

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

**1, 2 and 3 March 2011**

**(Extract from book 3)**

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Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP



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**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Tuesday, 1 March 2011**

**Autism: eastern suburbs school**

**Raised with: Minister for Education**

**Raised by: Mr Leane**

**Raised on: 9 February 2011**

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development recognises that children and young people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) face unique educational needs and is committed to providing a range of effective educational options to support these students.

In order to establish a P-12 ASD-specific school in Melbourne's east, Hede architects have developed an approved master plan to relocate Wantirna Heights School to the former Ferntree Gully Secondary College site in two stages:

Stage 1 encompasses an extension to current facilities plus significant refurbishment and modernisation to a portion of the existing building. It also includes the building of nine general purpose classrooms, improved staff and administration facilities, staff and student toilets, extensive external site works, services infrastructure upgrade and security fencing.

Plans for Stage 2 comprise facilities improvements for the middle and senior sectors of the school, including a further 21 general purpose classrooms, specialist teaching rooms, library, multi-purpose facility and related external site works.

In the 2010-11 State Budget \$8 million was allocated for Stage 1 of this project. However, funding is yet to be allocated for Stage 2.

The Government is committed to ensuring that, within its resources, students with ASD will be able to access the educational option that best meets their needs. The Government will give consideration to the funding of Stage 2 during the budget process and in determining future priorities for the school building program.



**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Wednesday, 2 March 2011**

**Rail: western suburbs**

**Raised with: Minister for Public Transport**

**Raised by: Ms Hartland**

**Raised on: 8 February 2011**

**REPLY:**

I refer to the matter you raised during the adjournment debate on 8 February 2011 regarding the new timetable for the Werribee and Williamstown lines.

One of the difficulties confronting Melbourne's train operator Metro is that it inherited a tangled web of lines where trains cross from one track to another. In peak hours, this leads to delays for thousands of passengers as delays compound. Metro has advised the Government that it needs to build a higher capacity, higher reliability railway with a timetable that is simple and can be expanded to meet Melbourne's future growth.

The previous Government's contract with Metro required the introduction of a new or 'Greenfields' timetable within 18 months of the commencement of Metro's franchise on 30 November 2009. In May last year, Metro planned to develop and implement a new timetable by April or May 2011.

There may have been costly commercial implications if the Government had declined to allow Metro to introduce this new timetable.

As you are aware, there will be some changes to the way trains on the Werribee and Williamstown lines operate. Under the new timetable, there will be an average 11 minute train frequency from Werribee in the morning peak, with trains operating express from Laverton to Newport, providing a significant time saving. This adjustment has been made to allow the introduction of an additional peak V/Line service from Geelong and will also provide three additional Metro peak period services.

In the off-peak, there will be no reduction in the number of services operating between Laverton and the city. However, train services will no longer travel via the City Loop. There will be a reduction in service from Werribee to Laverton. Services will operate from Werribee every 20 minutes, running express from Laverton to Newport, then through to Flinders Street and on to Frankston.

For customers on the Westona Loop, a shuttle service will operate from Laverton to Newport and return every 20 minutes. This significant change will provide a more reliable service on the entire line, including the Westona Loop, by more evenly spacing Werribee services and delivering shorter travel times. A 20 minute service will also operate on the Williamstown line.

Future stages of this new timetable will see other Melbourne rail lines operating independently from each other to further minimise the impact of any disruption on rail users. Metro will continue to make one or two timetable changes in each year of its franchise.

I have stressed to Metro that it is most important that passengers are kept fully informed about these timetable changes. An announcement of full details of the timetable change is expected soon.

**Judges: regional services**

**Raised with:** Attorney-General

**Raised by:** Hon. M. P. Pakula

**Raised on:** 9 February 2011

**REPLY:**

I refer to the matter raised on 9 February 2011 regarding basing judges in regional areas on an ongoing basis.

The commitment made by the Government prior to the election was to work with the independent courts executive service that we will establish, to enable judges to be based in major regional centres such as Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Latrobe Valley on an ongoing basis, rather than just on short-term circuit visits as at present.

The objective of this initiative is to provide greater continuity and boost productivity by reducing time lost due to travelling and to handover issues.

It is reasonable to expect that a number of the judges who will be based in regional centres on an ongoing basis will be judges who live in or near the regional centre concerned. However, this will be a matter to be determined by the courts.

**West Gate punt: service**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport

**Raised by:** Ms Hartland

**Raised on:** 10 February 2011

**REPLY:**

In recent years, many Victorians have chosen to take up cycling for commuter travel, as well as for recreation. The Victorian Government remains committed to cyclists and recognises them as important users of roads and paths.

The Government announced its support and intention to fund the upgrade of the West Gate punt as part of its election commitments. Funding for this project will be confirmed in the budget.

The Department of Transport has begun to investigate the possible scope of the service expansion and what infrastructure and funding may be required. Detailed planning will consider potential passenger demand, days of operation, service frequency and the ticket prices, and funding required to ensure the ongoing viability of the service.

The Government has shown its further support for cycling in its commitment to link the major activity centres of Box Hill and Ringwood through a new shared use Eastern Rail Trail. This new 9.9 kilometre link will encourage more Melburnians to cycle to work or school, or to cycle for leisure. It will facilitate access to a number of other bike trails such as those to Croydon North, Doncaster and Templestowe.

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Thursday, 3 March 2011**

**Cairn Curran Reservoir: water release**

**Raised with:** Minister for Water

**Raised by:** Mr Lenders

**Raised on:** 8 February 2011

**REPLY:**

- The extreme rainfall event in January 2011 has caused widespread damage on the flood plain below Cairn Curran Reservoir, including damage at Baringhup Caravan Park.
- Cairn Curran Reservoir has a capacity of 147,130 ML. A peak inflow of 90,086 ML/day was calculated and a peak release of 80,000 ML/day occurred. The Cairn Curran Reservoir is managed as water supply storage. Its primary purpose is to hold water for customer supply, not flood mitigation. The airspace within Cairn Curran Reservoir that existed on 10 January 2011 prior to the extreme rainfall event was insufficient to handle the sheer amount of water inflows. With a peak inflow of 90,086 ML/day the Reservoir would have needed to be well less than one third capacity to avoid flood releases.
- Goulburn-Murray Water operates the storage in accordance with the requirements of the *Water Act 1989, Bulk Entitlement (Loddon System–Goulburn-Murray Water) Conversion Order 2005*, and associated flood management rules. Goulburn-Murray Water advises that it applied the appropriate procedures throughout the January 2011 event.
- I have requested that Goulburn-Murray Water prepare a briefing on this matter for members of Parliament in late February or March 2011.

**Rail: regional link**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport

**Raised by:** Ms Hartland

**Raised on:** 9 February 2011

**REPLY:**

The timing, funding and implementation of the Regional Rail Link project is being examined by the Department of Transport and the Department of Treasury and Finance in light of project cost pressures.

The Government has approved the acquisition of residential properties in the Southern Cross Station to Deer Park section of the project due to concern generated by media speculation about uncertainty surrounding the project.

Regional Rail Link staff are committed to providing community members and landholders with as much certainty as possible, as quickly as possible—about all aspects of the project.

**Floods: Wickliffe****Raised with: Minister for Water****Raised by: Mr O'Brien****Raised on: 10 February 2011****REPLY:**

I refer to your concern for the residents of Wickliffe and thank you for the invitation to join you in visiting Wickliffe on Thursday, 10 February 2011.

I am informed that the gauge at Wickliffe was upgraded on 14 February 2011 to enable Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (CMA) to remotely monitor what is happening and if flooding is likely. This is a significant step forward as previously the gauge had to be manually read.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA has also compiled information from the recent flood. This information will be valuable for future flood studies in the area.

A comprehensive review of flood warnings and emergency response efforts is to be undertaken in the wake of the severe flooding across Victoria. Led by the former Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Mr Neil Comrie, the review will examine the adequacy of flood predictions and modelling, the timeliness and effectiveness of warnings and public information and the adequacy of evacuations of people most at-risk. An interim report will be submitted to the Premier by 30 June 2011 and a final report is due on 1 December 2011.

**Rail: regional link****Raised with: Minister for Public Transport****Raised by: Ms Broad****Raised on: 10 February 2011****REPLY:**

The timing, funding and implementation of the Regional Rail Link project is being examined by the Department of Transport and the Department of Treasury and Finance in light of project cost pressures.

Regional Rail Link staff are committed to providing community members and landholders with as much certainty as possible, as quickly as possible—about all aspects of the project.