to free up police to undertake frontline duties protecting our community where they are needed. This will occur by recruiting, training and deploying custody officers to supervise prisoners at around 22 police stations across Victoria, including Geelong Police Station.

An independent police force is best placed to determine where, when and how police are deployed. The Victoria Police Act 2013 gives the Chief Commissioner of Police the autonomy to make these crucial decisions. The Chief Commissioner has made it clear that the resources of Victoria Police will be deployed to where they are needed — on the frontline tackling important issues such as gang-crime, family violence and responding to emerging threats. The Chief Commissioner has also said police stations play an important role in policing and they will continue to do so. But officers in a car on the road can respond to incidents much quicker than if they are back at the station, and in policing, minutes can save lives.

The residents of Geelong, the Bellarine Peninsula and the Surf Coast Police Service areas, continue to receive a 24-hour police response from across the police service areas.

Victoria Police has advised that, due to the need for police officers at the Geelong Court Complex, two extra police positions have been created in Geelong. Victoria Police has further advised that the police officers freed up by the deployment of PCOs to Geelong, have not been rostered to court security.

The Andrews Government is investing \$58.1 million in court safety and security upgrades with more than 70 additional security officers employed, providing a security presence at every court across the state.

I am advised that the significant increase in property and deception offences in the Geelong Police Service Area, is attributed to two incidents. One where an offender was charged with over 100 deception and theft offences and another where two offenders were charged with over 300 deception offences.

I am also informed that increased crime in Queenscliff, also within the Geelong Police Service Area, can be attributed to the rise in property and deception offences. Victoria Police advised that these increases are a result of increased community confidence in reporting property damage and graffiti offences: Victoria Police has also advised that increases in theft offences can be attributed to one offender being charged with multiple thefts from motor vehicles.

The Surf Coast's Local Area Commander holds quarterly meetings with representatives of the local council. These meetings enable Victoria Police and the Surf Coast Shire to discuss local crime issues in the area, as well as provide opportunities for collaboration.

Victoria Police also advises that the roster at the Torquay Police Station was expanded to include a night shift, approximately eight months ago. This has allowed local police to identify areas of concern and increase patrols in these locations.

I am informed that increased reporting of graffiti offences and a targeted police operation has contributed to the rise in property offences. Victoria Police has also advised that increases in theft offences can be attributed to one offender being charged with multiple thefts.

Macedon electorate

Question 7037

Question asked by: Member for Macedon
Directed to: Minister for Energy and Resources
Asked on: 24 March 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting renewable energy and we believe that renewable energy community projects can play a bigger role in delivering Victoria's energy supplies.

In early 2015, the Government provided the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group with \$100 000 to support the installation of a 30 kilowatt solar farm at the Timber Mill in Woodend, Victoria. This project is a fantastic example of the State Government working together with local community to deliver great outcomes in the renewable energy field.

Late last year, the Government amended the General Exemption Order to provide Victorian energy consumers with an alternative way to access renewable energy. This means that customers can now access the benefit of solar panels via solar power purchase agreements, including those offered by community solar groups.

The Government has also produced a Guide to Community-Owned Renewable Energy for Victorians. This guide provides practical advice on critical commercial, technical, governance and regulatory aspects of renewable energy projects, including on identifying the right business model.

In 2016 the Government will release a Renewable Energy Action Plan. The Action Plan will contain number of initiatives to support communities developing renewable energy solutions. This includes actions to improve connection processes for distributed generation and to support new business models and applications.

Rowville electorate

Question 7073

Question asked by: Member for Rowville
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to preserving the great volunteer tradition of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and greatly respects and values the work of volunteers in our communities. Volunteers including CFA volunteers play a vital role in protecting the people of Victoria from all manner of disasters. The government recognises the importance of volunteering in building strong communities.

As at January 2016, the CFA Fire Appliance Fleet total was 2335, including tankers, pumpers and specialist vehicles that are both Authority and Brigade owned. The 2015-16 budget provides \$33.5 million for the purchase

of 70 new firefighting vehicles which includes 20 medium tankers, 40 heavy tankers and 10 medium pumpers. This exceeds our election commitment to provide 50 trucks in the first budget.

The CFA has responsibility for its own operational matters, including the delivery of fire appliances to its brigades whether they are volunteer only or career-staffed. However, I am advised that funding has not been reallocated to fund new pumpers at career-staffed brigades.

Mildura electorate

Question 7075

Question asked by: Member for Mildura
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

There are supply chain constraints other than rail infrastructure that affect the ability of freight trains to load, leave, unload and return to Merbein in 24 hours such as port interfaces, loading and unloading capability and capacity. As such 24 hour turnaround capability was not investigated as part of the business case for the Murray Basin Rail Upgrade.

The funding has been provided by the federal and state governments of up to \$220 million each on a dollar-for-dollar basis rather than as a capital appropriation. As such there are no excess funds of \$24 million available to direct towards other projects.

Yuroke electorate

Question 7076

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

I understand that staff from the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship met with the Hume Interfaith Network and informed them about the following four grant programs:

- Multicultural Festivals and Events 2016-17
- Capacity Building and Participation Program 2016-17
- Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts Program 2016-17
- Community Harmony Program.

I also understand the Hume Interfaith Network was encouraged to submit an application.

The Community Resilience Grants are open for applications until 15 May 2016, and information on how to apply is available at www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants. Funding is available for projects that support and work with communities and young people to develop collaborative approaches to building resilience to hate and violent extremist narratives; and support and work with communities and young people at risk of violent extremism to develop their confidence and skills to advocate for their concerns and grievances through peaceful and democratic means.

Information about future multicultural funding rounds will be published at <http://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/grants>.

The Victorian Government will shortly be seeking new members for the Multicultural Youth Network. I encourage the youth ambassadors from the Hume Interfaith Network to submit an expression of interest to help us engage with and understand the views and needs of young Victorians from diverse backgrounds.

Prahran electorate

Question 7079

Question asked by: Member for Prahran
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure, and this has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$1.1 billion into school facilities in 2016-17 State Budget.

This commitment includes the delivery of a new Year 7-12 secondary school for the Prahran community. A further \$5 million has been allocated in this year's budget, making the total committed funds to date \$25 million.

Internationally renowned architects Gray Puksand were commissioned to design the new school. They conducted a detailed feasibility study and put forward two options — either a refurbishment or a rebuild — for consideration by both the Government and the New School Planning Group. Both options have been now considered, with existing facilities to be demolished and a new vertical school to be built. The architects will finalise designs over coming months. Enrolments will open in 2018 with students to begin school in 2019.

Delivery of a school in a high density inner city area requires an innovative approach to design. Prahran High School will be a vertical school that will support a new model of education for inner city children. Recreational facilities are important to the well-being of the students and are a fundamental consideration during further design development.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 7080

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Pascoe Vale for raising the important issue of parents in our community who, while raising their own child or children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, donate their time to support other families and young people facing similar challenges.

From 1 July 2016, the National Disability Insurance Scheme will begin to roll out across the state, with the NDIS assuming responsibility for the provision of supports to people with a disability, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families.

Victoria will continue to be responsible for delivering disability supports until the completion of the roll out. There a number of organisations that are funded to support people with autism. Services such as AMAZE, Autism Spectrum Australia, Autism Plus and Mansfield Autism Statewide Services provide a range of supports such as recreational and social activities for young people with autism spectrum disorders, individual support packages, facility based respite and information services.

In addition, a number of self-help groups could be eligible for Disability Self Help Grants administered by the Department of Health and Human Services. These grants target groups that focus on disabilities that are not related to age or mental illness, and provide mutual peer support and education programs to members, as well as community information about disability. The outcomes of the current self-help grants funding round will be announced shortly.

Polwarth electorate**Question 7081**

Question asked by: Member for Polwarth
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 12 April 2016

REPLY:

Mr Riordan does himself and his community a great disservice by playing politics with this serious issue, and by deliberately making misrepresentations such as his statements above.

The Andrews Labor Government has provided and is continuing to provide assistance to the communities affected by the Wye River fires. In January, the Andrews Labor Government's \$2.75 million assistance package announced in January to support the Wye River and Separation Creek communities.

This assistance package included a \$1 million Great Ocean Road Economic and Community Recovery Fund to support local projects, and \$400 000 for events, priority marketing and advertising that will help drive tourism and visitor activity in the region.

Many supported activities, such as the Lorne Sculpture Biennale, the Apollo Bay Seafood Festival and two fundraising events at the Wye River Surf Club, have already been held while others are underway.

In delivering this package, the Government has been working with key stakeholders including the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism Board and the Wye River-Separation Creek Community Resilience Committee to determine how best to support the region in the medium to long-term.

The Recovery Package also includes support for local small businesses through free business mentoring. Experienced mentors work directly with business owners to provide independent and specialist advice on steps for recovering their operations and rebounding from loss of trade. Mentors can also help businesses to build their resilience by planning and preparing for future emergencies. Some businesses from Wye River and surrounding areas have taken up the support offered through this initiative.

I would like to emphasise that free mentoring is still available and can be arranged by calling the Business Victoria Contact Centre on 13 22 15. The Government has also established a dedicated Wye River-Separation Creek community information portal and details about mentoring and other recovery activities can be found at www.wyeseconnect.info

The Government acknowledges that the Wye River-Jamieson Track fire had a huge impact on the local economy, and announced a further package of assistance on 7 May, including an additional \$190 000 for priority projects that further assist the recovery from last year's fire.

The Government is providing \$100 000 for the Wye River CFA, which will go towards funding an extension to the local CFA building and an equipment upgrade.

The Wye River Surf Life Saving Club will receive \$60 000 to fund repairs and an upgrade to facilities and equipment.

A further \$30 000 will go towards the immediate weed management works in the Wye River and Separation Creek areas, which has been identified as a key priority by the community as well as the government agencies that manage public land in the area.

Under the Commonwealth Government's Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) there are four categories of natural disaster assistance, categories A, B, C and D. It is the Commonwealth Government that sets the guidelines for each category of assistance. Details are available at www.disasterassist.gov.au/

Dandenong electorate**Question 7084**

Question asked by: Member for Dandenong
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 13 April 2016

REPLY:

As part of the 2016-17 Victorian State Budget, the Andrews Labor Government is investing an additional \$1.3 billion in hospital services, with a focus on elective surgery, emergency department access and performance and specialist clinics. This is to facilitate capacity improvement and also address additional activity across these programs.

As part of this, Monash Health has been allocated additional funding of \$3.45 million, brought forward into the 2015-16 financial year. This funding is for capital works to support elective surgery and to increase elective surgery activity at Monash Health. A portion of this funding will be used to open 10 new beds, expand the Short Stay Unit at Monash Medical Centre and to purchase new elective surgery equipment.

This funding will have an immediate impact allowing Monash Health to increase their elective surgery activity and to target longest waiting patients, to get the surgery they need sooner.

The increase in elective surgery admissions will mean the patients currently waiting the longest for surgeries will move off hospital elective surgery waiting lists sooner.

Additional funding to support activity for each specific health service in 2016-17 will be confirmed as part of the 2016-17 Policy and Funding Guidelines development process.

Eltham electorate**Question 7086**

Question asked by: Member for Eltham
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 13 April 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the vital contribution made by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) firefighters, including those volunteers and career firefighters of the Eltham CFA Brigade, who selflessly devote their time in keeping our communities safe from all manner of disasters.

Please be assured that I have noted the concerns raised by members of the CFA in your electorate. The Victorian Government is keen to finalise an enterprise agreement which is balanced, delivers good and fair outcomes for paid firefighters and enables us to continue to deliver a world class fire service to Victorians that keeps us all safe.

As I have stated publicly, the focus of the Victorian Government is ensuring that we reach an enterprise agreement with the United Fire Fighters Union that respects and values the great work of both our paid and volunteer firefighters.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Cranbourne electorate**Question 7088**

Question asked by: Member for Cranbourne
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 13 April 2016

REPLY:

The Casey Central PSP process is being undertaken by the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) via Amendment C189 to the Casey Planning Scheme.

I am advised that the one month exhibition of Amendment C189 ('the Amendment') closed on 7 December 2015 and that 11 submissions were received by the MPA. A Directions Hearing on the Amendment by Planning Panels Victoria (Panel) was held on 24 March 2016.

The MPA advised the Panel that all submissions were resolved prior to the Directions Hearing and consequently there were no requests from submitters to be heard by the Panel.

The Chair of the Panel directed the MPA to distribute complete versions of the revised and updated PSP to those who made submissions. The MPA expects the Panel report on the Amendment to be released in May 2016. This will enable the MPA to consider adopting the Amendment. If the Amendment is adopted it must be submitted to me for a decision on its approval.

Pascoe Vale electorate**Question 7090**

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 13 April 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to establishing Victoria as the Education State where every Victorian has an equal right to the knowledge and skills to shape their lives. Part of this work is to promote inclusive practices in schools so every school can better support all children and young people, including those with disabilities and special needs. The Victorian Government's Special Needs Plan for Victorian Schools (the Plan) is part of the commitment to establish Victoria as the Education State. The Plan is building inclusive schooling through nine initiatives which will strengthen and improve support for children and young people with a disability, including those with an ASD.

The Victorian Government has outlined its vision for inclusive school education in the Education State, with the publication of the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) Review (the Review) and the Government's Response, Inclusive education for all students with disabilities and additional needs. The PSD Review was the most comprehensive review of the PSD ever undertaken. The PSD Review was informed by research, expert input, stakeholder engagement, and a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of the program. The PSD Review and the Government's Response can be found at:
www.education.vic.gov.au/about/departments/Pages/inclusive-education-for-all.aspx.

The Government has immediately accepted 21 of the 25 recommendations made in the Review. The remaining four recommendations propose a new funding model. The Government acknowledges the potential merits of a new funding model and will carefully consider these recommendations in the context of other national and state-based reforms, which will also impact support systems for students with disabilities in the near future. These include the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS); ongoing negotiations with the Commonwealth Government regarding the Gonski funding agreement; the Government response to the Bracks Review into Government School Funding; the continued implementation of the Special Needs Plan and the broader reforms to the Victorian education system proposed through the Government's Education State agenda.

To support immediate work on the implementation of the recommendations, the Government has announced a \$22 million funding boost, which includes an extra \$17 million funding to better support the needs of students with autism, dyslexia and learning disabilities, \$3 million to provide support for students who are transitioning to Year 7 who are no longer eligible for the PSD, and \$2 million for a dyslexia and learning difficulties strategy. The extra \$17 million over two years will be used to support students who have learning challenges such as an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the PSD. This, extra funding will enable schools to put in place programs and strategies such as social skills groups, education support staff and speech pathologists in order to maximise the learning and wellbeing of children and young people with disabilities.

There are a range of supports to enable teachers to work more effectively with children with an ASD. The Department of Education and Training knows that all children, including those with ASD have unique strengths, interests and abilities and works to ensure that these are supported.

Since 2010, the Department of Education and Training has provided over 180 teachers with scholarships to undertake postgraduate studies in teaching students with an ASD, through the Autism Teaching Institute (ATI). Other professional learning for teachers in ASD has been provided by Aspect and Inclusion Online (which features a 10 week module on ASD). The Department's Autism Friendly Learning website hosts videos, fact sheets and templates for use by teachers, school leaders and families.

I have asked Mr Mark Tainsh, Director, Inclusion, Access and Participation, Early Childhood and School Education Group, Department of Education and Training to meet with Ms Katie Koullas, Founder, Yellow Ladybugs (and mother of Mia) to discuss her views on the needs of girls with an ASD.

Footscray electorate

Question 7103

Question asked by: Member for Footscray
Directed to: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Asked on: 14 April 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Labor Government is committed to women's equal representation, leadership and participation in the economic, social and civic life of the community. The 2016-17 State Budget has allocated \$9 million over two years to enhance equality for Victorian women.

In December 2015, the Government launched a consultation paper for Victoria's first Gender Equality Strategy. The strategy will guide actions and priorities for achieving women's economic, social and civic participation and help to create a more equal community that does not tolerate negative attitudes and behaviour towards women.

Submissions to the consultation paper formally closed on 18 March 2016, however, the submissions received have already provided valuable insight into how gender inequality impacts on women's health, wellbeing, safety and economic and social participation.

These key themes and issues emerging from the submissions will be used to guide the next phase of targeted consultations with Government departments, business and community groups. These consultations will be conducted over the months of May through to August 2016.

I encourage members of the Footscray community to contact my office in relation to further opportunities to contribute to the development of Victoria's Gender Equality Strategy.

Morwell electorate**Question 7104**

Question asked by: Member for Morwell
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 14 April 2016

REPLY:

The construction of the shared path between Traralgon and Morwell will be considered for funding under the Andrews Labor Government's Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund.

Essendon electorate**Question 7105**

Question asked by: Member for Essendon
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 14 April 2016

REPLY:

The ability of Moonee Ponds' water infrastructure to meet the demands of an increasing population is determined by rigorous analysis. City West Water has advised that there is adequate capacity within the network to supply the forecast growth in Moonee Ponds.

The condition of ageing assets is closely monitored with work undertaken to ensure infrastructure continues to meet community needs. This includes:

- Renewal of 3.2 km of a 100-year-old water main in Essendon and Moonee Ponds, scheduled for completion in October 2016.
- Construction of the Aberfeldie Stormwater Drainage Improvement project, a new 1.6 km stormwater drain to better protect properties from the impacts of flooding during heavy rainfall events.
- Works to reline sections of the 8.8 km Maribyrnong River Main will increase its service life by 50 or more years.

Furthermore, the Moonee Ponds Reliever Sewer project will improve the structural integrity of the sewer by relining 4 km of the pipeline.

City West Water is committed to ensuring that the community is kept well informed of current and future progress.

Future pressure on water infrastructure is also addressed through controlling proposed land development. Over 50 applications in Moonee Ponds were reviewed in 2014–15 to ensure growing communities do not increase flood risk and to help mitigate impacts on local waterways.

Burwood electorate**Question 7110**

Question asked by: Member for Burwood
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 14 April 2016

REPLY:

Thank you for your question of 14 April 2016 regarding the redevelopment of the Markham Estate in Ashburton. I appreciate your concerns and the concerns of your constituents about this project.

The provision of social housing and housing affordability are significant issues in the community which the Government would like to address. We need to respond to the needs of vulnerable Victorians by ensuring a supply of appropriate housing so that they can contribute to a vibrant local community and thrive.

As you note, plans for the Markham Estate redevelopment are not finalised, and will not be finalised until after the local community, Boroondara City Council and other stakeholders have been consulted.

I appreciate that the western boundary of the Markham Estate site interfaces with the rear of several properties fronting Ashburn Grove. Achieving a suitable interface to these residential properties will be a key issue to address through the planning process.

Broadmeadows electorate

Question 7111

Question asked by: Member for Broadmeadows
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 14 April 2016

REPLY:

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Andrews Labor Government, and this has been demonstrated through our 2016-17 State Budget allocation of \$1.1 billion to build, upgrade and maintain school infrastructure across the state. The Victorian School Building Authority will be established to deliver this construction boom that will not just benefit students, but also create jobs for construction workers and local tradies.

I am delighted to confirm that \$500 000 has been allocated to Dallas Brooks Community Primary School to complete and upgrade its outdoor spaces and undertake landscaping on the school site.

I have asked the Department of Education and Training to assist the school with the planning for this work, and to help it prepare for the upcoming capital works project.

Once Dallas Brooks Community Primary School receives its capital funding, the Department will work closely with the school to ensure the best outcome for the school community.

Mildura electorate

Question 7508

Question asked by: Member for Mildura
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 27 April 2016

REPLY:

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers, including those of the Mildura CFA Brigade play a paramount role in protecting Victoria from all manner of disasters. The Victorian Government greatly values and respects the work of volunteers in our communities.

I have stated publicly, the Victorian Government is making sure that we get an agreement with the United Fire Fighters Union which respects and values the great work, of both our paid and volunteer firefighters.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Evelyn electorate**Question 7510**

Question asked by: Member for Evelyn
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 27 April 2016

REPLY:

Helicopters must operate according to strict requirements determined by Airservices Australia as the Commonwealth authority responsible for ensuring compliance with airspace and aircraft noise regulations.

The planning system regulates heliports and other helicopter landing sites through Clause 52.15 of planning schemes. Planning Practice Note 75, *Planning requirements for heliports and helicopter landing sites*, has also been published to explain how helicopter activity is regulated in the planning system and to guide the preparation of planning permit applications to use or develop land for heliports and helicopter landing sites.

Victoria, along with member jurisdictions of the National Airports Safeguarding Advisory Group, sought a review of aircraft noise standards, which resulted in the publication of the revised *Australian Standard 2021-2015: Acoustics — Aircraft noise intrusion — building siting and construction* on 25 March 2015. The Standard is implemented in Victorian planning schemes which contain airport environs overlay controls. The Victorian Government is also awaiting the release of Standards Australia's new Handbook *SA HB 149: Acoustics — Guidance on producing information on aircraft noise* to help communicate and better understand aircraft noise, including helicopter noise.

A Fly Neighbourly Advice or Agreement (FNA) is a voluntary code of practice which can be used by helicopter operators to minimise their noise impact on surrounding communities. FNAs are usually established by agreement between aircraft operators, the community and other authorities including local councils. I would encourage your constituents and tourism related helicopter operators to make use of FNAs as a means of balancing the requirements of helicopter operations with the need to maintain the Yarra Valley's unique appeal.

Further information regarding FNAs can be found on the Civil Aviation Safety Authority's website at www.casa.gov.au/standard-page/fly-neighbourly-advice.

Essendon electorate**Question 7511**

Question asked by: Member for Essendon
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 27 April 2016

REPLY:

The CityLink Tulla Widening project is committed to minimising the impact of construction works on the natural environment wherever possible. As part of these essential works, it has been necessary to clear vegetation along the freeway corridor in preparation for major construction works to begin.

In this case, vegetation has been removed to build the new inbound exit ramp and separated road to Bell Street. The new two-lane road will run parallel to the freeway from the Calder/Tullamarine interchange to Bell Street. This development will improve traffic flow and safety by separating Bell Street traffic from general freeway traffic. Separated roads like this help achieve a higher level of safety and reliability on the freeway by reducing weaving and merging, while also allowing freeway traffic to flow freely without interruption from exiting traffic.

The CityLink Tulla Widening project recognises the importance of the local environment and we are committed to delivering the project in an environmentally responsible manner. A detailed landscape plan is being developed that will see approximately 150 000 new shrubs and trees planted as part of the CityLink Tulla Widening reinstatement works along the corridor.

Rowville electorate**Question 7521**

Question asked by: Member for Rowville
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 3 May 2016

REPLY:

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers, including those of the Rowville and Scoresby CFA Brigades play a vital role in protecting Victoria from all manner of disasters. The Victorian Government greatly values and respects the work of volunteers in our communities.

Please be assured that I have noted the concerns raised by members of the CFA in your electorate. As I have stated publicly, the focus of the Victorian Government is ensuring that we reach an enterprise agreement with the United Fire Fighters Union that respects and values the great work of both our paid and volunteer firefighters.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Ringwood electorate**Question 7525**

Question asked by: Member for Ringwood
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 3 May 2016

REPLY:

Introducing half price car registration for apprentices who need a car for their work was an election commitment. The commitment specified that bricklayers, carpenters, joiners, electricians and plumbers would be eligible, as well as select apprenticeships outside these trades. When the discount was implemented it was broadened to other construction trades, including apprentice painters, plasterers, glaziers, roof tilers, and wall and floor tilers. Apprentices in the Certificate III in Landscape Construction are not currently eligible under the scheme. The registration discount will be reviewed by the Department of Education and Training, in consultation with VicRoads, in July 2016. The review will include, subject to financial assessment, consideration of whether the discount should be broadened to further trades, such as Landscape Construction.

Forest Hill electorate**Question 7529**

Question asked by: Member for Forest Hill
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 3 May 2016

REPLY:

I can assure the Honourable Member that the welfare of students is our highest priority, and parents can be confident that their children are being educated in facilities whose safety is regularly monitored.

The 2015-16 State Budget provided \$42 million to extend and complete the asbestos audit program, demolish 780 relocatable classrooms with high amounts of asbestos and replace 200 of these classrooms, ensuring school capacity is not affected.

The 2016-17 Budget continues to progress the Government's commitment to removing asbestos from all government schools by providing \$28 million to increase the removal of asbestos in schools, informed by the asbestos audit. This brings the total additional funding provided by the Government for asbestos removal in schools to \$70 million.

On 31 March 2016, the most thorough asbestos audit of schools in Victoria's history was completed. This audit has identified where asbestos is, the risk it poses, and how best to manage it until it can be removed. In a major achievement, the Government has now removed all identified high risk (A1 and A2 rated) asbestos from Victorian government schools, and a total of 1712 school campuses had individual asbestos audits completed and all identified 'high risk' asbestos has been removed.

In the asbestos audit undertaken of Vermont Primary School in June 2015, no high-risk asbestos was identified.

The Department of Education and Training oversees a comprehensive Asbestos Management Program for all government schools. This includes the emergency removal of all high-risk material as identified, the provision of expert advice via a 24-hour hotline, and training for school staff to ensure that they are equipped to identify and monitor potential hazards. If a school has concerns about the condition of asbestos, it should the Department's asbestos program manager, for immediate and professional support.

South-West Coast electorate

Question 7539

Question asked by: Member for South-West Coast
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 4 May 2016

REPLY:

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers, including volunteers of the CFA brigades in the South-West Coast, play a vital role in protecting Victoria from all manner of disasters. The Victorian Government greatly values and respects the work of volunteers in our communities.

Please be assured that I have noted the concerns raised by members of the CFA in your electorate. As I have stated publicly, the focus of the Victorian Government is ensuring that we reach an enterprise agreement with the United Firefighters Union that respects and values the great work of both our paid and volunteer firefighters.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Burwood electorate

Question 7541

Question asked by: Member for Burwood
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 4 May 2016

REPLY:

Investment in education and school infrastructure continues to be a priority for the Victorian Government. This has been demonstrated through the Government's 2016-17 State Budget allocation of \$1.1 billion to build, upgrade and maintain school infrastructure across the state, ensuring that every child has access to a great local school, and gets the chance to succeed.

Understandably, State Budget constraints do not allow for all school building projects to be immediately funded, and the needs of all government schools must be balanced and prioritised accordingly. I am advised that the Department of Education and Training has recently been in contact with the Ashwood School Principal, Ms Heather Hatherly, OAM, to discuss the school's use of a nearby site for teaching purposes. I understand the school vacated the room it occupied in the Storage King Warehouse in January 2016 at the request of the owner, and have been able to accommodate these students in other classrooms on the school site. I was fascinated to learn about the school's history with this warehouse, which I understand was utilised to teach industrial sewing classes, allowing the students to make chair bags. Ms Hatherly and her staff are clearly extremely committed to their students and it is humbling to hear of such dedication in Victoria's schools.

Please assure Ms Hatherly and the wider Ashwood School community that the Government will continue to use all available data, including condition assessments and pre-existing project plans, when allocating funding in future State Budgets. In the meantime, Ashwood will receive additional maintenance funding (through an increase in the Student Resource Package) to help address day to day maintenance issues at the school.

In addition, I have asked the Department to work with the school to ensure it has enough classroom space to accommodate the increasing enrolments.