

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

**10, 11 and 12 December 2013**

**(Extract from book 17)**

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## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and Minister for Bushfire Response . . . . .	The Hon. K. A. Wells, MP
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Community Services, and Minister for Disability Services and Reform . . . . .	The Hon. M. L. N. Wooldridge, MP
Cabinet Secretary . . . . .	Mr N. Wakeling, 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, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Drum, Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, Mr Melhem, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford and Mr Ramsay.

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

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

**Environment and Planning References Committee** — Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Elsbury, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #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, #Mr Leane, Ms Mikakos, Mrs Millar, Mr O'Brien, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

**Legal and Social Issues References Committee** — Ms Crozier, Mr Elasmr, #Mr Elsbury, Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Ms Mikakos, Mrs Millar, Mr O'Brien, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

*# Participating member*

## Joint committees

**Accountability and Oversight Committee** — (*Council*): Mr P. Davis, Mr O'Brien. (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Mr McIntosh and Ms Neville.

**Dispute Resolution Committee** — (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Lovell and Ms Pennicuik. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Clark, Ms Hennessy, Mr Merlino, Mr O'Brien and Mr Walsh.

**Economic Development, Infrastructure and Outer Suburban/Interface Services Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Mrs Peulich. (*Assembly*): Mr Burgess, Mrs Fyffe, Mr McGuire and Mr Shaw.

**Education and Training Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Elasmr, Mrs Kronberg and Mrs Millar. (*Assembly*): Mr Brooks and Mr Crisp.

**Electoral Matters Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Finn, Mrs Peulich, Mr Somyurek and Mr Tarlamis. (*Assembly*): Mr Northe.

**Environment and Natural Resources Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Koch. (*Assembly*): Mr Bull, Ms Duncan, Mr Pandazopoulos and Ms Wreford.

**Family and Community Development Committee** — (*Council*): Mrs Coote, Ms Crozier and Mr O'Brien. (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McGuire and Mr Wakeling.

**House Committee** — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*) Mr Drum, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, and Mr P. Davis. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Ms Beattie, Ms Campbell, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Thomson, Mr Wakeling and Mr Weller.

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**Law Reform, Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Scheffer. (*Assembly*): Mr Carroll, Mr McCurdy and Mr Southwick.

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee** — (*Council*): Mr O'Brien and Mr Ondarchie. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Ms Hennessey, Mr Morris, Mr Pakula and Mr Scott.

**Road Safety Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Elsbury. (*Assembly*): Mr Languiller, Mr Perera, Mr Tilley and Mr Thompson.

**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 Dalla-Riva. (*Assembly*): Ms Barker, Ms Campbell, Mr Gidley, Mr Nardella, Dr Sykes 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

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Mr J. LENDERS

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**Leader of The Nationals:**

The Hon. P. R. HALL

**Deputy Leader of The Nationals:**

Mr D. DRUM

<b>Member</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Party</b>
Atkinson, Hon. Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Lenders, Mr John	Southern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP
Broad, Ms Candy Celeste	Northern Victoria	ALP	Melhem, Mr Cesar <sup>2</sup>	Western Metropolitan	LP
Coote, Mrs Andrea	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Millar, Mrs Amanda Louise <sup>4</sup>	Northern Victoria	LP
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Darveniza, Ms Kaye Mary	Northern Victoria	ALP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
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Davis, Mr Philip Rivers	Eastern Victoria	LP	Pakula, Hon. Martin Philip <sup>1</sup>	Western Metropolitan	ALP
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Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Petrovich, Mrs Donna-Lee <sup>3</sup>	Northern Victoria	LP
Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Elsbury, Mr Andrew Warren	Western Metropolitan	LP	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Guy, Hon. Matthew Jason	Northern Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Hon. Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tarlamis, Mr Lee Reginald	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Koch, Mr David Frank	Western Victoria	LP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP

<sup>1</sup> Resigned 26 March 2013

<sup>2</sup> Appointed 8 May 2013

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 1 July 2013

<sup>4</sup> Appointed 21 August 2013



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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, 10 December 2013**

**Planning: Maribyrnong development**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 5 March 2013

**REPLY:**

Places Victoria has worked closely with the commonwealth over recent months to develop options around a more streamlined approach to developing the Maribyrnong defence site.

Getting the former commonwealth to commit to undertaking the necessary remediation and resolving ongoing responsibility for risks and liabilities has proved difficult in the past and continues to be at the centre of negotiations in this new approach. Places Victoria will ensure that all requests by the commonwealth are acceptable to the state before contracting with the commonwealth government to transfer the land.

The Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure and Places Victoria will meet with the Maribyrnong City Council when the business strategy has been prepared and approved by government. In the meantime, Maribyrnong City Council will be advised of the project status.

**Landmate: future**

**Raised with:** Premier

**Raised by:** Mr Lenders

**Raised on:** 29 May 2013

**REPLY:**

I refer to your question raised in the Legislative Council on 29 May 2013 about the ongoing funding of the Landmate prison industry program.

Landmate is a valuable program for communities in rural Victoria that has been operating for over 20 years. Landmate provides teams of prisoners from Beechworth, Ararat and Langi Kal Kal prisons to environmental and agricultural projects. The program is a mutually beneficial opportunity for prisoners to develop new skills while contributing back to the wider community.

In June 2013, the Minister for Corrections confirmed that the Landmate program will continue to be funded and operate in 2013–14.

**East–west link**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads

**Raised by:** Mr Eideh

**Raised on:** 21 August 2013

**REPLY:**

The state government recognises that Victoria needs investment in both roads and public transport to keep our system working effectively.

The Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure and Linking Melbourne Authority prepared a business case for the east–west link project with assistance from a wide range of expert advisory firms. The business case was submitted to Infrastructure Australia in June 2013.

The east–west link business case looked into the entire 18-kilometre project cost and scope between the Eastern Freeway and the Western Ring Road, including how it interacts with the existing freeway and road networks, and provided advice on priorities for delivery and financing.

After considering all options, the east–west link stage 1, between the Eastern Freeway and CityLink, was selected as the first section to be built as it would provide more benefits as a ‘stand-alone’ project.

East–west link stage 1 would link the two major freeways — the Eastern and CityLink, which are the last of the four big freeways yet to be connected.

The high volumes of traffic using the Eastern Freeway mean that currently there are daily queues and congestion where the freeway terminates and Hoddle Street on the edge of the city. Starting with the eastern section will help alleviate this congestion, and will provide an alternative should issues occur on the Monash or CityLink.

East–west link stage 1 would also connect our gateways such as the port and Melbourne International Airport as well as provide opportunities for public transport including the DART bus service and north–south tram routes along Alexandra Parade.

The east–west link business case contains a robust appraisal of the project’s costs and benefits, taking into account economic, social and environmental impacts.

The business case shows a benefit-to-cost ratio of 1.4, or \$1.40 return for every \$1 invested on the project. It identifies clear economic and social benefits stemming from the delivery of the project.

Linking Melbourne Authority will not be releasing the east–west link business case publicly because the state is involving the private sector in the project’s delivery and the business case contains sensitive commercial information. This approach has been standard practice on major projects over the last few decades.

This approach enables a competitive and fair bidding process while driving down the cost of the project and ensuring value for money for the state.

A short form business case for east–west link is available to view on the Linking Melbourne Authority website at [www.linkingmelbourne.vic.gov.au](http://www.linkingmelbourne.vic.gov.au).

With regard to tolls, it is too early to confirm toll pricing for east–west link; however, the government expects that toll pricing would be comparable with other toll roads in Victoria. Further information on toll pricing will be available closer to the project’s completion.

With regard to consultation, a Communication and Stakeholder Engagement report has been prepared as part of east–west link’s Comprehensive Impact Statement (CIS).

A CIS for the east–west link is on public exhibition from 31 October to 12 December this year. The CIS is based on detailed studies and analysis regarding the project, including a traffic impact assessment, tunnelling vibration and noise, cultural heritage, social and business impact assessments and land use planning.

The report includes findings from a range of forums including public information sessions, online discussion forums, surveys and focus groups and 1:1 contact with stakeholders.

Linking Melbourne Authority has also been providing briefings and presentations to key stakeholder groups, including the Western Transport Alliance, which provides transport advice to Lead West and councils in western region of Melbourne.

The purpose of the consultation is to inform, listen to and involve the community to ensure community considerations are taken into account in the development of east–west link.

People can now make a submission to the CIS Assessment Committee so that their feedback can be taken on board.

### **East–west link**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads

**Raised by:** Mrs Coote

**Raised on:** 22 August 2013

#### **REPLY:**

The east–west link will offer major benefits to all Victorians, including the Glen Eira council area.

Providing a link between CityLink, the Tullamarine Freeway and the Eastern Freeway is incredibly important for people who are caught in congestion every day, and for our economy.

A Comprehensive Impact Statement (CIS) for the east–west link is on public exhibition from 31 October to 12 December this year. The CIS is based on detailed studies and analysis regarding the project, including a traffic impact assessment, tunnelling vibration and noise, cultural heritage, social and business impact assessments and land use planning.

Linking Melbourne Authority will provide councillors an in-depth briefing on the benefits of the east–west link as requested.

### **Regional police cells**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police and Emergency Services

**Raised by:** Ms Darveniza

**Raised on:** 4 September 2013

#### **REPLY:**

The government is committed to making our communities safer so families can feel safe on our streets, on public transport and in their homes. The government is providing \$602 million to deliver 1700 extra front-line police members by November 2014. Since November 2010, Division 4 of Eastern Region, which includes the Wangaratta Police Service Area, has been allocated a further 18 officers.

I am advised that the number of prisoners held in police cells while awaiting transfer to a corrections facility has increased due to the current high prisoner population. This has impacted on those police stations which have a watch-house, including in regional centres such as Wangaratta. Managing prisoners held in police cells is a police responsibility and police are trained and equipped to perform this role, which is carried out by officers rostered to staff the watch-house.

Victoria Police and Corrections Victoria liaise closely to ensure that prisoners are moved from police cells into the prison system as quickly as possible, and have initiated a number of strategies to facilitate this. Victoria Police manages the occupancy of police cells in accordance with its operational requirements, and transfers prisoners as and when required.

The shortage of prison beds is the result of under investment in prison infrastructure over many years, and can only be effectively remedied by an expansion of the prison system. That is why the government is increasing the size of Ravenhall prison, to be built in the west of Melbourne, to 1000 beds. This is in addition to the 350 beds currently under construction at the Hopkins Correctional Centre in Ararat. Furthermore, the 2013–14 state budget provides for a new 40-bed unit for high security prisoners at Barwon Prison and an additional 357 beds across the male prison system.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

### **Caroline Chisholm Society**

**Raised with:** Minister for Community Services

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 19 September 2013

#### **REPLY:**

I thank for the Member for Western Metropolitan Region for his request to consider what assistance can be given to the Caroline Chisholm Society.

I acknowledge the good work the Caroline Chisholm Society (the Society) is undertaking in the community in responding to the needs of families and supporting them to achieve and maintain a safe and nurturing environment.

The Society is a strong agency of social and community workers, service support staff and volunteers, who offer pregnancy counselling and support, material aid, housing assistance and family support.

The department currently funds the Society to provide individual family services across the Western Melbourne and Brimbank Melton Areas.

I have asked the department to meet with the Society and explore what options are available.

### **Royal Exhibition Building**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Mr Tee

**Raised on:** 19 September 2013

#### **REPLY:**

I approved the update to the World Heritage Management Plan for the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens on 30 October 2013.

I trust that you would also be aware that the previous 2009 plan was approved by the former planning Minister, Justin Madden, four years after its completion in 2005.

**Australia Post regional and rural services**

**Raised with:** Minister for Regional and Rural Development

**Raised by:** Ms Tierney

**Raised on:** 15 October 2013

**REPLY:**

The Victorian government continues to monitor the situation regarding proposed changes to Australia Post services and reductions in jobs in rural and regional Victoria.

I have written to Mr Ahmed Fahour, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Australia Post, raising concerns that the consolidation of Australia Post services would reduce postal service standards for regional and rural Victorians.

I have also raised this issue in discussions with the commonwealth government.

The Victorian government will continue to monitor this situation closely.

**Police protest response**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police and Emergency Services

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 16 October 2013

**REPLY:**

The government recognises that the issue of abortion generates strong views within the community, and accepts the right of people to express their differing views publicly, including at street marches and protests. Indeed, the views expressed within the Parliament itself on this issue are divided, with changes to the law made subject to a conscience vote.

The opportunity to protest is an integral part of our open and democratic way of life, and government recognises the right of citizens to convey their opinions lawfully. Although protest organisers may elect to liaise with police or local authorities regarding any actions they are planning, this is not compulsory, and protests do not require authorisation or the granting of a permit. No one group is given priority over another, and whilst police make requests of protestors, they cannot give directions where their behaviour is not unlawful.

Where groups with different views choose to express these publicly in the same area at the same time, the role of police is to maintain public order and enforce the criminal law. Effective policing requires the careful exercise of judgement and the application of appropriate discretion, ensuring that police adapt their response to suit the circumstances of the day. In this context I am advised that police did intervene and separate parties to minimise disputes and altercations. The Chief Commissioner has received a number of complaints regarding the policing of the demonstration, and the Professional Standards Command (PSC) will respond to each complainant on the completion of their investigation.

If you have not already separately raised the matter of police not intervening in an alleged assault on your daughter by abortion rights activists with the Chief Commissioner, you may lodge a complaint with the Professional Standards Command (PSC), Police Conduct Unit, by:

- phoning PSC on 1300 363 101, or
- writing to PSC at Victoria Police, P. O. Box 415, Melbourne, Vic., 3005, or
- lodging an online complaint at: [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au) (Victoria Police — Compliments and Complaints).

I am further advised that police planning for 12 October 2013 March for the Babies included an assessment of resource requirements in the context of previous marches, and other protests and activities occurring that day. This planning is an operational matter for the Chief Commissioner, who will determine what additional measures, if any may be required in 2014. As indicated above, the Chief Commissioner has also received correspondence on this matter, and I anticipate that he will take account of the matters raised.

### **Police protest response**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police and Emergency Services

**Raised by:** Mr Elsbury

**Raised on:** 16 October 2013

#### **REPLY:**

The government recognises that the issue of abortion generates strong views within the community, and accepts the right of people to express their differing views publicly, including at street marches and protests. Indeed, the views expressed within the Parliament itself on this issue are divided, with changes to the law made subject to a conscience vote.

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**Croydon South Primary School site**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education

**Raised by:** Mr Leane

**Raised on:** 30 October 2013

**REPLY:**

I am advised as follows:

The former Croydon South Primary School was declared surplus in September 2010.

The site will be disposed of in accordance with the government land monitor's guidelines and will be offered for sale at a market price as determined by the valuer-general. It will initially be offered to other government departments, then to the local council and then to the public.

I am able to inform you that the Victorian government successfully secured space for the Blackburn English Language School at an alternative venue, the former Croydon North Primary School, which now serves as the Maroondah Campus of the Blackburn English Language School.

**St Columba's Kindergarten future**

**Raised with:** Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development

**Raised by:** Mr Leane

**Raised on:** 14 November 2013

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

I understand that the Uniting Church's decision to sell their private property has created concerns about ongoing kindergarten provision for a number of local communities, including in Balwyn where St Columba's Kindergarten is located.

The Victorian government's immediate concern is the certainty of program delivery for 2014. The Uniting Church has confirmed that the St Columba's Kindergarten facility will be available for the entirety of the 2014 kindergarten program and enrolments are being confirmed as normal through Boroondara council's central enrolment process.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will continue working with UnitingCare Victoria Tasmania, as the provider of this kindergarten service, and the City of Boroondara regarding longer term options for kindergarten provision in the Balwyn area.

I will ensure that the department explores all feasible possibilities in its discussions with UnitingCare Victoria Tasmania and Boroondara Council, with a view to the best option being determined as soon as possible to provide certainty to the local community about arrangements post-2014.

**Circus hall of fame**

**Raised with:** Minister for the Arts

**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich

**Raised on:** 14 November 2013

**REPLY:**

I thank Mrs Peulich for acknowledging the rich history of circus in Australia, and for her ongoing support of the arts and culture sector.

The Performing Arts Collection at Arts Centre Melbourne is the official national archive for the circus industry and plays an important role in the preservation of circus archives, materials and traditions in Australia. Arts Centre Melbourne undertakes this role in consultation with members of the circus sector.

The Circus Collection includes costumes, props, posters and photographs from many of Australia's traditional circuses dating from the early 20th century to the 'new circus' wave since the 1970s, including the legendary Circus Oz and Wodonga-based Flying Fruit Fly Circus.

Mrs Peulich asked that I investigate a Circus Hall of Fame, and in this regard I note that the Arts Centre Melbourne's Circus Collection already plays a leading role in keeping the history of circus arts and culture in Australia alive.

**Uniting Church kindergartens and playgroups**

**Raised with:** Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development

**Raised by:** Ms Mikakos

**Raised on:** 14 November 2013

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

I understand that the Uniting Church's decision to sell their private property has created concerns about ongoing kindergarten provision for a number of local communities, including the areas where Ewing Kindergarten, St Columba's Kindergarten and The Crossway Preschool are located.

The Victorian government's immediate concern is the certainty of program delivery for 2014. The Uniting Church has confirmed that kindergarten facilities for Ewing Kindergarten and St Columba's Kindergarten will be available for the entirety of the 2014 kindergarten program, and enrolments for these services are being confirmed as per normal processes.

The Crossway Preschool, in Strathmore, will cease operating at the end of 2013. A decision was taken by the service provider, Lentara UnitingCare, to close this service due to low and unviable enrolment numbers prior to the announcement of the Uniting Church's divestment program. Moonee Valley Council has worked to ensure that places in local kindergarten programs are available for all affected four-year-old children in 2014.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will continue working with the service providers and local councils in relation to longer term options for the other affected services. I will ensure that the department explores all feasible possibilities in its discussions with service providers and local councils, with a view to the best options being determined as soon as possible to provide certainty to communities about arrangements post 2014.



**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Wednesday, 11 December 2013**

**Planning: Richmond development**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Mr Tee

**Raised on:** 15 March 2012

**REPLY:**

Amendment C144 to the Yarra Planning Scheme was gazetted on 15 September 2011 to ensure a consistent approach to car parking on the relevant site.

Unlike the previous Labor government, the coalition is working to deliver certainty and transparency in Victoria's planning system.

**Wallan-Kilmore bypass: route**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Ms Broad

**Raised on:** 5 February 2013

**REPLY:**

VicRoads referred the Wallan-Kilmore bypass project to me under the Environment Effects Act 1978 to determine whether environmental assessment is required under this Act prior to statutory approvals and decision making proceeding.

On 15 April 2013, I determined that an environmental assessment is required through an environment effects statement (EES) process which provides for formal public consultation and submissions about the project and its potential effects.

Environmental assessment under the Environment Effects Act 1978 occurs to inform statutory approvals under other relevant legislation, including under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

VicRoads has developed a consultation plan that provides for community and stakeholder engagement during the preparation of the EES. In October I released scoping requirements which sets out the specific environmental matters to be investigated and documented in the EES. As the EES statutory process is underway it is not appropriate that I meet with local residents at this time.

**Knox planning scheme: amendment**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Mr Tee

**Raised on:** 5 March 2013

**REPLY:**

I refer to your adjournment debate matter raised in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, 5 March 2013, about the decision time frame for amendment C49 to the Knox Planning Scheme in relation to *Ministerial Direction No. 15 — the Planning Scheme Amendment Process*.

The Napthine coalition government is committed to an efficient and certain planning system. Ministerial direction no. 15 sets out this process.

Knox City Council submitted amendment C49 to me for approval on 21 August 2012. Ministerial direction no. 15 came into effect on 25 October 2012. Amendments submitted to me before 25 October 2012 are not subject to the decision timeframes in ministerial direction no. 15, as transitional provisions apply.

Amendment C49 was a highly complex amendment and implemented the findings and recommendations of the *Sites of Biological Significance in Knox Study — 2nd Edition, 2010* to privately and publically owned land across Knox.

The amendment also took into consideration the views of Victorian fire authorities and especially issues resulting from the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.

Notice of the approval of amendment C49 to the Knox Planning Scheme was published in the Victorian *Government Gazette* on 11 April 2013.

**Bayside planning scheme: amendment**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Ms Pennicuik

**Raised on:** 17 April 2013

**REPLY:**

On 17 May 2013, amendment C122 to the Bayside Planning Scheme was approved, under delegation. The amendment extended the expiry date of the Water Sensitive Urban Design (Stormwater Management) policy found at clause 22.08 of the Bayside Planning Scheme until 31 May 2015. This extension was made to ensure the policy did not expire while work is undertaken to make the provision a permanent part of the Bayside Planning Scheme.

Officers of the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure are presently working with Bayside City Council officers to make necessary adjustments to the policy that will enable it to become a permanent provision of the scheme.

**Echuca-Moama: second bridge**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Ms Darveniza

**Raised on:** 11 June 2013

**REPLY:**

The planning process for the second Murray River crossing at Echuca-Moama has yet to be determined.

I can advise that on 14 June 2013 I decided that an environment effects statement (EES) was required for the project. The EES will assess the referred alignments within the Mid West 2 corridor as well as the alternatives available in the previously referred Mid West corridor.

The EES process will involve a public review phase, including an inquiry, to consider the potential environmental effects of the project.

The EES will inform decision making under other Victorian legislation, including the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Campaspe Planning Scheme.

I will consider the options available for the planning process once my advice has been formally sought.

**Woorndoo native vegetation removal**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Mr Barber

**Raised on:** 29 October 2013

**REPLY:**

I share the concerns raised by Mr Barber on behalf of the Woorndoo Land Protection Group about the alleged illegal destruction of native grassland located within the Mortlake-Ararat Road reserve by Powercor's subcontractor, VEMCO.

I am advised this matter is being investigated by the Moyne Shire Council, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries and the commonwealth Department of the Environment, to determine possible breaches of the Moyne Planning Scheme, Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and the commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

The Victoria planning provisions, forming part of all planning schemes in Victoria, set clear parameters for the 'as of right' clearance of native vegetation in order to maintain utilities such as powerlines. However, this only allows removal of vegetation to the minimum extent necessary to maintain the utility provided it is undertaken in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Electric Line Clearance (1999)*.

I am confident that the relevant agencies are properly investigating this matter and that, if deemed necessary, the appropriate enforcement action will be initiated to address any unlawful destruction of native vegetation.

**Motorcycle safety campaigns**

**Raised with:** Assistant Treasurer

**Raised by:** Mr Elsbury

**Raised on:** 26 November 2013

**REPLY:**

Thank you for interest in and acknowledgment of the positive work being undertaken by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) in the area of motorcycle safety as seen within its recently launched road safety campaign titled The Perfect Ride.

The Perfect Ride campaign encourages recreational motorcyclists to consider some of the risks they face and to manage their personal risk on the roads, by providing them with strategies and positive behaviour demonstrations to help reduce their risk. The ultimate aim of the campaign is to encourage riders to adopt safe and positive on-road behaviour. I understand that during the development and production of the campaign, the TAC consulted with key motorcycling bodies and organisations in order to improve the effectiveness of communicating this important message.

I am aware that the feedback received about this campaign to date has been overwhelmingly positive, and it is encouraging to learn that the feedback you have encountered has been similarly favourable.

**Bendigo TAFE future**

**Raised with:** Minister for Higher Education and Skills

**Raised by:** Ms Pulford

**Raised on:** 28 November 2013

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The board of Bendigo TAFE has carefully examined the institute's training and service offerings to ensure they are providing financially sustainable training which meets the needs of its community and industries.

The Institute has had to make some difficult decisions which will ensure the best possible use of government training subsidies.

Bendigo TAFE has advised parents and staff that the child care facility operated by the institute, BRIT Beginners, will cease to operate on 31 March 2014. The institute has committed to assisting parents find alternative care where possible.

The board of Bendigo TAFE is responsible for all employment matters, including decisions concerning the effective and efficient management of their workforce.

As autonomous training organisations operating in a fully contestable market, TAFE institutes rightly maintain a level of commercial confidentiality as they assess options to ensure their organisations best meet the needs of their communities and industries.

## WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

**Thursday, 12 December 2013**

**Single parents: government support**

**Raised with:** Premier

**Raised by:** Ms Darveniza

**Raised on:** 16 April 2013

**REPLY:**

I refer to the matter raised regarding commonwealth government parenting payments. The Victorian coalition government is committed to supporting vulnerable Victorians and understands the significant impact that the cuts made by the former federal Labor government have had on Victorian families.

The current federal opposition leader, the Honourable Bill Shorten, MP, and shadow minister for infrastructure, the Honourable Anthony Albanese, MP, have both publicly conceded that the cuts made by their former government have had a devastating impact on families across Australia. In an interview on Sunday, 22 September 2013, Mr Albanese admitted that 'sole parent payments is an area where we made a mistake'. On the same day, Mr Shorten stated that the Labor Party 'need[ed] to revisit [their] policies to do with sole parents'.

I understand that the federal coalition Minister for Social Services, the Honourable Kevin Andrews, MP, has committed to a full review of the commonwealth welfare system, including the payments available to support single parents. The Victorian government looks forward to the outcomes of that review.

The Victorian government is taking action to support vulnerable Victorians with the cost of living. In the 2013–14 budget, a \$1.6 billion package was announced to help families with the cost of utilities, health services, education and transport. This is assisting more than 1.4 million households across Victoria.

Victoria's regional labour market has grown stronger, with employment in regional Victoria increasing by 2300 persons in the three months to October 2013. Over the same period, the unemployment rate in regional Victoria was 5.0 per cent, the lowest of all the states and well below the Australian regional average of 5.8 per cent.

The Victorian government's Regional Growth Fund, a record \$1 billion eight-year investment, supports people living in regional Victoria. The Regional Growth Fund supports major strategic infrastructure and community-led local initiatives that create more jobs and better career opportunities, and improve the competitiveness and livability of regional and rural Victoria. In Wangaratta, almost \$2.2 million in support has been provided through the Regional Growth Fund for Bruck Textiles' new \$6.1 million process and wastewater treatment project, which is supporting the creation of new jobs in northern Victoria.

The Victorian government advocates for greater investment and Victoria's fair share of commonwealth funding and services, for the benefit of all Victorians. For example, in June 2013, Victoria worked to secure the commonwealth government's agreement to locate the headquarters of the national disability insurance scheme in Geelong, which will bring new jobs and an economic boost to the region.