

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

(Extract from book 8)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

The ministry

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Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads	The Hon. T. W. Mulder, MP
Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
Minister for Gaming, Minister for Consumer Affairs, and Minister for Energy and Resources	The Hon. M. A. O'Brien, MP
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Cabinet Secretary.	Mr D. J. Hodgett, MP

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Darveniza, Mr D. Davis, Mr P. Davis, Mr Hall, Ms Lovell, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Scheffer.

Procedure Committee — The President, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Viney

Legislative Council standing committees

Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee — Mr Barber, Ms Broad, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, #Mr Lenders, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

Economy and Infrastructure References Committee — Mr Barber, Ms Broad, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Mr Leane, #Mr Lenders, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and Mr Somyurek.

Environment and Planning Legislation Committee — Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Petrovich, Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Environment and Planning References Committee — Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Petrovich, Mrs Peulich, Mr Scheffer, #Mr Tarlamis, Mr Tee and Ms Tierney.

Legal and Social Issues Legislation Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Brien, Mr O'Donohue, Mrs Petrovich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Legal and Social Issues References Committee — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Brien, Mr O'Donohue, Mrs Petrovich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

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Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Peulich. (*Assembly*): Mr Burgess, Mr Foley, Mr Noonan and Mr Shaw.

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Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn, Mr Somyurek and Mr Tarlamis. (*Assembly*): Ms Ryall and Mrs Victoria.

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Law Reform Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Petrovich. (*Assembly*): Mr Carbines, Ms Garrett, Mr Newton-Brown and Mr Northe.

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Rural and Regional Committee — (*Council*): Mr Drum. (*Assembly*): Mr Howard, Mr Katos, Mr Trezise and Mr Weller.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Mr O'Brien and Mr O'Donohue. (*Assembly*): Mr Brooks, Ms Campbell, Mr Gidley, Mr Nardella and Mr Watt.

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 W. R. Tunnecliffe

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Deputy President: Mr M. VINEY

Acting Presidents: Ms Crozier, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Mr O'Brien, Ms Pennicuik, Mr Ramsay, Mr Tarlamis

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Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. W. A. LOVELL

Leader of the Opposition:

Mr J. LENDERS

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

Mr G. JENNINGS

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. R. HALL

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Mr D. DRUM

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Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Lenders, Mr John	Southern Metropolitan	ALP
Broad, Ms Candy Celeste	Northern Victoria	ALP	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP
Coote, Mrs Andrea	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	O'Brien, Mr David Roland Joseph	Western Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Hon. Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Darveniza, Ms Kaye Mary	Northern Victoria	ALP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Davis, Hon. David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pakula, Hon. Martin Philip	Western Metropolitan	ALP
Davis, Mr Philip Rivers	Eastern Victoria	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Petrovich, Mrs Donna-Lee	Northern Victoria	LP
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Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Hon. Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
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Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Tarlamis, Mr Lee Reginald	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Koch, Mr David Frank	Western Victoria	LP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.
Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Council.
Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.
The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

Public transport: Metro Trains Melbourne — wheelchair access

235. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Public Transport):

- (1) Is it a contractual requirement of Metro —
 - (a) to provide wheelchair access to trains; and
 - (b) for drivers to assist wheelchairs onto trains.
- (2) Has the government or Metro received any complaints stating that this service is not being provided and people in wheelchairs are being left behind on the platform.

ANSWER:

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

- (1) Through its services, Metro is required to provide equivalent access or direct assistance to any user that may have a disability, including those reliant on wheelchairs and scooters. Metro’s drivers and station staff are required to assist people with disabilities onto trains to the best of their abilities.
- (2) The Department of Transport and Metro have received such complaints.

Tourism and major events: minister’s office — car parking spaces

491. HON. M. P. PAKULA — To ask the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations (for the Minister for Tourism and Major Events):

- (1) What was the number of car parking spaces allocated to the minister’s office as at 5 April 2011.
- (2) What was the cost of car parking spaces allocated to the minister’s office as at 5 April 2011.
- (3) What was the market value of car parking spaces allocated to the minister’s office as at 5 April 2011.

ANSWER:

Further to the answer to question on notice no. 674, tabled on 28 February 2012, the following information is provided on the costs of car parking spaces allocated to ministerial offices from 2005–06.

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	14	\$84 963
2006–07	14	\$88 502
2007–08	14	\$92 190
2008–09	14	\$96 030
2009–10	14	\$100 032

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

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COUNCIL

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

HEALTH

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	8	\$10 311
2006-07	7	\$35 568
2007-08	8	\$43 498
2008-09	7	\$39 997
2009-10	12	\$70 180

COMMUNITY SERVICES

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	6	\$7733
2006-07	5	\$25 405
2007-08	0	\$0
2008-09	0	\$0
2009-10	0	\$0

HOUSING

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	6	\$7733
2006-07	4	\$20 324
2007-08	5	\$27 186
2008-09	5	\$28 569
2009-10	6	\$35 090

AGED CARE

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	6	\$7733
2006-07	6	\$30 487
2007-08	6	\$32 624
2008-09	6	\$34 284
2009-10	5	\$29 242

MENTAL HEALTH, Children

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	0	\$0
2006-07	3	\$15 244
2007-08	0	\$0
2008-09	0	\$0
2009-10	0	\$0

MENTAL HEALTH, Senior Victorians, Community Services

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	0	\$0
2006-07	0	\$0
2007-08	7	\$38 061
2008-09	9	\$51 426
2009-10	8	\$46 787

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	5	\$23 100
2006-07	14	\$64 680
2007-08	14	\$70 027
2008-09	14	\$69 720
2009-10	14	\$69 720

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	15	\$68 400
2006-07	12	\$61 517
2007-08	28	\$149 530
2008-09	29	\$166 304
2009-10	25	\$119 109

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PLANNING

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	10	\$45 600
2006-07	10	\$51 264
2007-08	10	\$51 264
2008-09	10	\$54 813
2009-10	10	\$57 266

SPORT AND RECREATION

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	7	\$33 574
2006-07	7	\$34 792
2007-08	7	\$36 054
2008-09	7	\$37 361
2009-10	7	\$38 716

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	0	\$0
2006-07	0	\$0
2007-08	0	\$0
2008-09	0	\$0
2009-10	5	\$15 056

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

ROADS AND PORTS

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	4	\$25 668
2006-07	2	\$13 720
2007-08	8	\$41 148
2008-09	7	\$41 472
2009-10	7	\$41 507

TRANSPORT

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	3	\$19 248
2006-07	1	\$2947
2007-08	10	\$51 430
2008-09	5	\$29 616
2009-10	6	\$35 577

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	13	\$52 767
2006-07	23	\$99 360
2007-08	21	*
2008-09	21	\$106 588
2009-10	18	\$89 251

*No cost available

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

ATTORNEY-GENERAL

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005-06	5	*
2006-07	6	\$32 832
2007-08	7	\$38 304
2008-09	2	\$11 352
2009-10	2	\$12 144

*Parking managed as part of rental — no cost recorded

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 1 May 2012

COUNCIL

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CONSUMER AFFAIRS

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	2	*
2006–07	6	\$32 832
2007–08	6	\$32 832
2008–09	6	\$28 143
2009–10	7	\$32 834

*Parking managed as part of rental — no cost recorded

POLICE, CORRECTIONS AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	3	*
2006–07	3	\$11 160
2007–08	6	\$31 080
2008–09	6	\$32 100
2009–10	8	\$48 576

*Parking managed as part of rental — no cost recorded

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PREMIER

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	3	\$2836
2006–07	6	\$7486
2007–08	7	\$23 090
2008–09	6	\$20 922
2009–10	6	\$19 494

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	67	\$241 082
2006–07	70	\$240 516
2007–08	54	\$259 491
2008–09	51	\$243 929
2009–10	53	\$199 757

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	7	\$34 354
2006–07	6	\$33 017
2007–08	6	\$5453*
2008–09	0	\$0

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2009–10	0	\$0

*Until September 2007

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2005–06	6	\$20 568
2006–07	6	\$20 364
2007–08	11	\$47 108
2008–09	8	\$26 826
2009–10	7	\$24 346

PERIOD FROM 2 DEC 2010 TO 5 APRIL 2011

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND INNOVATION

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	14	\$34 257.00

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

MENTAL HEALTH, WOMEN’S AFFAIRS and COMMUNITY SERVICES

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	7	\$16 100.00

HOUSING and CHILDREN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	3	\$6900.00

HEALTH and AGEING

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	8	\$18 400.00

DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	5	\$8300.00

DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	7	\$13 589.24

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

SPORT, RECREATION, VETERANS’ AFFAIRS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	3	\$6900.00

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	6	\$14 179.80

PLANNING

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	7	\$16 131.85

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

PORTS

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	3	\$5633.54

ROADS and TRANSPORT

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	4	\$7682.10

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	8	\$24 578.40

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2011–5 April 2011	5	\$11 507.55

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PREMIER

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	5	\$7839.00

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	20	\$24 567.00

DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR FINANCE

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	0	\$0

OFFICE OF THE TREASURER

<i>Year</i>	<i>Car Spaces</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
2 Dec 2010–5 April 2011	2	\$3 301.00

Roads: WestLink — Infrastructure Australia submission

599. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Roads): In relation to the WestLink tollway and tunnel proposal, will WestLink to be removed from the Victorian government submission seeking funding from the commonwealth government's Infrastructure Australia fund.

ANSWER:

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

The Victorian coalition government's submission to Infrastructure Australia will be publicly accessible.

Finance: parliamentary budget office — establishment

8150. MR BARBER — To ask the Assistant Treasurer (for the Minister for Finance): In relation to the parliamentary budget office:

- (1) Does the government have a time frame in which to establish the office; if so, what are the details of this time frame.
- (2) What are the intended functions and responsibilities of the office.
- (3) What is the estimated cost of the office.

ANSWER:

The establishment of a parliamentary budget office (office) is a key reform to which the government has committed and which it moving to put in place.

The intended function of the office is to provide independent policy costings.

In developing the proposed model for the office the government will have regard to emerging trends in other jurisdictions. The government is proceeding as expeditiously as possible to implement this reform within this term.

The government will address the funding arrangements for the office in the course of developing the proposed model.

Roads: Glenelg Highway — repair work

8176. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Roads): In relation to the Glenelg Highway:

- (1) What is the time line and budget for the complete repair of the:—
 - (a) highway patching between Coleraine and Casterton;
 - (b) repatching of Muntham Hill, as toured by the minister in July 2011;
 - (c) clean up of road repair waste and debris from road repair materials unsettled by heavy rain in September 2011 along the highway; and
 - (d) upgrade to the highway at Strathdownie (near Cawkers Creek).
- (2) When was the Department of Transport or VicRoads first made aware of the extensive damage to these roads.
- (3) As at 22 November 2011, were repairs occurring, or soon to be occurring, on any of the above roads in sections that have had previous repair works completed in the period 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2011.

ANSWER:

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

- (1a) Patching of several sites between Coleraine and Muntham are programmed to be completed by the end of April 2012 at an estimated cost of \$460 000.
- (1b) Pavement failures at Muntham Hill on the Glenelg Highway were rectified in January 2012 at a cost of approximately \$10 000.
- (1c) The material referred to is in small quantities that cannot be economically removed. Small amounts of this material do not present an environmental risk. It is common that this material is incorporated into the road shoulder.
- (1d) The Glenelg Highway at Strathdownie (Cawkers Creek, approximately 16 kilometres west of Casterton) was repaired in September 2011 at no additional cost to the state.
- (2) Damage to the roads was identified during road inspections which are conducted every two weeks.
- (3) Two small sections of pavement that were repaired with a temporary treatment during the period of July to September 2011 will require a more permanent treatment.

Roads: Federation Trail — extension

8235. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Roads): In relation to the Federation Trail in the western suburbs linking Millers Road, Altona North, to Hyde St, Spotswood, when will construction commence on the section between Fogarty Avenue and Hyde Street.

ANSWER:

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

The construction of a shared bicycle path for the section of the Federation Trail between Fogarty Avenue and Hyde Street is not currently a committed project.

Roads: Whitehall–Parker streets, Footscray — traffic management

8237. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Roads): In relation to the intersection of Whitehall and Parker streets, Footscray:

- (1) Since 1 January 2010, on what dates and for how long, has VicRoads monitored the intersection for compliance with clearway rules.
- (2) At what times of the day has VicRoads monitoring of the intersection occurred.
- (3) Will the minister release the VicRoads detailed investigation into the intersection designed to determine the most appropriate treatment options and the proposal to install traffic signals at the intersection.

ANSWER:

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

- (1) The intersection of Whitehall Street and Parker Street in Footscray is not governed by clearway restrictions.
- (2) VicRoads undertook a 1-hour site inspection at approximately 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 15 June 2011, and a further 30-minute inspection at approximately 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 22 June 2011. Further site monitoring included traffic and bicycle counts between 7.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 16 August 2011.

- a(3) VicRoads is able to provide the details of its investigation into the intersection and the pedestrian/bike traffic signal proposal.

Public transport: Federation Trail — extension

8238. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Public Transport): In relation to the extension of the Federation Trail section from Fogarty Avenue to Hyde Street in Spotswood —

- (1) What is the specific route for the section.
- (2) When will works begin.
- (3) When will works be completed.

ANSWER:

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

A number of options have been considered in relation to the extension of the Federation Trail for the section from Fogarty Avenue to Hyde Street. A final alignment is subject to further detailed investigation and stakeholder engagement.

The construction of a shared bicycle path for the section of the Federation Trail between Fogarty Avenue and Hyde Street is not currently a committed project.

Roads: Anderson Road, Sunshine — speed limit

8252. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Roads): What is the speed limit on Anderson Road, Sunshine.

ANSWER:

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

A 60 km/h speed limit applies to Anderson Road, Sunshine.

Agriculture and food security: Landcare — coordinator funding

8258. MS PULFORD — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills (for the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security): What progress has been made on the government's election commitment to provide \$12 million over four years to fund 75 per cent of the salaries of 60 Landcare coordinators across the state.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibilities. It falls within the responsibilities of the Minister for Environment and Climate Change.

Higher education and skills: Vocational Training Group — deregistration

8263. MS PENNICUIK — To ask the Minister for Higher Education and Skills: In relation to reports that some 1400 students were caught up in the operations of the Vocational Training Group (VTG), which

the minister has had investigated and deregistered, and that these students may not have been provided with the necessary training to be assessed as fully competent:

- (1) What conditions did the VTG fail to meet that led to its deregistration.
- (2) How was the VTG able to provide only 15 hours of supervised instruction to the students and yet claim the full amount of funding from Skills Victoria.
- (3) How does the minister intend to stop the unregulated practice of delivering less training hours than what is claimed for.
- (4) Have the VTG students been contacted and informed of the problems associated with the training they have received and the assessments undertaken.
- (5) What measures have or will be taken to independently assess these students to establish their level of competence and if there are any deficiencies identified, what remedial action is planned for those students and at whose cost.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

- (1) The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) acted to cancel the registration of the Victorian Training Group (VTG) following a thorough investigation involving a quality audit and financial health assessment. As the decision to cancel the registration of VTG is currently the subject of a review before the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), it is not appropriate for me to comment further on the decision.
- (2) While the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development contracts registered training organisations (RTOs) to provide training services, the contract does not specify the amount of time to be allocated to the training. Training packages do not define how an RTO will deliver the training or assessment. Training packages define the competencies to be achieved as a result of training and assessment services. RTOs are responsible for customising training services according to the needs of students.
- (3) The VRQA audits RTOs against the Australian quality training framework (AQTF) and the VRQA guidelines for VET providers. The department also audits against the requirements of the contract. In the case of VTG, as soon as the VRQA became aware of issues around the quality of training and assessment, it initiated an audit which resulted in the cancellation of VTG's registration. The department has also initiated an audit against the conditions of the contract. A rapid response team will be established to facilitate timely, onsite responses to complaints about the quality of training services delivered by contracted organisations.
- (4) The VRQA has contacted all students listed on VTG's records as having undertaken training with VTG in 2011. All students have been advised of the cancellation of the provider's registration. The VRQA has sought their consent to provide contact details to Higher Education and Skills in order that the department may act to minimise any disadvantage in regard to funding for future training.
- (5) The VRQA has established that no qualifications or statements of attainment have been issued to students who trained with VTG in 2011. The VRQA has obtained student records from VTG and, pending the outcome of the review by VCAT, is able to provide students with copies of any records of assessment. Students can provide these records to a training provider who is registered to deliver the qualification in question for the purpose of seeking recognition of prior learning.