

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

11 December 2015 to 11 February 2016

(Extract from book 1)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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

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
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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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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

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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
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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
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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
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D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Richardson, Mr Timothy Noel	Mordialloc	ALP
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Edwards, Ms Janice Maree	Bendigo West	ALP	Ryan, Ms Stephanie Maureen	Euroa	Nats
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Hibbins, Mr Samuel Peter	Prahran	Greens	Thomas, Ms Mary-Anne	Macedon	ALP
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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, 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.

11 December 2015 to 11 February 2016**Rowville electorate****Question 326**

Question asked by: Member for Rowville
Directed to: Minister for Police
Asked on: 23 June 2015

REPLY:

Thank you for your constituency question. I apologise for the delay in responding.

The Victorian Government is committed to a well-resourced police force, with a strong commitment to community engagement and policing. In May 2010, the Labor Government committed funding for an additional 1966 police to the frontline, which includes an increase of 58 police in the Eastern Region Division 2, which includes the Knox Police Service Area (PSA).

Since coming to office in November 2014, the Andrews Labor Government has funded almost 700 additional police personnel, reflecting the Government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe. Our continued investment in policing has seen a record \$2.5 billion budget for Victoria Police in 2015/16 to continue their important work.

The Government recently announced funding to nearly double Victoria Police's counter-terrorism investigative capacity. This new investment will fund 88 counter-terrorism specialists, including 40 dedicated sworn officers, as well as intelligence experts, forensic analysts, and equipment.

The Government is 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 400 custody officers to initially supervise prisoners at around 22 police stations across Victoria.

Under Victorian law, I cannot direct the Chief Commissioner about the allocation or deployment of police to or at particular locations in accordance with section 10 of the Victoria Police Act 2013.

As you would expect the Government works closely with the Chief Commissioner to ensure Victoria Police is appropriately resourced to tackle law and order issues facing the Victorian community, including family violence and the use of ice and other illicit drugs. These issues remain a key focus for Victoria Police.

I assure you that the residents of the Knox PSA will continue to receive a 24-hour police response which includes Rowville. If any person requires urgent police assistance, they should contact Victoria Police on the emergency number '000'. Calls made to '000' are processed and responded to by the closest appropriate police personnel.

I am advised by Victoria Police that significant work is undertaken to address family violence and drug related crime in the Knox PSA. Local police have arrested a substantial number of high-level drug traffickers since July 2015.

Police are working with a number of other government and non-government agencies who are all focussed on reducing family violence related crime. This joint approach has a strong focus on tackling drivers of family violence with a view to keeping victims safe and holding perpetrators to account. There is also a longer-term vision of changing behaviours through community education, in particular to address gender inequity. Better risk assessment to identify persons at risk and prevent escalation and re-occurrence of family violence is all part of the focus on improved community safety and to ensure that ongoing outcomes are achieved.

The Government will continue to consult with Victoria Police about overall police resourcing across the state. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner that the level of policing is continuously monitored by respective command officers, with a view to ensuring community safety.

Essendon electorate

Question 373

Question asked by: Member for Essendon
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government has committed \$20 million to improve car parks at stations across Victoria. As part of this, I have requested that PTV work with VicTrack to audit car parks and investigate opportunities to provide more car parks.

The audit of car parks is now underway. I look forward to working with the local member to identify what future improvements can be made to car parks in the electorate of Essendon in the future.

Mill Park electorate

Question 1091

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

REPLY:

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) completed construction of the temporary car park at South Morang station in December 2015, providing an additional 450 car parking spaces for local train users.

The opening of the car park has provided improved access to the many commuters who use the South Morang rail line every day.

Works involved constructing a crushed rock car park and installing designated walkways. Safety and amenity has also been improved for commuters with the installation of lighting, drainage, fencing and works.

Construction of the car park formalises the area of land that was previously being used by commuters.

The temporary gravel car park is planned for the next four years and will be reviewed upon operation of the Mernda Rail Extension, in 2019.

Mildura electorate

Question 1286

Question asked by: Member for Mildura
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

This matter does not fall within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. The Attorney-General is responsible for the autopsy service. I have referred this question to the Hon Martin Pakula MP for his response.

Melbourne electorate**Question 1290**

Question asked by: Member for Melbourne
Directed to: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Asked on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government believes that all Victorians have the right to safe, affordable and secure housing. The Andrews Government appreciates and understands the nature of the public housing high rise towers, the vulnerability of the people we work with, and the challenges of ensuring safety and security amongst these diverse communities.

The Department of Health & Human Service's housing workers are professional public servants who have dedicated their careers to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the people we house and care for. To claim that they routinely dismiss security and maintenance complaints without keeping records is a slur on hundreds of dedicated professionals.

The government manages 65 000 tenancies across Victoria, and consequently has a responsive and accessible complaints mechanism for residents of public housing who believe they were given an unsatisfactory service; did not receive enough information or choice; or were denied respect, dignity or privacy.

The mechanism involves three steps and is focussed on making every attempt to resolve the complaint at the local level. The first step to have the complaint resolved is to discuss the complaint with a staff member at the local office. Where this does not resolve the matter satisfactorily, the complaint is escalated to a senior manager at the local office. Where the complaint is not able to be resolved at the local level, the matter is referred to the dedicated complaints unit who take further steps to resolve the matter.

All concerns are taken seriously and provided due consideration. Tenants are provided with feedback and an update on their concerns which takes into account the privacy of all involved. The department can also provide assistance and support throughout the process of making a complaint, for example, arrange an interpreter to help with language services.

Public housing residents also have the option of taking a complaint to other organisations such as the Victorian Ombudsman or the Commissioner for Privacy and Data Protection.

Public housing residents who have concerns about maintenance contractors' service or quality of work, can direct complaints to the Housing Call Centre. If they are not satisfied with the outcome, they can lodge a formal complaint by contacting the central complaints unit on 1300 884 706 (cost of a local call). Residents can also seek advice from Consumer Affairs Victoria, other community service organisations or can apply for a matter to be heard at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal where there is a dispute between the landlord and tenant.

I will continue to engage directly with residents of Sutton St where issues arise to improve services, rather than engage with those who slag off housing workers to score cheap political points.

Dandenong electorate**Question 2848**

Question asked by: Member for Dandenong
Directed to: Minister for Employment
Asked on: 8 October 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government has an important role to play in providing labour market support to people who need it the most and who are often the hardest to reach.

On coming to Government, we inherited a small number of employment assistance programs, limited in scale, scope and geographic coverage, which is why I initiated a Review to ensure we are delivering the most effective and targeted support for vulnerable Victorians.

As part of this Review, we have consulted extensively with key stakeholders on how to improve employment support, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians. Consultation sessions were conducted across Victoria, including Dandenong where I was delighted to host with Ms Williams.

Findings from the Review will assist the Government to maximise job opportunities for Victorians who are disadvantaged in the labour market and help ensure investment in employment programs is effective.

I thank the Honourable Member for her question and look forward to working closely with her on how the Government can best support workers in Dandenong into the future.

Burwood electorate

Question 2853

Question asked by: Member for Burwood
Directed to: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Asked on: 8 October 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government believes that all Victorians have a right to safe, affordable, and secure housing and that a strong and sustainable social housing sector is critical to ensuring that all Victorians can own or rent housing that meets their needs.

The Markham Avenue Estate comprises 56 two bedroom units. The Department of Health & Human Services assessed the site and found that upgrading or renovating the homes was not viable and that redevelopment was the best option.

The 1950s buildings and infrastructure will be demolished, and new, modern, six star energy-rated homes with better accessibility will be built in their place. Both social and private housing will be built on the site with 10% more social housing built than was previously there.

The department is currently investigating redevelopment options for Markham Avenue to ensure the redevelopment delivers the best outcome for both the Ashburton and the Victorian community. To do this, the Victorian Government has committed to consulting the local community, City of Boroondara and other stakeholders as plans progress.

The financial return generated by the Victorian Government from the redevelopment will be reinvested to provide more social housing for disadvantaged Victorians in need.

The scaremongering of the Member for Burwood is beyond hysterical levels. There will be consultation with the local community and council as plans progress.

The Member if he was passionate about Markham, should have done something about it in his four years in government.

Warrandyte electorate

Question 3673

Question asked by: Member for Warrandyte
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 20 October 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads participated in an Emergency Management Forum on 12 November 2015, which included guest speaker, Mr Craig Lapsley (Emergency Services Commissioner) and other speakers representing VicRoads and the local emergency service branches. The forum was jointly organised by the Warrandyte Community Association and the Municipal Emergency Officers of the Manningham and Nillumbik Councils.

The aim of the forum was to update the community on the traffic modelling, outline the findings of the recently completed report and seek community feedback on the report's findings.

Ovens Valley electorate

Question 3675

Question asked by: Member for Ovens Valley
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 20 October 2015

REPLY:

When the Andrews Labor Government was elected, all detailed reports and community feedback on the best route for the Yarrawonga-Mulwala Bridge crossing were fully examined and carefully considered.

In conjunction with the New South Wales Government, the Victorian Government wanted to ensure that the best possible decision was made in order to meet the needs of the Yarrawonga and Mulwala communities.

The Andrews Labor Government and the Baird Coalition Government have recently confirmed their preference for the grey route as the best option, in response to the transport needs of the communities of Yarrawonga and Mulwala.

Now that the community has some certainty from the two state governments about the preferred route, VicRoads and Roads and Maritime Services can proceed with the next stage of the planning process. VicRoads advises me that it will continue to seek the views of the community as it progresses with this phase of the project.

Brighton electorate

Question 3692

Question asked by: Member for Brighton
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 21 October 2015

REPLY:

The issue of speeding motorists is an enforcement matter for Victoria Police. VicRoads advises me that it has discussed your constituent's concern with Victoria Police and has requested that appropriate enforcement be undertaken in this area.

Rowville electorate**Question 3694**

Question asked by: Member for Rowville
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 21 October 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads' recent inspection of this site during the afternoon peak period found that motorists waiting to turn out of Koornang Road have a clear view of traffic travelling in both directions along Ferntree Gully Road. Vehicles turning right out of Koornang Road were able to find sufficient gaps in the traffic, particularly when traffic on Ferntree Gully Road was temporarily halted at the nearby traffic signals at Stud Road.

The configuration of the intersection is in accordance with the relevant design guidelines and is similar to many other intersections across Melbourne where motorists turn right from a major industrial estate onto a major access road.

VicRoads considers the intersection to be operating safely at the time of the inspection for all road users. However, VicRoads will continue to monitor the safety at this location.

Macedon electorate**Question 3697**

Question asked by: Member for Macedon
Directed to: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Asked on: 21 October 2015

REPLY:

The implementation of the NDIS is a significant and complex reform.

Under the Bilateral Agreement for transition, people currently receiving supports through the Victorian or Commonwealth governments will be moving to the NDIS based on a geographical roll out. The Victorian Government will ensure that this transition will be smooth for people with disability and their families with minimal disruption.

During the Barwon trial, the Victorian government supported service providers to successfully adapt their business models in line with the key principles of the Scheme, and to work collaboratively to solve and respond to the new ways of delivering services and support under the NDIS.

Earlier this year, based on information gleaned from the trial, the Victorian government committed \$450 000 to National Disability Services Victoria to support existing service providers to transition to the Scheme.

\$10 million was also recently committed to support the readiness of people with disability, families and carers, as well as service providers to ensure their successful transition to this new Scheme. There will be opportunities for people to access information and supports so they feel well prepared for the NDIS.

The Victorian government is committed to keeping people with disability, families and providers informed in relation to the NDIS implementation schedule and arrangements. Over the coming months, the Victorian government will be hosting community information forums across the State and all community members are welcome to attend.

Over 200 people including people with a disability their families and local providers, attended the first of these forums in Bendigo on 4 November 2015.

Lowan electorate

Question 3889

Question asked by: Member for Lowan
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

The Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) has developed a market access protocol to enable trade of Queensland fruit fly (QFF) host produce from the Portland region to South Australia in 2014. Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) provided final endorsement of this protocol on 22 December 2014.

Charges for DEDJTR services, such as auditing, trap seeding and travel are charged in accordance with legislated fees. In this case, even though an inspection officer may travel from Ballarat to undertake the audit inspection, the travel fees charged are the same as from the nearest DEDJTR office, which in this case is Portland. Therefore arranging for a local departmental employee to inspect the fruit fly traps from Portland would not result in a reduced charge.

Market access protocols are developed in accordance with quality assurance principles, and accordingly require routine audits to be conducted by an authorised officer to verify business compliance with protocol requirements.

This particular trade protocol allows accredited businesses in the Portland region to self-monitor OFF traps and issue certification for trade of fruit into South Australia. This is the first trade protocol of its kind that allows for monitoring of OFF traps by a first party under accreditation. This significantly reduces the costs compared to weekly trap monitoring by an authorised officer.

Due to the trade protocol being the first of its kind, South Australia requested monthly auditing of business trap monitoring through trap seeding. This involves placing a dead sterile OFF in a trap on the property, which the trap inspector from the accredited business must detect. Once detected, the fly must be reported to DEDJTR, otherwise follow-up corrective action is undertaken in accordance with protocol requirements. Sterile flies are marked to allow easy identification using a compound microscopic.

South Australia has advised that they will consider reducing the monthly trap seeding requirement in the future if the new protocol proves successful. If this were to be the case, the annual cost of trap seeding will also reduce.

South Barwon electorate

Question 3895

Question asked by: Member for South Barwon
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

Surf Coast Shire Council has decided to refuse to grant a planning permit for the proposed adventure park on 31 hectares of land on the Great Ocean Road at Bellbrae. I understand Council's decision on this matter recognises the concerns expressed by the 115 objectors to the proposal and its own concerns about the potential impact on the surrounding agricultural uses, the scale and intensity of the proposal and its potential to impact on the rural character of Bellbrae and the resulting traffic impacts. The proponent has sought a review of Council's decision at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). I have received a number of requests from members of the local community seeking my intervention in this matter and I have asked the Department of Environment Land, Water & Planning to brief me on these requests as a matter of priority. I am advised the adventure park matter has been listed for a full hearing at VCAT starting on 29 February 2016.

Croydon electorate**Question 6323**

Question asked by: Member for Croydon
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

The Manchester Road level crossing in Mooroolbark is one of the 50 that will be removed by the Andrews Labor Government over the next eight years. The four level crossings on the Belgrave Line have been announced and further details on each level crossing can be found at www.levelcrossing.vic.gov.au.

Pascoe Vale electorate**Question 6324**

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Sport
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

In the 2015-16 State Budget the Victorian Government confirmed a \$10 million commitment to improve cricket opportunities for all Victorians.

On 30 October 2015 I launched the Community Cricket Program - On Common Ground with program partners Cricket Australia and Cricket Victoria who confirmed commitments of \$1.2 million each towards the program, increasing the total investment towards cricket to \$12.4 million.

The program is a four-year partnership between the Victorian Government, Cricket Australia and Cricket Victoria that will allow clubs and councils to complete major upgrades to infrastructure and deliver targeted programs aimed at ensuring cricket participation in Victoria is higher than in any other state.

Through the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund, grants up to \$100 000 are available to local government authorities to upgrade and develop cricket sports infrastructure including new buildings, grounds and training facilities.

Grants of up to \$5000 are available through Cricket Victoria to assist clubs with minor facility upgrades, for equipment or for programs that build the base of players, coaches, umpires and volunteers.

In addition, a Sports Vouchers Program will be available in partnership with local councils in disadvantaged areas to subsidise registration fees so that everyone can get involved in this great sport.

I look forward to working with clubs, councils and communities throughout the state to secure the future of grassroots cricket through the \$12.4 million Community Cricket Program: On Common Ground.

Gippsland South electorate**Question 6325**

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland South
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

As previously outlined to the member, I agree that Veolia's canvassed proposal has caused unnecessary angst in the local community.

While any private operator can express interest in a potential site, it is important that we do not put the cart before the horse on these issues. Any proposal would need to go through rigorous processes with their local Waste and

Resource Recovery Groups, as well as the process of EPA works approvals and planning permits from the relevant planning authority. A key part of all the processes outlined above is making sure the community gets a say.

The community should not take this proposal as a given, and I strongly encourage the community to get involved in the Gippsland Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan in the coming months.

Essendon electorate

Question 6326

Question asked by: Member for Essendon
Directed to: Minister for Mental Health
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

Through the Boomerang Network, people with a mental illness are meeting at the Farnham Street Neighbourhood Learning Centre in Flemington and socialising with others, participating in activities that improve their wellbeing and reconnecting with their community.

Neighbourhood houses such as the Farnham Street Neighbourhood Learning Centre play a vital role in building social inclusion and providing support for those at risk of social isolation. In 2014, 50 per cent of all neighbourhood house participants in Victoria visited a neighbourhood house to spend time with other people, 40 per cent to meet new people and make friends and 36 per cent to improve their personal wellbeing and confidence.

Through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program, the Victorian Government provides funding of \$25.9 million per annum to over 370 neighbourhood houses, 16 neighbourhood house networks and the peak body Neighbourhood Houses Victoria. This core investment enables each neighbourhood house to leverage additional funding from other sources and provide activities that meet the needs of their community members.

My office is making arrangements for me to visit Farnham Street Neighbourhood Learning Centre. I look forward to meeting the 70 inspirational members of the Boomerang Network and the dedicated people who work and volunteer at the centre.

Sunbury electorate

Question 6328

Question asked by: Member for Sunbury
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

Thank you for that question, and all the work you have put in to support and represent the community of Sunbury.

We carefully considered feedback from the Sunbury community, and I was pleased to recently announce that Sunbury residents will be able to travel to and from Melbourne on all V/Line trains except for two PM peak services. This will allow Sunbury residents to use spare capacity on V/Line services, whilst also ensuring there is capacity available for passengers travelling to stations further along on the Bendigo line.

I also announced that an additional 73 trains per week will be extended to Sunbury station, including all services after 7.00 pm. Furthermore, Sunbury will benefit from all-night trains on weekends as part of the Night Network Trial in 2016.

This represents a significant boost to train services for Sunbury residents, and I want to thank the local member again for his advocacy for the Sunbury community.

Sandringham electorate**Question 6329**

Question asked by: Member for Sandringham
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Government is committed to improving access and accessibility in and around public transport to ensure that people can get to where they need to safely and efficiently.

In relation to safe and secure access to the Sandringham station from the car park, Metro Trains Melbourne and Public Transport Victoria will continue to monitor the situation.

Yan Yean electorate**Question 6330**

Question asked by: Member for Yan Yean
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 10 November 2015

REPLY:

New school bus services will run from Doreen to Diamond Valley College and St Helena Secondary College from late January 2016.

The two new services, one for each high school, will run from South Morang and travel through Doreen before heading south to the schools.

As part of its ongoing program to improve local bus networks, Public Transport Victoria (PTV) has prepared a proposal for a new public bus network in South Morang, Mernda and Doreen in the City of Whittlesea. The proposal builds on a number of commitments outlined in Labor's Plan for Victoria's Bus Network.

Community information sessions were held in late 2015 and I thank the member for Yan Yean for her involvement in the consultations.

The introduction of new bus routes is planned for mid-2016.

Melbourne electorate**Question 6431**

Question asked by: Member for Melbourne
Directed to: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Asked on: 11 November 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The government is committed to improving the regulation of high-rise apartment buildings so that residents and property are protected from unruly short stay parties.

Living in apartment buildings can be difficult, with neighbours above, below and to the sides and there are sometimes competing interests between owners of short-stay apartments and other residents.

Most short-stay occupants do not cause trouble and make an important contribution to tourism. However, unruly short stay parties can affect the amenity of apartment living. Under current laws it is difficult to hold people accountable for the problems and damage these parties cause.

The government appointed an independent expert panel to examine all the issues and recommend ways to improve the situation. The panel looked at what other cities in Australia and around the world are doing about the issue.

The government has accepted the panel's recommendation to consult with the bodies represented by its members on its preferred solution.

The government is considering the outcomes of that consultation.

Eltham electorate

Question 6476

Question asked by: Member for Eltham
Directed to: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Asked on: 12 November 2015

REPLY:

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a great Labor achievement delivered in close partnership with the community. Just like Medicare changed the way health care was delivered, the National Disability Insurance Scheme will change the way disability services are provided.

The scheme will provide greater choice and control to people with a disability so they can access the support they need, when they need it, allowing them to live more independently and have more fulfilling lives. It will ultimately afford people with a disability with the same opportunities as others to participate in community life.

The historic agreement signed in mid-September 2015 by the Premier and the Prime Minister will make the NDIS a reality in Victoria. This agreement sets out the pathway to build a better future for Victorians with a disability. Under this agreement, more than \$5 billion will be invested in the NDIS in Victoria, with the Victorian Government contributing \$2.5 billion at full scheme.

Moving to the NDIS will significantly increase the number of Victorians with a disability receiving support. At full roll out, an estimated 105 000 Victorians will be supported, an increase of 25 000. The scheme will also provide increased employment opportunities within the disability sector workforce which is expected to increase as the NDIS is rolled out.

You may be aware that the NDIS will progressively roll out in Victoria over three years from 1 July 2016. North East Melbourne will be the first area to transition and it is expected that over 10 000 people with a disability will benefit at full scheme. North East Melbourne covers most of the Eltham electorate and includes the local government areas of Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra.

To enable transition to the NDIS, the Victorian Government is focused on supporting participants by facilitating the development of a high quality disability sector and maintaining a skilled and experienced workforce. In line with this commitment, on 1 December 2015, the government announced a \$10 million NDIS Transition Support Program to support participants, providers and staff to transition to the NDIS.

South Barwon electorate

Question 6479

Question asked by: Member for South Barwon
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 12 November 2015

REPLY:

PTV will review the Geelong bus network which was introduced in June 2015 to ensure that the network is meeting passenger needs and determine whether further adjustments to bus services and routes is required. This includes bus routes in Highton.

Mount Pleasant Road in Highton is the most direct route and an important thoroughfare for a bus service in the neighbourhood. Any changes to bus routes would take time to implement, and as such, bus infrastructure across the network is still required to support passengers currently using services in Highton and the wider Geelong area.

Gippsland East electorate

Question 6481

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland East
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 12 November 2015

REPLY:

Public Transport Victoria provides free school bus services in accordance with service provision and travel eligibility policies set by the Department of Education and Training.

This question should be redirected to the Minister for Education, the Hon James Merlino.

Thomastown electorate

Question 6482

Question asked by: Member for Thomastown
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 12 November 2015

REPLY:

I was delighted to recently announce that Thomastown, within the City of Whittlesea, is home to three projects which received grants in the initial round of funding for the Interface Growth Fund, totalling \$4.6 million. These are:

- Barry Road Community Centre (\$2.60m towards a 3.75m project)
- Lalor Tennis Community Pavilion Development Project (\$1.25m towards a \$3.02m project)
- Epping Services Hub — Infrastructure for Integrated Community Service (\$0.78m towards a \$1.54m project)

I was fortunate to make my announcements of the successful City of Whittlesea projects at the Barry Road Community Centre and to experienced firsthand the importance of these types of facilities to communities. The Barry Road Community Centre is an ageing council facility which will be transformed to provide a refurbished community activity centre. With the construction of an additional meeting room, expansion of the existing hall and improvements to access and amenity the centre will be well placed to serve the needs of the local community into the future.

This project will benefit over 800 people who use the facility weekly, particularly seniors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. It is expected to be completed in early 2017.

The Lalor Tennis Community Pavilion Development Project will deliver Stage Two of the four stage Lalor Tennis Club Redevelopment to reflect community connections with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and diverse multi-cultural communities. Interface Growth Funding will bring forward the construction of the Multi-Use Community Pavilion, a culturally appropriate outdoor social gathering space and the modular construction of new multi-purpose clubrooms that will provide fit for purpose spaces for administration, community meetings, a kitchen/kiosk, two family change amenities, universal toilets and internal/external storage spaces. The project is expected to be completed in late 2016.

The Epping Services Hub project will redevelop an existing facility to enable an integrated service hub which will deliver a range of complementary and related services to the Whittlesea community. The building will bring together Council and community services and providers to deliver a partnership approach to service delivery in the Epping and surrounding areas and is expected to be completed by the middle of 2016.

These three projects combined with the 23 other projects funded through the initial Interface Growth Fund investment across all ten interface councils will enable councils to begin a program of work to deliver the types of infrastructure communities need to deliver economic benefits, provide local jobs and improve access to services for growing communities.

I'd like to thank the Member for Thomastown for the wonderful advocacy work she has done for her community. Her hard work has ensured her constituents are benefitting from a range of investments in the local area under the Andrews Labor Government.

Narre Warren South electorate

Question 6484

Question asked by: Member for Narre Warren South
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 12 November 2015

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Narre Warren South for the question regarding the Casey Hospital Expansion. The Andrews Labor Government provided \$106.3 million in the 2015-16 State Budget to expand Casey Hospital. The project is in the planning stages and work is progressing well.

The Department of Health & Human Services has been working in partnership with Monash Health to deliver this commitment and together have been undertaking the necessary planning work required to inform the building design for this exciting expansion.

After four years of cuts and underinvestment in hospital capital under the former Liberal Government, Casey hospital is calling out for the higher acuity services this project will deliver. This includes a 12 bed intensive care unit, 64 additional inpatient beds, and a day surgery unit.

The delivery of this vital expansion to Casey Hospital will significantly enhance the delivery of health services to the local area, an area that is experiencing unprecedented growth.

Bayswater electorate

Question 6494

Question asked by: Member for Bayswater
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 24 November 2015

REPLY:

The decision of the Liberal Opposition and the Member for Bayswater to oppose the Andrews Labor Government's removal of 50 of Victoria's worst level crossings, including the level crossing at Mountain Highway, is understood.

Since the announcement that work to remove level crossings at both Mountain Highway and Scoresby road would start in 2016 the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) has engaged the local community via four information sessions and additional meetings with traders and community groups.

There is a high level of community support for these removal of the level crossings and the feedback provided by the community is being assessed by the LXRA.

The proposed design at Mountain Highway has the support of VicRoads and Knox City Council and fits in with Council's vision for a more cohesive and activated community precinct.

While the Liberal party continues to try and block the removal of the 50 level crossings in parliament, the Andrews Labor Government is getting on with the job of removing these congested death traps.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 6495

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 24 November 2015

REPLY:

I would like to thank the Member for Pascoe Vale for her positive feedback on the improvements already made to public transport under the Andrews Labor Government.

Public Transport Victoria is currently analysing options for tram routes 55, 1 and 6 based on feedback from consultation sessions and network considerations.

I look forward to updating the Member for Pascoe Vale in due course.

Lowan electorate

Question 6496

Question asked by: Member for Lowan
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 24 November 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government has closely monitored the impact of deteriorating seasonal conditions and conducted extensive consultation with impacted communities over the past 18 months.

On 15 November 2015, the Premier, Minister Neville and I announced a targeted drought response package to support producers and communities impacted by drought.

The package includes:

- \$1.5 million for a Drought Extension Program to help farmers make necessary on-farm decisions such as de-stocking, animal health and welfare, feed budgeting, land management, irrigation and water use efficiency;
- \$1 million for the Catchment Management Authority Drought Employment Program which will provide local employment for people directly affected to undertake works on key environmental projects;
- \$400 000 to support ten Local Governments to deliver targeted social support for drought affected households, businesses and communities through community led events and activities;
- \$220 000 to deliver Mental Health First Aid training across the ten identified drought affected local council areas and implement local community engagement and support measures;
- \$270 000 for additional Rural Financial Counsellors;
- \$300 000 from the State Schools Relief program to provide families in drought affected communities with uniforms, shoes and other school items;
- \$960 000 to support kindergarten participation in drought affected communities;
- \$5.8 million from the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund to ensure kids in drought affected regions don't miss out on these important educational experiences;
- \$1 million worth of local community infrastructure projects in drought affected areas to be fast-tracked through the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund;
- \$1.1 million to increase water supply to remote towns not connected to a secure water supply;

- \$150 000 to extend the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline to increase water supply to properties within the southern Wartook Valley which is currently without a secure raw water supply; and
- \$1.2 million to undertake critical maintenance of key roads in drought affected regions to improve safety and support efficient and cost effective movement of freight.

In addition to the targeted package, a further \$10 million fund has been established to support a broader community driven response.

Community consultation is now open for suggestions around the sorts of measures that will be of most benefit to support individuals and communities through this time.

The online forum is open until 31 January 2016 and can be accessed at - <http://oursay.org/victoriandrought>

Narracan electorate

Question 6498

Question asked by: Member for Narracan
Directed to: Minister for Regional Development
Asked on: 24 November 2015

REPLY:

Regional Victoria's best days are in front of it. The Andrews Labor Government is helping your constituents in West Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley to recover from four years of Coalition cuts to local schools, hospitals and services.

The Andrews Government has established the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund to support major projects, create the jobs and industries of the future, and build stronger regional communities.

Labor is also investing in industries of the future and the projects we need, harnessing the strength of our communities to attract more families, create more jobs and get regional Victoria back on track.

On 17 November 2015, the Government unveiled Victoria's Regional Statement, a new vision for country Victoria that will also change the way government works with the Gippsland region.

Through the Regional Statement's initiatives, local communities will have a stronger voice in government decision-making by directing priorities identified by local people, straight into the heart of the Labor Government's agenda.

The centrepiece of the Statement is the establishment of nine new Regional Partnerships across the state, with representatives from community, business, and all three levels of government.

The new Gippsland Region, which encompasses Bass Coast Shire, Baw Baw Shire, East Gippsland Shire, Latrobe City, South Gippsland Shire and Wellington Shire, will have its own Regional Partnership; ensuring government decisions and investments reflect the priorities of the families, workers and businesses in Gippsland.

The Statement also outlines a number of key new initiatives that will put the Government back to work for Gippsland.

As the media release to which the Member refers clearly outlines, Labor is investing \$20 million in the next stage of the Macalister Irrigation District project; and developing a \$34 million Regional Skills and Training package that will help communities across regional Victoria, particularly disadvantaged groups and areas, access the training they need to get the jobs they want.

The Government is also getting on with delivering better mobile reception for V/Line travellers along the Gippsland line; and investing up to \$25 million to upgrade 'first and last kilometre' routes across regional Victoria through the Agriculture Infrastructure and Jobs Fund, growing local agriculture by cutting travel times and costs for Gippsland producers.

The Andrews Labor Government is putting government back to work for Gippsland with a commitment to create jobs, provide a better start for young people, and ensure a brighter future for local families and communities.

Narre Warren South electorate

Question 6499

Question asked by: Member for Narre Warren South
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 24 November 2015

REPLY:

Since the announcement of this project, VicRoads has been actively progressing the assessment of treatment options, detailed design, land acquisition and preparation of construction contracts.

The options investigated for mitigating the road safety concerns at this site included the signalisation of the intersection as well as the installation of a roundabout. The installation of a roundabout is the preferred treatment, as it provides greater safety and operational benefits than a signalised intersection treatment.

The process for acquisition of the necessary land has commenced and VicRoads has met with affected property owners to advise them of the likely impact of the project on them. VicRoads is currently defining the land required to upgrade this intersection and is seeking the relevant valuations.

VicRoads is also currently finalising details for relocation of power cables and other services necessary for construction of the roundabout.

Detailed design of the new roundabout is well progressed and subject to finalisation of the land acquisition, construction is expected to commence mid-2016 and be completed mid-2017.

Ripon electorate

Question 6502

Question asked by: Member for Ripon
Directed to: Premier
Asked on: 24 November 2015

REPLY:

Since the election in November 2014 over 72 050 jobs have been created in Victoria.

Over the same period the unemployment rate has fallen from 6.7 percent to 5.6 percent. Victoria currently has the second lowest unemployment rate of the states. Throughout October — Victoria accounted for almost half the jobs created in Australia.

This is in stark contrast to the record of the former government where unemployment rose from 4.9 percent to 6.7 percent.

The economy is growing at 2.5 percent, up from 1 percent in the previous year.

Victorian growth is outpacing NSW for the first time since 2008.

Brighton electorate**Question 6528**

Question asked by: Member for Brighton
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly appreciates the important role of volunteer lifesavers in protecting the community in and around water. I am aware that the Brighton Life Saving Club with over 600 members, has a proud tradition and history of providing essential surf lifesaving services to the public for over 80 years. The Brighton Life Saving Club plays a vital role in community wellbeing and safety. The government will continue to work with Life Saving Victoria (LSV) to examine options relating to the redevelopment of clubhouses.

As you would be aware, the Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP) is an ongoing program funded by the Victorian Government, which provides local emergency services volunteer groups, including Life Saving Victoria clubs access to grants for operational equipment, vehicles, trucks, tankers, watercraft, trailers and minor facility improvements. The Brighton Life Saving Club has been the beneficiary of \$47 638 in VESEP grants between 2011 and 2015, towards the purchase of operational and rescue equipment.

I also note that the government continues to provide substantial funding annually to Lifesaving Victoria for a variety of activities and programs. Of this funding, \$5000 is allocated to each club towards its administration. I encourage the Brighton Life Saving Club to continue to explore options available in collaboration with LSV.

Narre Warren South electorate**Question 6529**

Question asked by: Member for Narre Warren South
Directed to: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

I was very pleased to join the Member for Narre Warren South in launching the Say No to Family Violence campaign on 19 June 2015.

This campaign has contributed to raising awareness on the impact of family violence, with the pursuit of eradicating it. Partnerships between community organisations, sporting clubs and Kambrya College have provided the foundation of this successful campaign. I thank the Narre Warren South community for their commitment to eliminating this violence and sending a clear message of support to those who have been impacted by this harm.

Throughout its public hearings, the Royal Commission into Family Violence heard evidence directly on the importance of influencing change across the community. This module demonstrated the value in engaging a range of universal platforms, including our schools, to encourage respectful attitudes towards women and children. The Royal Commission is due to deliver its report and recommendations in March 2016.

I am proud that Victoria is the first Australian state to join the United Nations endorsed Unite: 16 Days of Activism Campaign. The events held across the community as part of this campaign provided an opportunity to highlight the devastating impact that family violence has on the lives of many individuals. As part of the campaign, the Victorian Labor Government allocated funding to the Women's Health Association of Victoria and to the Family Violence Regional Integration Committees to raise awareness about family violence through local action.

I will be attending the Say No to Violence vigil and I would like to thank the Member for inviting me to join her. The vigil will provide an opportunity for the Narre Warren South community to again unite against this harm and reflect on its impact.

Gippsland South electorate**Question 6530**

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland South
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers including those volunteers of the Foster, Mirboo and Yarram CFA brigades who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community. The government is committed to providing a safe environment for volunteers to carry out their work through the provision of enhanced equipment and facilities.

The Victorian Government is committed to strengthening Victoria's emergency services response by investing in major upgrades to CFA assets. The government's 2015-16 Budget initiatives include commencing the recruitment of an additional 350 CFA career firefighters; new CFA stations and upgrades; installation of toilet and washroom facilities at up to 100 rural CFA stations; delivery of 70 trucks comprising of 40 heavy tankers, 20 medium tankers and 10 medium pumpers; and expansion of the Emergency Medical Response Program across the CFA's integrated brigades.

Additionally, the Volunteer Emergency Services Equipment Program (VESEP) provides funding for operational equipment, vehicles, watercraft, trailers and minor facility improvements. This ongoing program, funded by the Victorian Government, provides local emergency services volunteer groups including CFA brigades, access to grants of up to a maximum of \$100 000 excluding GST. For more information call the VESEP liaison officer at Emergency Management Victoria on (03) 8685 1309 or email vesep@emv.vic.gov.au.

As conveyed to you previously, CFA has identified that the fire stations in Foster and Mirboo North are in need of upgrade and they have been placed on its District Capital Works list for potential future development.

The CFA has advised that Yarram is included in its 5-Year base capital works program for a replacement station project to commence in the 2019 financial year. The CFA has also advised that priorities for district 10 may change affecting the timeframe for a replacement station for Yarram.

Frankston electorate**Question 6533**

Question asked by: Member for Frankston
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

I thank the Member for his question.

The Andrews Labor Government has provided funding and support to the FNCR CoM to ensure this site can be opened up and enjoyed by the community as soon as possible.

The work has progressed a great deal in spite of delays related to the discovery, and safe removal of asbestos and ensuring safety around the water body.

The Committee of Management advise that the Nature Conservation Reserve will likely open to the public in January 2016.

Prahran electorate**Question 6534**

Question asked by: Member for Prahran
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that the intersection identified at this location is signalised, with the tram stop being a regular kerbside stop. There are three lanes of traffic heading east, two straight through lanes and a combined through and left turning lane.

Passengers alighting at the stop are reminded to look before alighting the tram. Passengers boarding should follow the road rules and signal to the tram driver to stop, while checking to see the road is clear of traffic before crossing to the tram. There are decals at the doorways with the Rhino logo advising passengers to take care when getting off the vehicle.

Under current road rules, car drivers are obliged to obey all road rules including stopping behind a stationary tram. Drivers failing to do this will have their registrations noted down and passed on to Victoria Police.

I have requested that PTV continues to work with relevant safety authorities and Yarra Trams to continue to monitor the tram stop.

Ivanhoe electorate**Question 6535**

Question asked by: Member for Ivanhoe
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

The Government has made an election commitment to introduce a new Yarra River protection Bill and to establish a trust to guard the Yarra river from inappropriate development and promote the river's amenity and significance. Community engagement will be a key part of the project.

We have already engaged with councils regarding the planning control reforms and changes to the Statement of Planning Policy Framework for the Yarra River. The governance for the project includes a Stakeholder Reference Group. This group will comprise representatives from 11 councils, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, EPA, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, Environmental Justice Victoria, Wurundjeri Registered Aboriginal Party and the Yarra Riverkeepers Association. Mr Andrew Kelly, President of the Yarra River Keepers Association, has accepted his invitation to be a member of the Yarra River Protection Reference Group.

There will also be further opportunities for community engagement following the release of a discussion paper in the first part of 2016.

Oakleigh electorate

Question 6537

Question asked by: Member for Oakleigh
Directed to: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Asked on: 25 November 2015

REPLY:

In late October 2015, I launched the Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) Travelling Con Men campaign that will run until the end of January 2016. CAV partners with Crime Stoppers Victoria (CSV) to raise community awareness around travelling con men so consumers can protect themselves from these scams.

The 2015-16 awareness campaign includes suburban and regional communications targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Activities that will reach the Member's constituents include:

- reporting con men activities to the local press
- releasing online updates on Crime Stoppers Victoria website, Victoria Police `Eyewatch' local community Facebook pages, Neighbourhood Watch website, local council online communication channels and CAV's social media accounts
- placing advertisements in local papers including the Oakleigh Monash Leader, Whitehorse Leader, Moorabbin Kingston/Glen Eira Leader, Knox Leader and Cranbourne Leader
- a translated print advertisement into five languages (Greek, Italian, Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese)
- running a radio commercial across a selection of ethnic media outlets
- running Travelling Con Men information segments on local eastern radio (Eastern FM)
- conducting Travelling Con Men presentations across Victoria including in Melbourne's outer eastern suburbs.

We have also released a news article in 10 languages for community media publications, and distributed a news alert to community and mainstream radio stations and newspapers, to highlight the commencement of the travelling con men season.

CAV also seeks to disrupt travelling con men by sharing information with the relevant enforcement agencies, such as Victoria Police and Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

To help us warn your constituents please share the CAV campaign through your networks. We seek your help in getting the message out to your communities to help protect them from unscrupulous con men.

Gembrook electorate

Question 6635

Question asked by: Member for Gembrook
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads met with the President of the Upper Beaconsfield Association onsite in mid 2015 to discuss his concerns regarding the site.

Maintenance responsibilities for this area are shared between VicRoads and Melbourne Water, and VicRoads has subsequently met with Melbourne Water on two occasions to discuss the immediate remedial works. I am pleased to inform you that VicRoads has undertaken considerable clean-up efforts to ensure entry into the site is safe, and that illegal four-wheel drive access is deterred.

VicRoads has communicated its works program to the Upper Beaconsfield Association on a number of occasions and will endeavour to meet with the group and Melbourne Water in the coming weeks to discuss the ongoing management of the site.

Essendon electorate

Question 6636**Question asked by:** Member for Essendon**Directed to:** Treasurer**Asked on:** 8 December 2015**REPLY:**

Thank you for your question Mr Pearson.

I am grateful for your invitation, and would be happy to speak to employers in your electorate about the Back to Work Scheme. I am sure the Scheme will offer valuable support for employers in the Essendon electorate. My office will be in touch to arrange a suitable time and date.

The Back to Work Scheme (the Scheme) provides financial assistance to employers hiring persons who are disadvantaged in the labour market. The Scheme has recently been expanded to improve access to support for several disadvantaged groups, and to further support job creation for all Victorians.

Employers will receive a significant increase in Government funding for taking on eligible job seekers employed after 1 November 2015. Employers will receive:

- up to \$12 000 (increased from \$2000) when they hire long-term unemployed workers;
- up to \$7000 (increased from \$1000) when they hire workers retrenched from the Automotive industry;
- up to \$5000 (increased from \$1000) when they hire retrenched workers, out-of-trade apprentices or young people aged between 15 and 25 who have been unemployed for three months or more.

In addition, up to \$4000 will be available to reimburse employers who provide accredited training after 1 November 2015 to an eligible job seeker employed after 1 April 2015. This will be on top of any other payment provided through the Back to Work Scheme.

I am pleased to note that the government is also providing increased support into employment for persons in social housing estates, such as estates in Flemington and Ascot Vale. Along with the increased payments, the Scheme has been expanded to explicitly include a number of disadvantaged groups as eligible employees. Hire of these employees will attract payment of up to \$5000. In particular, employers who hire social housing tenants from 1 November 2015 will be able to access a Back to Work payment.

Other categories of eligible employees now included are apprentices and trainees, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, disability pensioners, persons from drought-affected farm households, refugees, sole parent pensioners, current or recent youth justice clients, young persons in or exiting out of home care and current or recent criminal justice clients. In order to further encourage employment of persons in these groups, employers will not need to prove prior unemployment to claim a Back to Work payment for these hires.

Thank you for your interest in the Back to Work Scheme.

Ovens Valley electorate**Question 6637**

Question asked by: Member for Ovens Valley
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that over the past five years, there have been 16 crashes recorded on the Murray Valley Highway between Cobram and Yarrawonga (one fatality, five serious injury and 10 other injury crashes). Two of the crashes were head-on collisions, while a majority of the crashes were a result of vehicles leaving the road.

VicRoads is currently developing a road safety proposal to improve the safety of this section of the highway for consideration under the Transport Accident Commission's Safe System Road Infrastructure Program. The proposal includes shoulder sealing, tactile edge lines and left-side barriers at high risk locations, to protect motorists from leaving the road and colliding with road-side hazards.

Yuroke electorate**Question 6638**

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

Thank you for your question regarding the Interface Growth Fund. This funding will enable councils to begin a program of work to deliver the types of infrastructure communities need to deliver economic benefits, provide local jobs and improve access to services for growing communities.

I was delighted to announce \$500 000 from the IGF for the construction of the Annadale Interim Community Centre. Construction is expected to commence in mid 2016, and be completed by late 2017. The centre will contribute to local job creation and economic development, deliver strong social benefits, reduce disadvantage, and improve liveability. Early years activities and community programs will be accommodated by the centre as it will include a pre-school room, maternal and child health room, multi-purpose community meeting space, waiting room, kitchen, and staff resource area.

This investment from the Interface Growth Fund will assist Hume City Council to bring forward important community services and infrastructure to support the community.

I look forward to working with the Member and Hume City Council to deliver outcomes that matter most to communities.

Nepean electorate**Question 6639**

Question asked by: Member for Nepean
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

On 24 December 2012, Melbourne Water completed the Eastern Treatment Plant upgrade to enable tertiary treatment of wastewater in order to comply with the Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) requirement to improve the quality of the plant's discharge via the South Eastern Outfall into Bass Strait at Boags Rock (also known as Gunnamatta).

A significant side benefit of the upgrade is the availability of high quality wastewater for a wide range of re-use purposes. Melbourne Water already supplies customers with this 'Class A' equivalent recycled water, including to the Eastern Irrigation Scheme. The Government will continue to work with Melbourne Water and the community to explore future opportunities as they emerge.

Footscray electorate

Question 6640

Question asked by: Member for Footscray
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to introducing statutory recognition of advanced care directives to give Victorians a greater say over their future treatment and their end of life care.

The Government has recently released the 'Greater say for Victorians: Improving end of life care' discussion paper that examines how palliative care services can be improved and the development of an end of life framework. More information about this discussion paper can be found at <http://www.betterendoflife.vic.gov.au/>

This discussion paper and the public consultation will inform the development of an end of life framework. This new framework will give all Victorians, including Mr Given, a greater say over their end of life care.

In addition to this work, the Victorian Parliament's Legal and Social Issues Committee is currently conducting the Inquiry into End of Life Choices.

The due date for tabling of the final report of this inquiry is 31 May 2016.

The Committee's terms of reference include examination of all issues around end of life care including palliative care, the practices of physicians assisting at this stage, practices in other jurisdictions and the current legislative framework.

Pascoe Vale electorate

Question 6642

Question asked by: Member for Pascoe Vale
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads submitted the speed limit reduction project proposal for funding consideration under the Transport Accident Commission's Safe System Road Infrastructure Program. This proposal is currently being considered in the context of other statewide priorities.

Further consultation is proposed with the broader community to discuss the benefits and impacts of a 40km/h speed limit, and whether the speed limit should be permanent or time-based. This further consultation is proposed to commence by March 2016 and be completed by mid-2016.

Following your meeting with Mr Vince Punaro, VicRoads' Regional Director, Metropolitan North West on 11 September 2015, VicRoads reviewed the operation of the pedestrian traffic signals adjacent to the Coburg Primary School. The traffic signals had been previously adjusted to increase crossing times for pedestrians. The subsequent investigations revealed that the crossing is operating at its optimum capacity.

Rowville electorate**Question 6643**

Question asked by: Member for Rowville
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

Melbourne Water conducts fortnightly water quality monitoring for Blue-green algae at the lakes. To date this summer (2015-16), monitoring has not detected Blue-green algae above acceptable limits.

Melbourne Water's monthly maintenance schedule, involves inspecting the perimeter of all three lakes and removing debris and litter. Melbourne Water's latest inspection, in mid-January 2016, showed that the lakes are functioning as designed.

Narre Warren South electorate**Question 6644**

Question asked by: Member for Narre Warren South
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 8 December 2015

REPLY:

Glasscocks Road is a local road managed by the Casey City Council. The council is responsible for constructing the missing sections between the Western Port Highway and Clyde Road.

VicRoads expects that the easterly extension of Glasscocks Road from Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road to The Promenade to occur as part of the development of the Casey Central Town Centre precinct. VicRoads is also aware that the Casey City Council is currently developing options for the construction of the westerly extension of Glasscocks Road from the South Gippsland Highway to Sherwood Road, including the installation of signals at the South Gippsland Highway intersection.

The Government has also committed to the completion of the duplication of Thompsons Road, between EastLink and Clyde Road, and the removal of the railway level crossing. This upgrade to this critical east-west corridor, located just south of Glasscocks Road, will improve accessibility in the surrounding area.

VicRoads will continue to work collaboratively with the Casey City Council on the future development of the various sections of Glasscocks Road.

Warrandyte electorate**Question 6650**

Question asked by: Member for Warrandyte
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to supporting schools in the effective management of their assets, which includes capital works projects at some schools. This is why we have committed to investing in education and school infrastructure, and this has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million to school facilities in the 2015-16 State Budget.

I am aware of the infrastructure requirements of Donvale Primary School and our challenge is to responsibly balance and prioritise the needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria, all in varying condition.

The infrastructure needs of all schools, including Donvale Primary School, will be considered through the State Budget process and when determining future priorities for the capital works program.

Yan Yean electorate

Question 6651

Question asked by: Member for Yan Yean
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

Yan Yean Road between Kurrak Road and Bridge Inn Road has recently been declared as a state arterial road. The declaration was listed in the Victorian Government Gazette dated 8 December 2015.

Mildura electorate

Question 6652

Question asked by: Member for Mildura
Directed to: Minister for Regional Development
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Labor Government has long recognised the significance of the Mildura Airport, having previously provided funding totalling \$6 320 000 through the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund across two separate projects, including: terminal extensions and upgrades, relocation of refuelling areas, strengthening works to pavement of apron and taxiway C & D and sealing of the main runway shoulders.

As the NSRF Round 2 announcements were only made on Monday 7 December, detailed discussions about State funding support for the lengthening of the runway have only recently commenced. However, the Andrews Labor Government has committed to delivering a range of new initiatives to assist Victorian business adapt and grow, including:

- \$500 million in strategic investment to be guided by the Premier's Jobs and Investment Panel;
- A \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RIJF) to support investment in regional Victoria; and
- A \$200 million Future Industries Fund to support business investment in high growth industries.

RDV and Mildura Airport are currently discussing the proposal to lengthen Runway 09/27.

Niddrie electorate

Question 6653

Question asked by: Member for Niddrie
Directed to: Attorney-General
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The announcement on 2 December 2015 related to grant funding for a project to enable online applications for family violence intervention orders.

The initiative helps victims of family violence by allowing them to begin the intervention order process without having to go into court or to the police. An affected family member could make their application from a remote and safe location, whether that be at home, a friend's or family member's home, at a support or legal service, or anywhere they can access the internet.

The online form is structured differently from the current paper-based form, and is designed to be more user-friendly. Risk levels can be automatically flagged through the online system. This enables court staff to easily identify and prioritise high-risk cases as soon as they receive the applications. After an online application is submitted, court staff will contact the applicant about the next steps in the intervention order process.

This initiative is an expansion of the online form currently piloted at the Neighbourhood Justice Centre in the City of Yarra since mid-2015. The funding will allow a 12-month pilot of the form to be rolled out to an additional two venues of the Magistrates' Court. I am advised that roll out to these additional venues, which are yet to be selected, is anticipated by July 2016.

This limited roll out will enable us to assess any advantages and disadvantages to using the online form.

Brighton electorate

Question 6654

Question asked by: Member for Brighton
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

Protective Services Officers are the responsibility of Victoria Police. As such, this question should be directed to the Minister for Police, the Hon Wade Noonan MP.

Carrum electorate

Question 6655

Question asked by: Member for Carrum
Directed to: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that:

The Victorian Government launched its review of the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (the Review) in June 2015. It is part of the government's broader Plan for Fairer, Safer Housing, which aims to ensure that all Victorians have access to safe, affordable and secure housing.

The Review is being conducted in four stages over three years and will determine how regulation can best meet the current and future needs and expectations of landlords and tenants in the modern rental market.

Stage 1 of the Review involved the release of the consultation paper 'Laying the Groundwork', which examined the changing characteristics and trends in the Victorian rental market over the period 1996 to 2012. Over 50 submissions were received in response to this paper.

Stage 2 of the Review involves the release of six issues papers that will seek community feedback on matters that are key to producing effective housing outcomes. Many of these matters will be relevant to retirement housing accommodation as they concern, among other matters, security of tenure and protections for residents of residential and caravan parks. The issues paper on security of tenure was released in October 2015 while the issues paper on community housing models and alternative forms of tenure is scheduled for release early in 2016. The other issues papers will focus on themes including the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants, property conditions and standards, rental charges and bonds, and dispute resolution.

The remaining stages of the Review will involve the release of an options paper in the middle of 2016 and proposals for legislative amendments in 2017-18.

A dedicated consultation website hub at fairersaferhousing.vic.gov.au/renting provides a way for the community to engage with the Review. The hub has detailed information about the Review and its progress. It also allows

members of the public to make submissions, access the results of the public consultations to date, contribute to discussions and quick polls, and share their renting experiences through the 'Your Story' tool. To enhance the accessibility of the hub it has videos and information available in a number of languages.

Almost 500 individuals and organisations have registered with the hub to learn about, and contribute to the Review.

South-West Coast electorate

Question 6656

Question asked by: Member for South-West Coast
Directed to: Minister for Employment
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

I can advise the Honourable Member that Regional Development Victoria (RDV) has been working closely with Porthaul, and I understand that the recruitment issues faced by the company have been resolved.

I am advised that Porthaul has been able to obtain all of the required drivers through in-house training and external recruitment.

Furthermore, I am advised that with harvest operations beginning in the coming weeks, new job vacancies will become available. RDV will be meeting with Porthaul during this period to offer assistance with the recruitment process.

Sunbury electorate

Question 6657

Question asked by: Member for Sunbury
Directed to: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

I was very pleased that the Andrews Labor Government's Victoria Against Violence — 16 Days of Activism initiative attracted wide participation across all sections of the community and raised awareness about the various ways all of us can contribute to preventing family violence.

The events held across this campaign, especially Rosie Batty's keynote address at the Parliament of Victoria sent a strong message that this harm is not tolerated and victims are not alone.

In relation to taking part in Victoria Against Violence in an ongoing way, I encourage Sunbury constituents to participate in a range of events held by their local women's health organisations, Hume City Council and local community groups. I also refer them to the Victoria Against Violence website and online calendar to gain a deeper understanding of the calibre of events that took place in 2015.

Going forward, constituents in the Sunbury electorate could participate in any future Victoria Against Violence online social media campaigns using the hashtags #16days, #UniteandChange and #VictoriaAgainstViolence. Alternatively, they could host a morning tea; round table discussion; art show; film screening or partake in existing local fundraising events.

Another way to show support is to "Go Orange", the United Nations colour used to symbolise a bright and optimistic future free from violence against women and girls. Supporting this element of the campaign can be done by wearing orange or displaying orange in the home, neighbourhood or workplace and encouraging others to do the same.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Women's Health in the North (WHIN) who work on behalf of women in Melbourne's Northern Metropolitan Region, an area which includes Sunbury as part of Hume City Council. WHIN were very supportive of the 2015 campaign and facilitated the Clothesline Project on the steps of

Parliament House and also in Queen's Hall. This initiative provided an opportunity for Members and those visiting Parliament to create T-Shirts featuring messages of gender equality and ending violence.

WHIN's Building a Respectful Community: Preventing Violence against Women in the North strategy, outlines the actions we all need to take to prevent violence against women. The vision and goals of this strategy has been endorsed by 50 partner organisations, including all community health services, local governments and primary care partnerships operating in the northern region of Melbourne.

I encourage the constituents in Sunbury to make enquiries within local family violence networks about the range of activities taking place in the region that focus on the prevention of family violence and encourage them to support local responses to the issue.

Sandringham electorate

Question 6658

Question asked by: Member for Sandringham
Directed to: Minister for Finance
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

The former Highett Gasworks is being prepared for sale by the Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF). This 6.33ha site is surplus to government requirements and was rezoned to Residential Growth by the Kingston Council in October 2014. In addition to the 5 percent open space contribution (3150 sqm) required under the planning scheme, DTF and Council have agreed that a further 2200 sqm will be set aside as open space to offset the 1400 sqm to be occupied by proposed new gas infrastructure at the adjoining Sir William Fry Reserve. This represents a significant open space contribution of approximately 4000 sqm for the benefit of the Kingston and Bayside communities.

Yuroke electorate

Question 6659

Question asked by: Member for Yuroke
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 9 December 2015

REPLY:

I am pleased to advise that a planning team was assembled earlier this year comprising various education technical professionals. This team has been working collaboratively with the architect to develop both the master plan and detailed design for the new Craigieburn North West Primary School.

The master plan and documentation stage has now been completed and the project was recently issued for tender and pricing by building contractors. The project tender closed on Thursday 3 December and the Department of Education and Training anticipates that a contract will be awarded shortly.

Bayswater electorate

Question 6666

Question asked by: Member for Bayswater
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

Pro Ark Architects have been engaged to work with the school and the Department of Education and Training to develop an approved project scope and complete design and documentation works prior to calling construction tenders.

I am advised that the project is currently at Design Development stage and architects have met with the school several times to fine tune the project requirements.

The Department will continue to liaise closely with the school throughout the remainder of the design and construction process to ensure delivery of an excellent outcome for the school.

Gippsland East electorate

Question 6668

Question asked by: Member for Gippsland East
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investment in education and school infrastructure, and this has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million to school facilities in the 2015-16 State Budget. Our challenge is to responsibly balance and prioritise the needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria, all in varying condition. The infrastructure needs of Bairnsdale Secondary College and all Victorian government schools will be given serious and equitable consideration through future budget processes and when determining future priorities for the capital works program.

Victorian government schools are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of site infrastructure and buildings and are provided with funding for this through the Student Resource Package (SRP). In some cases, where damage to school facilities cannot be rectified within a school's budget, the Department of Education and Training will fund works to eliminate immediate hazards or to mitigate the risk of recurring damage with preventative maintenance.

I am advised that the Department has been in contact with Bairnsdale Secondary College regarding the issues you describe and that a total of \$50 000 was recently made available to the school in order to rectify the blockage of a storm water drain and further damage incurred as the result of a storm in November. The Department will continue to work closely with the school until these issues have been resolved.

I would be happy to visit Bairnsdale Secondary College when my schedule next permits.

Bentleigh electorate

Question 6669

Question asked by: Member for Bentleigh
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

I wish to commend East Bentleigh Primary School for the range of activities it is offering its students, such as the kitchen garden program. I am pleased to hear how beneficial these activities have been to the students, school and wider community, and would be pleased to visit the school.

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Andrews Labor Government and it has used its first Education State Budget to allocate \$730 million to build, upgrade and maintain school infrastructure across the state.

I can assure you that the condition of buildings at all schools, including East Bentleigh Primary School, will be given fair consideration when determining priorities for future funding.

Evelyn electorate**Question 6670**

Question asked by: Member for Evelyn
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

The Lilydale Country Fire Authority Brigade is located in Hardy Street, a local road managed by the Shire of Yarra Ranges.

VicRoads, the shire and the Lilydale Country Fire Authority Brigade are working together to enable VicRoads to modify the traffic signals at the intersection of Hardy Street and Anderson Street to assist the brigade.

The shire is managing issues related to parking and the 'keep clear' markings.

Melbourne electorate**Question 6672**

Question asked by: Member for Melbourne
Directed to: Minister for Sport
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

In March 2010, the Melbourne Cricket Ground Trust became the committee of management for Yarra Park as the result of amendments to the Melbourne Cricket Ground Act 2009 and the Melbourne (Yarra Park) Land Act 1980. I understand the Trust has delegated its functions and powers as the committee of management for Yarra Park reserve to the Melbourne Cricket Club.

Since this time, the Melbourne Cricket Club has invested \$18 million in the development of a water recycling facility. This facility provides guaranteed water into the park in comparison to water capture infrastructure which is dependent on rain. This guaranteed water has greatly improved the condition of the grass and the trees within the park.

The Melbourne Cricket Club has also:

- Re-turfed a substantial proportion of the park
- Installed directional signage
- Replaced ageing light poles
- Undertaken landscaping including installation of new garden beds, plants, trees, bollards, blue stone edging and fencing
- Installed community facilities including picnic tables, BBQs, seats, drinking fountains and hoops for securing bikes.

I am advised that all money received from car parking in Yarra Park by the Melbourne Cricket Club is reinvested in the park for improvements.

I am further advised that to protect the condition of the park, a rotational policy has been implemented to rest areas within the park as well as an overall reduction of car parking during the year.

Upcoming improvements to Yarra Park include the continuation of the tree rejuvenation following the planting of 115 new trees in 2015 and additional improvement works which are undertaken on an annual basis.

The Melbourne Cricket Club has a committed tree management policy which corresponds to the City of Melbourne's policy which includes identification, treatment, and if necessary removal and replanting.

The Melbourne Cricket Club will continue to work with the Yarra Park Advisory Group, which is represented by members from the City of Melbourne, the Victorian Government and local residents as well as a horticultural expert to improve conditions of the Park into the future.

Macedon electorate

Question 6673

Question asked by: Member for Macedon
Directed to: Minister for Police
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

I am pleased to advise that the former Daylesford Police Station has recently been declared surplus to Victoria Police requirements.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the status of the property.

Burwood electorate

Question 6674

Question asked by: Member for Burwood
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to providing safe and supportive school environments in which all children and young people can feel accepted, valued, included and safe.

Government schools can display Christmas decorations, decorate Christmas trees or permit the singing of Christmas carols, including traditional carols, on school grounds as these activities have a cultural place in Australian society. Similarly, schools may mark Diwali with colourful celebrations or Hanukkah with the lighting of candles. Learning about hymns can also be part of general religious education or other areas of study such as music.

Principals and teachers use their professional judgement to decide what forms of music are acceptable, based on the context, school's curriculum and Department policy.

The Guidelines have been issued about the changes to the delivery of Special Religious Instruction for next year. The Guidelines make it clear that if an outside provider like Access Ministries or a volunteer group, wishes to come to school and sing religious songs, this is considered Special Religious Instruction and must be done before school, after school or during lunch time.

Government schools strive to be open and inclusive of all Victorians, striking a balance between celebrating cultural events that are important to the local school community and preserving the principle of secularity.

Frankston electorate**Question 6675**

Question asked by: Member for Frankston
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 10 December 2015

REPLY:

Hospital car parking fees are determined by individual health services in Victoria and are influenced by a range of factors including:

- car park occupancy and revenue expectations relevant to financing obligations associated with the car park's development;
- agreements hospitals may have entered with commercial car park operators in relation to car park operations, revenue collection and asset maintenance;
- commercial car parking rates in adjacent precincts;
- health service policies in relation to car parking rebates, discounts and fee waivers for particular categories of users.

In addition to the standard car parking rates, there are numerous discounts provided at existing hospitals and health precincts to support vulnerable user groups. The level and type of discount available can vary from health service to health service. The Andrews Labor Government is also committed to reducing the burden of car parking fees for vulnerable patients who frequently visit hospitals.

In delivering the Government's election commitment, and following an independent review, each health service operating fee based car parking is required to have a formal policy in place by 1 February 2016 which mitigates the financial impact of car park fees on vulnerable patients.

I have encouraged health services to work with their patients and staff, local authorities and public transport providers to make sure that users can access health services (and park if necessary) as safely, conveniently and economically as possible.

Car parking policy is to be reviewed and endorsed by the board annually and reported to the Department of Health and Human Services. The policy must be publicised online and within the health service. Details of charges and concessions will be clearly placed at car park entrances, wherever payment is made, and inside the hospital. This initiative will reduce the burden of car parking fees for vulnerable patients who frequently visit hospitals.

Concession benefits provided under these policies will also be reported to the community in the health service annual report and will also be reported to the Victorian public in the Department of Health and Human Services' annual report.