

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 24 June 2014

(Extract from book 9)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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(from 17 March 2014)

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

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FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Lewis, Ms Margaret ¹⁰	Northern Victoria	ALP			

¹ Resigned 26 March 2013

² Appointed 8 May 2013

³ Resigned 1 July 2013

⁴ Appointed 21 August 2013

⁵ Resigned 3 February 2014

⁶ Appointed 5 February 2014

⁷ Resigned 17 March 2014

⁸ Appointed 26 March 2014

⁹ Resigned 9 May 2014

¹⁰ Appointed 11 June 2014

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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, 24 June 2014

Health: health funding

- 10 031. MS TIERNEY** — To ask the Minister for Health: In relation to the Napthine government’s promise of 800 new hospital beds at the 2010 election: How many new hospital beds were created at the Geelong Hospital in —
- (a) 2011;
 - (b) 2012; and
 - (c) 2013.

ANSWER:

Daily bed numbers in hospitals fluctuate according to hospital activity and clinical demand. Health Services make their own operational decisions relating to bed availability based on their own set of unique circumstances.

The Victorian coalition government has committed health funding in each budget to expand the capacity and hospital services in Geelong with Geelong hospital increasing capacity by more than 100 beds. There is a \$200 million health capital investment in Geelong.

Community services: child protection

- 10 067. MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Child Protection — Principal Practitioners’ of \$50.4 million over four years:
- (1) How much of the funding was expended in the 2012–13 financial year.
 - (2) How many additional full-time equivalent (FTE) child protection practitioners were employed in 2012–13 as a direct result of the funds and in what locations were the additional workers employed.
 - (3) How much of the funding will be expended in the 2013–14 financial year.
 - (4) How many additional FTE child protection practitioners will be employed in 2013–14 as a direct result of the funds and in what locations will the additional workers be employed.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

(1)–(4) There is no line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Child Protection — Principal Practitioners’ of \$50.4 million over four years.

Community services: child protection

- 10 071. MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Establishment of a Commission for Children and Young People’ of \$3 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in the 2012–13 financial year.
- (2) How much of the funding will be expended in the 2013–14 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) None of the allocated budget of \$400 000 was expended in 2012–13 as the Commission for Children and Young People commenced operation on 1 March 2013 and several new positions had not commenced by 30 June 2013. Unspent 2012–13 funds were carried over to 2013–14.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.

Community services: child protection

10 072. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Expansion of new model conferencing’ of \$2.9 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in the 2012–13 financial year.
- (2) How much of the funding will be expended in the 2013–14 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The allocated budget of \$700 000 was fully expended in 2012–13.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.

Community services: child protection

10 073. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Expansion of Therapeutic Residential Care’ of \$29.6 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in the 2012–13 financial year.
- (2) How many additional full-time equivalent (FTE) child protection practitioners were employed in 2012–13 as a direct result of the funds and in what locations were the additional workers employed.
- (3) How much of the funding will be expended in the 2013–14 financial year.
- (4) How many additional FTE child protection practitioners were employed in 2013–14 as a direct result of the funds and in what locations were the additional workers employed.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The allocated budget of \$3.5 million was fully expended in 2012–13.
- (2) Funding is provided to Community Service Organisations to deliver Therapeutic Residential Care. Therefore, no additional child protection practitioners are required to be employed as a direct result of this funding.
- (3) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (4) As indicated above, Community Service Organisations are funded to deliver Therapeutic Residential Care.

Community services: child protection

10 074. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Family group conferencing and Aboriginal family decision making’ of \$7.4 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in the 2012–13 financial year.
- (2) How much of the funding will be expended in the 2013–14 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The allocated budget of \$690 000 was fully expended in 2012–13.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.

Community services: child protection

10 077. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Responding to demand for residential out of home care’ of \$27.9 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in 2012–13.
- (2) How many of the 34 additional residential care placements were delivered in 2012–13.
- (3) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14.
- (4) How many of the 34 additional residential care placements will be delivered in 2013–14.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The allocated budget of \$6.7 million was fully expended in 2012–13.
- (2) 34 residential care placements were rolled out in 2012–13.
- (3) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (4) 34 residential care placements continue to be delivered.

Community services: child protection

10 078. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2012–13 state budget ‘Stronger Families’ of \$29.6 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding was expended in the 2012–13 financial year.
- (2) How much of the funding will be expended in the 2013–14 financial year.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) The allocated budget of \$7.14 million was fully expended in 2012–13.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.

Community services: child protection

10 081. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2013–14 state budget ‘Central After Hours Services’ of \$17.5 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14.
- (2) How much of this funding will be expended in 2013–14 on each of the —
 - (a) After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services;
 - (b) Streetworks Outreach Service; and
 - (c) Central After Hours Assessment and Bail Placement Service.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.

Community services: child protection

10 082. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2013–14 state budget ‘Demand and reform for out of home care services’ of \$91.3 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14.
- (2) How many additional residential and home based care placements will come as a direct result of this funding.
- (3) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14 in respect of therapeutic foster care.
- (4) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14 in respect of building capacity to respond to the needs of children with complex needs.
- (5) Will this funding eliminate contingency placements.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, the number of additional residential and home based care placements is unable to be provided.
- (3) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (4) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (5) Contingency placements will continue to be needed, however this funding assists in reducing unfunded placements.

Community services: family violence

10 083. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2013–14 state budget ‘Protecting women and children from violence and abuse’ of \$3.8 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14.

- (2) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14 in relation to voluntary men’s behaviour change programs.
- (3) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14 in relation to the pilot program for adolescents using violence in the home.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (2) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.
- (3) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding is unable to be provided.

Community services: disability funding

10 086. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the line item in the 2013–14 state budget ‘Individualised support for people with a disability, their families and carers’ of \$106.9 million over four years:

- (1) How much of the funding will be expended in 2013–14.
- (2) How many of the 720 additional individualised support packages will be available in 2013–14 —
 - (a) in total;
 - (b) for students with a disability currently exiting the school system; and
 - (c) for those exiting the Future for Young Adults program.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) As the financial year is not yet completed, funding expended is unable to be provided.
- (2) (a) As the financial year is not yet completed, this data is currently unavailable.
 (b) Refer to question (a) above.
 (c) Refer to question (a) above.

Community services: child protection

10 106. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services):

- (1) How many Category 1 incidents were notified to the Department of Human Services by each departmental division between —
 - (a) 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012;
 - (c) 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013;
 - (d) 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013; and
 - (e) 1 January 2014 to 31 January 2014.
- (2) How many Category 1 incidents were notified to the Department of Human Services by each Area within each departmental division between —
 - (a) 1 December 2010 to 30 June 2011;
 - (b) 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012;
 - (c) 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013;

- (d) 1 July 2013 to 31 December 2013; and
- (e) 1 January 2014 to 31 January 2014.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The department changed from eight regions to 17 areas within four divisions in December 2012. Category 1 incident data are published at www.dhs.vic.gov.au.

Community services: child protection

- 10 109. MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): What are the current barriers within the tax and industrial relations systems that prevent the establishment of a professional model of foster care and what is the government doing to address these barriers.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The establishment of a professional model of foster care would mean foster carers would be classified as employees, and consequently be entitled to the payment of penalties and other award conditions in connection to federal industrial instruments and other legislation. The carers would incur employment related federal tax obligations which they do not currently attract.

The coalition government has led the negotiations with the commonwealth to rectify these barriers and will continue with these discussions.

Community services: youth justice

- 10 121. MS MIKAKOS** — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to adults and children missing court appearances for youth justice matters:

- (1) How many detainees from each of the following Youth Centre's and Facilities failed to appear at court hearings in 2010–11, 2011–12 and 2012–13 —
 - (a) Parkville Youth Residential Centre;
 - (b) Melbourne Youth Justice Facility; and
 - (c) Malmsbury Youth Justice Centre;
- (2) What was the total amount awarded against the Department of Human Services for costs in cases where the above noted detainees failed to appear in —
 - (a) 2010–11;
 - (b) 2011–12; and
 - (c) 2012–13.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Data on missed court appearances for youth justice matters is not recorded.
- (2) No costs have been awarded against the Department of Human Services since 2010 for cases where the above noted detainees failed to appear.

Community services: child protection

10 127. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the 90 recommendations in the Protecting Victoria’s Vulnerable Children Inquiry Report:

- (1) How many recommendations have been fully implemented on 1 April 2014, and, of these, what has occurred in respect of these recommendations.
- (2) How many recommendations have been partly implemented as at 1 April 2014, and, of these, what has occurred in respect of these recommendations.
- (3) How many recommendations have had no action taken as at 1 April 2014.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The government’s response to the recommendations from the inquiry are detailed in the directions paper titled *Victoria’s Vulnerable Children — Our Shared Responsibility* released in May 2012, and the *Victoria’s Vulnerable Children — Our Shared Responsibility* strategy 2013–2022 released in May 2013.

Community services: disability funding

10 129. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to disability services in Victoria, how many individuals living with a disability receive support from —

- (a) North division;
- (b) West division;
- (c) East division; and
- (d) South division.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

In 2012–13, the number of individuals living with a disability who received support from —

- (a) North division was 8829;
- (b) West division 18 543;
- (c) East division 15 508; and
- (d) South division 11 783.

2012–13 data is the most recent information available for reporting

Community services: disability funding

10 130. MS MIKAKOS — To ask the Minister for Housing (for the Minister for Community Services): In relation to the Disability Support Register (DSR) in Victoria, how many people living with a disability were registered on the DSR and waiting for funding on 1 April 2014 in each of the four Department of Human Services divisions for —

- (a) supported accommodation; and
- (b) individual Support Packages.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The latest available data for the Disability Support Register is published on the Department of Human Services website.

Education: Sunvale Primary School site

10 450. MS HARTLAND — To ask the Minister for Liquor and Gaming Regulation (for the Minister for Education): In respect to the Sunvale Primary School site:

- (1) Does the government intend honouring the commitment made before the 2010 Victorian election by Mr Bernie Finn, MLC, when he committed to retaining the whole Sunvale Primary School site as a community park.
- (2) Given the government's commitment to retain the whole Sunvale Primary School site, what steps are being taking to prevent a sale proceeding.
- (3) Will the government provide a copy of the environmental assessment of the Sunvale Primary School site to the community.
- (4) Given Brimbank City Council undertook consultation which shows the community unanimously supports retaining the whole site for community use as parkland, with Sunshine developing as a central activity centre, does the minister recognise the increasing need to retain all open space available, including the Sunvale Primary School site.
- (5) Given the government has protected parkland at Merri Creek, Edgar's Creek and Nunawading that was previously owned by VicRoads, will the government follow this precedent and ensure Brimbank City Council is appointed a Committee of Management for the whole Sunvale Primary School site.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

The former Sunvale Primary School, located in Neil Street, Sunshine, closed on 31 December 2008. Approval to dispose of the site was provided by the former Minister for Education on 20 May 2009.

The site comprises a total area of 20 325 m², of which approximately 11 970 m² is zoned public use zone 2. I am advised that Brimbank City Council expressed interest in purchasing this portion of the site to be used for community public open space, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development finalised the sale of this portion of the site to the council on 20 March, 2014. I am further advised that Brimbank City Council has not expressed interest in purchasing the remainder of the property.

The remainder of the site is zoned residential 1 and is proposed to be offered for public sale in the near future, in accordance with Government Land Monitor requirements.

The Victorian government is unaware of any 2010 election commitment that the former Sunvale Primary School site land be transferred to the community as a public park. Gifting surplus assets is not in accordance with government policy.

In relation to the environmental assessment report, this report forms part of the contract of sale between the department and Brimbank City Council, details of which are considered to be 'commercial in confidence'. As such, the Victorian government is unable to release this report.

Police and emergency services: coronial recommendations

10 454. MS PENNICUIK — To ask the Minister for Planning (for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services): What action has been taken by Victoria Police to implement the recommendations of the State Coroner in the following inquests:

- (1) No. 110508 — Recommendations 1 to 4;
- (2) No. 262608 — Recommendation 2;
- (3) No. 547108 — Recommendations 1, 2 and 4 to 6;
- (4) Nos. 1880008 and 188108 — Recommendations A1 and A2;
- (5) No. 180407 — Recommendations 2 and 3;
- (6) No. 375309 — Recommendations 1 to 3, 5 and 6;
- (7) No. 035908 — Recommendations 1 and 2;
- (8) No. 554208 — Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 6 and 7;
- (9) No. 113208 — Recommendations 1 to 3;
- (10) No. 29709 — Recommendations 1 and 2;
- (11) No. 430806 — Recommendations 2 and 5;
- (12) No. 134510 — Recommendations 1 and 2;
- (13) Nos. 87306 and 87406 — Recommendation 1;
- (14) No. 329410 — Recommendation 1; and
- (15) No. 424806 — Recommendation 2.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The information requested is published online by the Coroners Court of Victoria at <http://www.coronerscourt.vic.gov.au/home/coroners+written+findings/>. The Coroners Court publishes both the findings of the coroner and the Victoria Police response for each investigation.