

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

13, 14 and 15 November 2012

(Extract from book 18)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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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.

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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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Leader of The Nationals:

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Mr D. DRUM

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Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Tarlamis, Mr Lee Reginald	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
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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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WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 13 November 2012

Living Longer Living Stronger: funding

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Darveniza

Raised on: 6 December 2011

REPLY:

Living Longer Living Stronger programs are delivered by established local organisations and facilities such as gyms, leisure centres and Community Health Centres. These facilities use down time to offer affordable, sustainable strength training programs which are not reliant on government or COTA funding.

Funding to COTA itself has been used to accredit the facilities that provide endorsed Living Longer Living Stronger programs and not for the delivery of those programs. COTA has indicated that they will continue the Living Longer Living Stronger endorsement program while seeking alternative funding.

There is no reason to believe that the current local programs will not continue to be offered.

Nurses: enterprise bargaining

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 7 February 2012

REPLY:

The Baillieu Government has great respect for the valuable work that nurses and other health workers perform.

The Baillieu Government is pleased to confirm that an agreement as reached between the Victorian Hospitals' Industrial Association and the Australian Nurses' Federation in March 2012 was endorsed by ballot of affected employees on 8 June 2012 and formally approved by Fair Work Australia on 29 June 2012. This is a good outcome for all concerned, including nurses, patients and tax payers, and was achieved within the Government's wages policy.

Key features of the settlement include:

- a four year agreement to 31 March 2016
- four salary increases of 2.5 per cent per annum
- new or increased allowances, e.g. continuing professional development allowance
- new Enrolled Nurse classification structure and salary levels
- new flexibilities regarding Enrolled Nurse utilisation and local workload management/nurse-patient ratios
- harmonisation and rationalisation of conditions, e.g. regarding public holiday entitlements

– \$10 million per annum earmarked to fund extra staff for rehabilitation and day oncology services.

This settlement ensures that Victoria continues to provide public sector nurses with the best working conditions in Australia and will allow Victoria to build on its reputation as having the best health system in Australia.

Budget: women's health services

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Broad

Raised on: 19 June 2012

REPLY:

Due to the external economic environment, Victoria's revenue forecasts over the next four years will be significantly lower than was previously thought. Budget adjustments have been made across government, including from the health portfolio. This has included an adjustment to the budget allocated to the Primary, Community and Dental Health Output Group, through which funding is allocated for many activities delivered by community health services.

It is not the case that funding of \$25 million or more has been removed from community health services. A budget adjustment has been made in relation to the Community and Women's Health Integrated Health Promotion Program. This forms part of a larger budget reform agenda to ensure that Victorians benefit from high quality, lower cost services.

Under the Victorian Women's Health Program, women's health services determine which priorities they focus their health promotion effort on and what programs they deliver. This is within a broad framework that requires services to focus on the greatest needs of women in their communities. Therefore, specific women's health initiatives have not been cut by the Victorian Government.

Almost all service providers, including Women's Health Goulburn North East and Women's Health Loddon Mallee, receive a variety of other government funding that is not affected by the health promotion budget adjustment. This funding supports activities such as the prevention of, and responses to, violence against women.

It should also be noted that the 2012–13 Victorian Budget allocated an additional \$30.8 million specifically to address violence and sexual assault against women and children and to respond effectively when it does occur.

Manufacturing: careers program

Raised with: Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade

Raised by: Mr Somyurek

Raised on: 21 June 2012

REPLY:

I am informed that:

The Victorian Government is committed to rigorous program evaluation and ensuring that our programs meet industry needs. An independent evaluation of the Careers in Manufacturing program was undertaken this year to consider the appropriateness of the program for addressing the needs of the manufacturing industry.

My Department has provided the evaluation report to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) for its consideration. The Departments are currently considering the best approach to working with industry to promote careers in manufacturing.

Edenhope Airport: expansion

Raised with: Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry

Raised by: Mr O'Brien

Raised on: 16 August 2012

REPLY:

The Victorian Government recognises the significant economic and social benefits that airports provide their surrounding communities in terms of connectivity, tourism, freight and emergency services access. It is for this reason that the \$20 million Regional Aviation Fund has been established to assist with aviation infrastructure upgrades at regional public-use airports across Victoria.

I have recently had the pleasure of visiting Edenhope Aerodrome to announce the West Wimmera Shire Council's successful application to the Regional Aviation Fund for assistance with widening the current runway—a critical infrastructure upgrade that will see the resumption and continuation of Air Ambulance services at the aerodrome. Additionally, it will provide for greater utilisation of the aerodrome by larger aircraft and other aviation-related enterprises, including but not limited to general aviation users, aerial agriculture and fire fighting services.

Officers from my Department continue to work closely with the West Wimmera Shire Council to progress this important initiative.

Mildura Base Hospital: future

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Broad

Raised on: 28 August 2012

REPLY:

I can advise that I have met with a number of representatives of the Sunraysia community in Melbourne and have visited the Mildura Hospital. I am committed to continuing to engage with a broad range of representatives in Mildura when my Parliamentary and other commitments allow.

I have recently reformed and strengthened the Community Advisory Board after it was allowed to run down under the previous Health Minister. This involved a broad public advertising process and selection of members with standing in the community to put the community view to hospital management and the government.

Building industry: union action

Raised with: Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 30 August 2012

REPLY:

Police perform a difficult role in balancing the competing rights and interests of citizens while maintaining public order and security. The Victoria Police Code of Conduct requires police to provide a safe, secure and orderly society and preserve the peace, protect life and property, prevent offences and detect and apprehend offenders.

Police attended at the Grocon construction site in Lonsdale Street on a number of occasions to facilitate entry by workers who were obstructed by a blockade of the site by the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

(CFMEU). A police presence was also necessary to ensure public safety, and to prevent breaches of the peace being committed by supporters obstructing footpaths and roadways.

These tasks comprise an essential part of the police role for which police receive specific training. Police attendance at events of this nature is an important component of front-line policing.

In relation to the recovery of costs arising out of this dispute, you will be aware that the government has joined Grocon in a Supreme Court action against the CFMEU for damages and for breaching court orders.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Health: infrastructure projects

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 6 September 2012

REPLY:

I can assure the member we will closely monitor the delivery of the important projects to which she has referred (\$22.7 million new Charlton hospital, \$10 million Castlemaine Hospital upgrade, \$18 million Swan Hill hospital aged-care facility redevelopment, \$15 million for new ambulance stations in Epsom, Eaglehawk, Strathdale and Bendigo city and \$630 million New Bendigo Hospital project) and we will report regularly to the community on their progress.

Aviation industry: western suburbs

Raised with: Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry

Raised by: Mr Elsbury

Raised on: 11 September 2012

REPLY:

The Victorian Government recognises the significant economic and social benefits that airports provide their surrounding communities and to the Victorian economy at large. With over 150 public-use aerodromes across the state, Victoria is well placed to secure domestic and international investment in aviation and other compatible industries.

With respect to aviation assets in the western region, the development of Avalon Airport is a high priority and forms a key part of the Liberal Nationals Coalition Plan for the Aviation Industry (2010). The Victorian Government has committed \$50 million towards the planning and development of a direct rail link to Avalon Airport, along with \$3 million towards the construction of a dedicated jet fuel pipeline to service airlines operating from the airport. Additionally, officers from my Department have worked closely with the airport to secure increased investment and international status at Avalon Airport.

Point Cook, as the birthplace of the RAAF, is an important historical and operational airport for Victoria. While it remains an active Defence asset, a modest level of flight training activities continue to be conducted by RMIT on site. The Commonwealth Government recently undertook a review into increased civilian access to Defence Airfields, of which both Point Cook and Avalon Airports were included. Recognising the importance of both of these airports from an economic perspective, the Victorian Government strongly advocated for increase civilian access, particularly in relation to Point Cook. It is my understanding that the Commonwealth is continuing to review the Defence presence at Point Cook and greater direction on this matter will be available by 2017.

Whittington: community renewal project

Raised with: Minister for Community Services

Raised by: Mr Koch

Raised on: 13 September 2012

REPLY:

I am pleased to be able to announce that on 11 September 2012 I approved more than \$700 000 for nine community projects through the Community Renewal Flexible Fund. This funding package includes \$196 750 to support three priority community projects in Whittington:

- \$11 750 for the Enhancing Early Years Outcomes for Whittington Children;
- \$35 000 for the Grinter Community Garden; and
- \$150 000 for Whittington Works.

The Community Renewal initiative is a government investment to address disadvantage in eight urban communities: Frankston North, Laverton, Whittington, Bayswater North, Chelsea, Craigieburn, Hampton Park and Rosebud West.

Community Renewal provides targeted support in these communities to build partnerships between residents, businesses, local organisations and all levels of government to assist them to realise their needs and aspirations.

National Centre for Farmer Health: funding

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 13 September 2012

REPLY:

As the Member for Western Victoria is aware, the National Centre for Farmer Health was established in 2009 with the previous Victorian Government's funding of \$2.4 million over four years (or \$0.6 million per annum) to 30 June 2012 through the Future Farming Strategy. The program was a lapsing program with no long-term secure funding base left by the previous government.

I first met with Mr Fletcher, CEO, Western District Health Service on 17 May 2012 to discuss the future of the National Centre for Farmer Health.

Since then, I have strongly advocated for national funding for the Centre and have taken the following actions:

- I wrote to the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Ageing seeking funding for the National Centre. The Commonwealth indicated they do not believe the work of the Centre has national relevance and declined the invitation to provide funding;
- through the Secretary of the Standing Committee on Health, I wrote to my jurisdictional colleagues proposing a national co-shared funding arrangement;
- on 10 August 2012, I submitted and spoke to the Standing Committee on Health about my proposed national cost-shared arrangement. My jurisdictional counterparts recognised the importance of the health of the agricultural workforce and the need for greater collaboration; but were unable to contribute funding;

- on 3 September 2012 I wrote again to the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Ageing seeking a 1:2 cost shared arrangement, and suggested the Victorian Government could contribute \$250 000 to the Commonwealth's \$500 000 contribution which would provide the Centre with \$750 000. No response has been received to date.

I met with Mr Fletcher again on Thursday 20 September 2012 where we discussed these actions; the implications for the National Centre; and my hope that the Commonwealth Minister for Health and Ageing will respond positively to my request.

Kilsyth Basketball: funding

Raised with: Minister for Sport and Recreation

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 13 September 2012

REPLY:

My department has contacted Basketball Victoria, who have advised that Swinburne University will be sponsoring Kilsyth Basketball for the 2013 season.

Department of Primary Industries: staffing levels

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture and Food Security

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 9 October 2012

REPLY:

I refer to the matter you raised during the Adjournment debate in the Legislative Council on 9 October 2012 in relation to staff movements from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) facility in Frankston, and your reference to the Coalition's election commitment to place a high priority on weed and vermin control.

In relation to staff movements in the context of the pending closure of the DPI Frankston facility, I note it was the former government that made the decision to close Frankston as part of a plan to consolidate DPI's metropolitan research effort in the new purpose-built Agri-Bio facility at Bundoora.

In relation to the Coalition Government's commitment to research and development supporting Victoria's food and fibre industries, the Government has invested an additional \$61.4 million in the 2012–13 Budget towards research and development in the dairy, grains, red meat and horticulture industries as well as biosecurity as part of the Growing Food and Fibre initiative.

The Government has delivered on its commitment to enhance pest weed and animal compliance activities. DPI officers inspected 3493 properties over 329 000 hectares statewide last year, some 700 more properties inspected than the previous year. There has been a 31 per cent increase in land management notices and a 27 per cent rise in directions notices issued to land-holders. Follow up inspections resulted in 76 land-holders issued with fines and nine prosecuted.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Buses: short-term tickets

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 9 October 2012

REPLY:

Following a six-month review of the technical, commercial and financial aspects of the myki project, the Coalition Government accepted the recommendation to continue with myki in a modified format.

Modifications to the initial project design include the omission of ticket machines on trams, halting the rollout of the system to V/Line intercity (long distance) trains and long distance V/Line coaches and eliminating short term disposable smart card tickets.

These changes reduce complex elements of the system and will lead to improved system reliability and limit the potential for further cost overruns.

When short term tickets are phased out on buses where myki is operating in regional Victoria during 2013, passengers will need a myki to travel. Many people have a number of bank, credit and other identification cards in their wallet or purse that they do not use each day. The Transport Ticketing Authority (TTA) expects that all Victorians who use public transport, whether that be every day, once a month or once a year, will have a myki in their wallet or purse for when they choose to use public transport.

With a myki in their wallet or purse, passengers will always pay the lowest fare and can continue to top up through the bus driver as they do today.

Women: TAFE funding

Raised with: Minister for Higher Education and Skills

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 9 October 2012

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government's reforms to refocus vocational education and training (VET) are designed to drive uptake in courses which provide real jobs for graduates and meet the Victorian economy's skill needs.

The Victorian TAFE Association analysis looked at 10 courses undertaken mostly by women and drew conclusions as to the impact of the recent reforms overall. It is inappropriate to make gender-based comparisons in this way as historically, more males than females have been enrolled in Victoria's VET system, just as there are now more women than men at university.

Under the Government reforms, Refocusing Vocational Training in Victoria, funding for high level certificates in areas such as health care, children's services and community services have actually increased by up to as much as 8 per cent.

Courses with near 100 per cent enrolment by women have seen marked increases in funding rates, such as:

- Certificate IV in Dental Assisting, 100 per cent female enrolment in 2011, up by 5 per cent;
- Certificate IV in Aged Care, 90 per cent female enrolment in 2011, up by 5 per cent;

- Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs Work, 70 per cent female enrolment in 2011, up 23 per cent;
- Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance, 88 per cent female enrolment in 2011, up by 5 per cent;
- Certificate IV in Nursing (Enrolled/Division 2 nursing), 88 per cent female enrolment in 2011, up by 5 per cent;
- Certificate IV in Mental Health, 76 per cent female enrolment in 2011, up by 23 per cent; and
- Certificate III in Hairdressing, 94 per cent female enrolment, up 21 per cent.

The Government has budgeted funding for training delivery at the highest level ever of \$1.2 billion per year on training subsidies over the next four years. This is a total of \$4.9 billion over the next four years in training subsidies alone to secure a high-quality, sustainable and focused training system.

The best thing we can do for women in Victoria is to make sure that we have a training system that is sustainable into the future; that they can readily access; provides them with the skills and support; and that assists them to get jobs. The Government will continue to ensure that we have a strong training system that increases pathways to jobs that enable women and all Victorians to participate in the future of this state.

Bedford Road–Great Ryrie Street, Ringwood: traffic lights

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 9 October 2012

REPLY:

Bedford Road and Great Ryrie Street are local roads managed by the Maroondah City Council. Local governments in Victoria share funding responsibility for local roads with the Commonwealth. This has been the case since 1991. Councils receive Financial Assistance Grants from the Federal Government, taking into consideration the Council's local road responsibilities. The Federal Government provides additional funding for road safety projects through the Nation Building Black Spot program, and for road maintenance-related projects through the Roads to Recovery program.

It is the responsibility of the Maroondah City Council to investigate and determine the most appropriate safety treatment for the intersection of Bedford Road and Great Ryrie Street, and to assess whether such a treatment meets the criteria for funding under one of the abovementioned Federal Government grants or programs. As part of its investigation, the Council may seek advice from VicRoads about treatment options for the intersection.

Yallourn power station: flood compensation

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture and Food Security

Raised by: Mr Lenders

Raised on: 10 October 2012

REPLY:

I refer to the matter you raised during the Adjournment debate in the Legislative Council on 10 October 2012 regarding the Energy Australia (formerly TRUenergy) Yallourn mine dewatering together with the request that I meet with affected land-holders.

Mr Gary Blackwood MLA, Member for Narracan, hosted a meeting for me with affected land-holders on Thursday 1 November 2012. I appreciated the opportunity to meet land-holders and discuss their circumstances and experiences.

Thank you for raising this important matter with me.

Calder Park Raceway: major events

Raised with: Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Raised by: Mr Elsbury

Raised on: 10 October 2012

REPLY:

I thank the member for Western Metropolitan for bringing to my attention the range of facilities available at Calder Park Raceway for the staging of major events.

The 440 hectare site is well located for event organisers with road access via the Calder Highway and the newly electrified Sunbury rail line.

The raceway's capacity to stage both motorsport and cycling activities including NASCAR and AUSCAR races, the Australian National drag racing championships, legal off-street drag racing and cycling club events on its 4.2 kilometre circuit is commendable.

The Government is committed to supporting major events in Victoria and is proud that our State has one of the most prestigious and successful major events calendars in the world.

In coming months Melbourne will host the Spring Racing Carnival, the Boxing Day Test Match, the Australian Open Tennis and Australian Formula One Grand Prix.

The choice of a venue to stage a major event is very much dependent on a range of operational, safety and logistical requirements.

I will provide the details of the facilities of the Calder Park Raceway to the Victorian Major Events Company, which is chartered with the responsibility of identifying and securing major events for the State.

Carers: Northern Metropolitan Region

Raised with: Minister for Community Services

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 11 October 2012

REPLY:

The Victorian Government continues to implement important state reforms to improve the lives of people with a disability such as self-directed supports and expanding respite and accommodation options. We are committed to ensure that respite services for people with a disability, their families and carers are flexible, provide real choice and are responsive to individual and carer needs and preferences

The Victorian Government has acknowledged the importance of carers and care relationships through the introduction of the Carers Recognition Act 2012, which recognises, values and promotes the role of carers within the community.

As part of the government's \$21 million plan to improve disability respite and carer support services, the government allocated funding to over 30 service providers, including five in the City of Whittlesea, to deliver innovative respite support and school holiday respite support.

North and Western Metropolitan Region currently has 15 respite facilities which provide a total of 85 beds. With the additional beds in the new Whittlesea respite care, which is currently in development, the total number of beds

in the region will grow to 90. This equates to 30 per cent of the total number of respite beds in the State. Individual Support Packages and a range of other support and care services are also available throughout Victoria for people with a disability.

The City of Whittlesea's business case-'Respite needs for the City of Whittlesea' was considered as part of a community consultation process undertaken by the Department of Human Services in 2011. This process informed the development of the Victorian Government's new and innovative responses to respite and supported accommodation services across Victoria.

Requests for submissions for new respite and supported accommodation services were advertised in September 2011. I am advised the department held a number of information sessions to support the submission process and that departmental staff provided relevant information directly to officers from the City of Whittlesea. I was disappointed to hear that there were no submissions for facility based respite services in Whittlesea. I have asked the North and West Metropolitan Region to continue to work with the City of Whittlesea to consider appropriate supports for its residents.

Society of Dyers and Colourists of Australia and New Zealand: ministerial meeting

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture and Food Security

Raised by: Mr O'Brien

Raised on: 11 October 2012

REPLY:

I refer to the matter you raised during the Adjournment debate in the Legislative Council on 11 October 2012 regarding the issues facing the textile industry. I am happy to meet with representatives of the Society of Dyers and Colourists of Australia and New Zealand (the Society) at a mutually convenient time.

Given the importance of the sheep and wool industry, the Victorian Government is implementing a range of projects and programs across relevant portfolio areas to ensure that maximum benefit can be gained from this important industry sector.

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) has a number of projects and programs to support the productivity and competitiveness of Victoria's sheep and wool growing sector. Foremost amongst these are the BestWool/BestLamb extension network and the EverGraze project, both of which are generating lasting productivity benefits for participants in Victoria's sheep and wool growing industry. DPI's approximately \$2.2 million investment (over four years) in the BestWool/BestLamb program is used to leverage additional funding from industry and peak bodies. BestWool/BestLamb is the primary vehicle in Victoria for delivering on Meat & Livestock Australia and Australian Wool Innovation's flagship adoption program: 'Making More from Sheep'.

Similarly, DPI is collaborating with the Future Farm Industries Co-operative Research Centre (CRC), Meat & Livestock Australia and Australian Wool Innovation to deliver the EverGraze project in Victoria, and is managing the project nationally. EverGraze is developing, testing and demonstrating new farming systems in different environments across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia. The target is to increase profits of sheep and cattle enterprises by up to 50 per cent and at the same time improve water management, use of perennials, biodiversity and soil health.

Within this framework, a study of sheep genomic breeding values for meat and wool undertaken by scientists employed in DPI's Biosciences Research Division has informed the national Sheep Co-operative Research Centre on future design of the national genetic reference flock (Merino, Border Leicester, Polled Dorset and White Suffolk sheep breeds). DPI also undertakes research and extension into biosecurity and animal welfare issues affecting sheep and wool growers, such as the potential use of electronic ear tags for tracking sheep in the supply chain, and finding alternatives to mulesing for combating fly strike in sheep.

The Department of Business and Innovation currently offers a range of programs designed to assist the manufacturing sector in Victoria. A local textile company and fellmonger, Huyck Wangner at Breakwater near

Geelong, received an Industries for Today and Tomorrow grant in November 2011. Fibremakers in Bayswater (a subsidiary of Godfrey Hirst) recently received a \$213 000 Investing in Manufacturing Technology grant.

Victoria is the home for the International Fibre Centre (IFC), the only organisation in Australia that provides funding for skills development specifically for the textiles and fibre industry. The IFC is a 'public body' under Victoria's Financial Management Act 1994.

Victorian training providers have also been recognised by the State Government for their innovation and industry collaboration. Most recently, the 2012 winner of the Victorian Industry Collaboration Award (sponsored by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development) was the Textile and Fashion Hub Project, delivered by Kangan Institute and the Council of Textile and Fashion Industries of Australia (TFIA).

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Pakenham Secondary College: technology-enabled learning centre

Raised with: Minister for Higher Education and Skills

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 11 October 2012

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Technology Enabled Learning Centre (TELC) pilot being undertaken across the Gippsland region will deliver new learning opportunities for students including:

- Ability to participate in classes remotely using video collaboration
- Using technology to share learning and information with other students in other learning sites
- Working with experts who can extend the spread of their expertise across different geographical locations simultaneously
- Using podcasts and other technology storage technologies to participate in learning activities outside of the normal hours of delivery
- Participation opportunities closer to the students' homes or employers or, in some instances, in their workplaces
- Collaborative learning with the richness of diverse geographic participation by students across campuses, across townships, across the country and from around the globe
- Sharing across learning institutions including secondary schools, TAFEs and universities as well as private training organisations and Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers.

More than 20 sites are being investigated for their suitability to house and deliver benefits from a TELC. Some of these are already confirmed and I am pleased to inform you that Pakenham Secondary is a confirmed site in this pilot program as well as campus sites at Chisholm, Central Gippsland and Advance TAFEs, that are working together to start the delivery of technology enabled learning across the region in the first semester of 2013.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 14 November 2012

Bendigo Art Gallery: exhibitions

Raised with: Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Raised by: Mr P. Davis

Raised on: 6 September 2012

REPLY:

I thank the member for Eastern Victoria for acknowledging the success of the Grace Kelly Exhibition, held at the Bendigo Art Gallery from 11 March until 17 June 2012.

The exhibition ran for 100 days, and it was an overwhelming success, with a final attendance figure of 152, 706. The exhibition was not only a success for the gallery, but for the City of Greater Bendigo as a whole.

I understand that the gallery is currently undergoing renovations, however it is not closed, and it is holding smaller exhibitions. Current exhibitions include Philanthropy: the art of giving. The gallery is also currently negotiating future blockbuster exhibitions which may be held in early 2014.

The Coalition Government is committed to developing tourism in regional Victoria and it supports major exhibitions such as Grace Kelly: Style Icon and The White Wedding Dress: Two Hundred Years of Wedding Fashions. Both exhibitions showcased the cultural tourism strengths of regional Victoria and in particular, the Goldfields region and the City of Greater Bendigo.

Events of this magnitude assist regions with opportunities to generate new audiences, raise its profile via media exposure, and generate additional revenue streams.

Cultural events such as the Grace Kelly: Style Icon exhibition add to the cultural life of Victorians and provide the chance to experience world class events, enhance liveability for Victorians, and support the local creative community.

The Coalition Government through the Victorian Major Events Company will work with the City of Greater Bendigo and other areas of regional Victoria to secure exhibitions of this calibre to drive visitation and increase the economic benefits to regional Victoria.

Police: Mount Waverley station

Raised with: Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Raised by: Mr Tarlamis

Raised on: 13 September 2012

REPLY:

The government is well on the way to delivering on its commitment of providing \$602 million to deliver 1700 extra frontline police members by November 2014, and by the end of June next year there will be an additional 1200 of these sworn officers allocated to communities across Victoria.

This largest increase in law enforcement funding in Victoria's history will also see funding of \$212 million for 940 Protective Services Officers (PSOs) to be located at all metropolitan railway stations from 6.00 p. m. until the last

train, including Mount Waverley. The 2012–13 State Budget included further funding of \$56 million to upgrade police station infrastructure to accommodate these additional police and PSOs.

Work for the planning and development on the upgrade of the Mount Waverley Police Station to operate 24 hours was included in the 2012–13 budget. This work is now under way.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Women: development and empowerment program

Raised with: Attorney-General

Raised by: Mrs Coote

Raised on: 9 October 2012

REPLY:

The government strongly supports the work of iEmpower in providing the Youth Development and Empowerment Program (Program) not only for young Muslim women, as Mrs Coote recently witnessed in the South East Metropolitan region, but for young people from many backgrounds.

The Department of Justice has funded this Program over the last three years, providing a budget of \$1.2 million over this period. Nine individual courses were delivered to 30 June 2012. The Program, which takes up to 25 young people at any given time, has been offered to young people from refugee backgrounds residing across the state, at multiple locations including Kensington, West Heidelberg, Dandenong, Sunshine, Footscray, Mildura, Braybrook and Ringwood, and has had excellent completion rates.

This Program is achieving good outcomes in avoiding young people from refugee communities coming into negative contact with the criminal justice system. It has done this by helping link participants to education, training and employment opportunities, building their sense of civic responsibility and helping them strengthen their sense of positive self-identity and belonging to the community in which they live.

A further four Programs are planned over the next twelve months, including further work in regional Victoria.

Ms Gabrielle Levine, the Regional Director for the South East Metropolitan Region of the Department of Justice, with whom Mrs Coote asked me to discuss the Program, informs me that, based on the South East Metropolitan region's experience and the feedback from young women involved in the Program, two new projects are in development through support from the Department of Justice and the local community. The Reducing Family Violence project is aimed specifically at addressing family violence as described by the young women and their mothers involved in the Program. The second project is the women's soccer and netball tournament, which is modelled on the successful men's soccer tournaments held in 2011 and 2012. The aim of the project is to provide young women with an opportunity to play organised sport and put them into contact with sporting clubs, to aid their transition into mainstream soccer and netball sports clubs and leagues.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 15 November 2012

Calder Highway: maintenance

Raised with: Minister for Roads

Raised by: Mrs Petrovich

Raised on: 12 September 2012

REPLY:

Winter rains have impacted severely on the condition of arterial roads throughout central Victoria, including the Macedon Ranges.

This has led to the rapid deterioration of some sections of the Calder Freeway and has resulted in severe potholing. In a number of cases, the resultant repair works required significant patching.

In response to the deterioration of sections of pavement, \$750 000 of asphalt patching works were recently completed on the Calder Freeway.

Further maintenance expenditure is planned for the Calder Freeway including:

- additional patching and an extensive (\$1.5 million) reseal program for the Calder Freeway in late 2012 and early 2013;
- \$500 000 of open graded asphalt in the Black Forest section in early 2013;
- further sealing works (\$1.6 million) from the recently announced \$45 million repair and restore package, to be undertaken in early 2013.

Motorists using the Calder Freeway can expect to see improvements to the road conditions in the coming months.

City of Kingston: councillor conduct

Raised with: Assistant Treasurer

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 10 October 2012

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian WorkCover Authority (VWA) is aware of the bullying allegations raised by an officer of Kingston City Council against three councillors.

I understand that the complainant made contact with the VWA's Advisory Service in mid-July 2012. I am advised that in this case the VWA provided a bullying information pack and the complainant returned a summary of events form outlining the alleged bullying to the VWA in early August.

I understand that upon initial review of this information in accordance with its usual procedures, the VWA advised the complainant of the outcome in writing on 14 August 2012.

