

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

19 and 20 August 2014

(Extract from book 11)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable ALEX CHERNOV, AC, QC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

The ministry

(from 17 March 2014)

Premier, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, and Minister for Regional and Rural Development	The Hon. P. J. Ryan, MP
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Minister for Education	The Hon. M. F. Dixon, MP
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Minister for Planning, and Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship	The Hon. M. J. Guy, MLC
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Minister for Housing, and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development	The Hon. W. A. Lovell, MLC
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads	The Hon. T. W. Mulder, MP
Minister for Energy and Resources, and Minister for Small Business.	The Hon. R. J. Northe, MP
Minister for Liquor and Gaming Regulation, Minister for Corrections and Minister for Crime Prevention	The Hon. E. J. O'Donohue, MLC
Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry	The Hon. G. K. Rich-Phillips, MLC
Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Youth Affairs.	The Hon. R. Smith, MP
Minister for the Arts, Minister for Women's Affairs and Minister for Consumer Affairs	The Hon. H. Victoria, MP
Minister for Higher Education and Skills	The Hon. N. Wakeling, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and Minister for Water.	The Hon. P. L. Walsh, MP
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	Mrs I. Peulich, MLC

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Darveniza, Mr D. Davis, Mr Drum, Ms Lovell, Ms Pennicuik, Mrs Peulich and Mr Scheffer.

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

Participating member

Legislative Council standing committees

Economy and Infrastructure Legislation Committee — Mr Barber, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, Mr Melhem, Mr D. D O'Brien, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford, Mr Ramsay and #Mr Scheffer.

Economy and Infrastructure References Committee — Mr Barber, Mrs Coote, #Ms Crozier, Mr Finn, #Mr Leane, Mr Lenders, Mr Melhem, Mr D. D O'Brien, #Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pulford and Mr Ramsay.

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

Environment and Planning References Committee — Mr Dalla-Riva, #Mr Finn, #Ms Hartland, Mrs Kronberg, #Mr Leane, Mr Ondarchie, Ms Pennicuik, #Mrs Peulich, Mr Ronalds, 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 Lewis, Mrs Millar, Mr D. R. J. 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 Lewis, Mrs Millar, Mr D. R. J. O'Brien, #Mrs Peulich, #Mr Ramsay and Mr Viney.

Participating member

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Council*): Mr D. R. J. O'Brien and Mr Ronalds. (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Mr McIntosh and Ms Neville.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Drum, 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, Mrs Millar and Mr Ronalds. (*Assembly*): Mr Burgess and Mr McGuire.

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 Delahunty.

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

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mrs Coote. (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr Madden, Mrs Powell and Ms Ryall.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*) Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr D. R. J. O'Brien and Mrs Peulich. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Ms Beattie, Mr Blackwood, Ms Campbell, Ms Thomson, Mr Wakeling and Mr Weller.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Council*): Mr Viney. (*Assembly*): Ms Kanis, Mr Kotsiras, Mr McIntosh and Mr Weller.

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 D. R. J. O'Brien and Mr Ondarchie. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Ms Garrett, 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 D. R. J. O'Brien. (*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 — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

President: The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President: Mr M. VINEY

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Mr Ramsay, Mr Tarlamis

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The Hon. D. M. DAVIS

Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. W. A. LOVELL

Leader of the Opposition:

Mr J. LENDERS

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

Mr G. JENNINGS

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. D. K. DRUM (from 17 March 2013)

The Hon. P. R. HALL (to 17 March 2013)

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Mr D. R. J. O'BRIEN (from 17 March 2013)

Mr D. K. DRUM (to 17 March 2013)

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Hon. Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Melhem, Mr Cesar ²	Western Metropolitan	LP
Broad, Ms Candy Celeste ⁹	Northern Victoria	ALP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Coote, Mrs Andrea	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Millar, Mrs Amanda Louise ⁴	Northern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ⁸	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Hon. Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	O'Brien, Mr David Roland Joseph	Western Victoria	Nats
Darveniza, Ms Kaye Mary	Northern Victoria	ALP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Davis, Hon. David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Davis, Mr Philip Rivers ⁵	Eastern Victoria	LP	Pakula, Hon. Martin Philip ¹	Western Metropolitan	ALP
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Petrovich, Mrs Donna-Lee ³	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 ⁷	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Ronalds, Mr Andrew Mark ⁶	Eastern Victoria	LP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Koch, Mr David Frank	Western Victoria	LP	Tarlamis, Mr Lee Reginald	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leanders, Mr John	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP
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

CONTENTS

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

TUESDAY, 19 AUGUST 2014

<i>Wedderburn ambulance service</i>	<i>2719</i>
<i>Community services.....</i>	<i>2720</i>
<i>Mental health funding</i>	<i>2720</i>
<i>City of Moreland security cameras</i>	<i>2721</i>
<i>Disability discrimination commissioner</i>	<i>2722</i>
<i>Local learning and employment networks</i>	<i>2722</i>

WEDNESDAY, 20 AUGUST 2014

<i>Ballarat green waste collection</i>	<i>2723</i>
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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, 19 August 2014

Wedderburn ambulance service

Raised with: Health

Raised by: Ms Pulford

Raised on: 8 May 2014

REPLY:

Since coming to government, the coalition has increased funding to Ambulance Victoria by 23.4 per cent, to a record \$696.50 million in 2014–15. This record increase in funding has resulted in more than 20 000 extra shifts across the state each year, when compared to 2010. Further, the government has already exceeded its commitment to roll out an extra 310 paramedics and 30 patient transport officers across Victoria. There are now more paramedics, more shifts and more vehicles on the road than at any point in the history of Victoria.

Given the highly mobile nature of ambulance work, in an emergency the nearest available ambulance is dispatched to the scene. Ambulances are not specifically tasked to one geographic area.

Ambulance Victoria is aware of the workload and challenges faced by the Wedderburn Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) and continue to work with the CERT in an effort to ensure a sustainable service.

Training of additional Wedderburn CERT members has recently been undertaken, strengthening the service with an additional seven CERT members.

The government will continue to work with AV to ensure it delivers a flexible, adaptive service which is able to respond to the needs of all Victorians.

I note a search of *Hansard* shows that as member for Western Victoria you failed to raise this issue through the period of the last government.

I have met with the Wedderburn CERT team and understand the legitimate case they have made.

I have also had responses from the Liberal candidate for Ripon regarding the CERT team and their requests.

Unfortunately over 11 years of Labor government the previous government failed to advance the cause made by the CERT team.

Community services

Raised with: Community Services

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 27 May 2014

REPLY:

The executive director of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Tony Nicholson, recently made some comments in relation to service sector reform, and I welcome the debate. It is important for us to have an open and frank conversation about the challenges facing the community services sector.

Beyond the headlines, there are many points on which the government and Mr Nicholson agree — the current situation is unsustainable, we need to find collective solutions to complex social problems, we need to harness the strengths of communities and we need a vibrant and diverse community services sector.

Professor Shergold did some important work in this regard and the Community Sector Reform Council is now working to effectively implement key recommendations to ensure that families are at the centre of decision-making, that innovation and good practice becomes the norm in service delivery and that we further build the capacity and capability of the community sector to meet the needs of vulnerable families.

The government has also been quite clear that Services Connect is the government's vision for the future of human services in Victoria, a reform that Mr Nicholson describes as highly desirable. Services Connect provides the focus on the broad service delivery and capability-building for which he advocates. It also seeks to move away from narrowly defined government contracts to enable the delivery of more integrated and outcomes focused services that meet the needs of individuals and communities. This is very consistent with the reform direction he seeks.

Unlike Labor, the coalition government is committed to both meeting the needs of vulnerable Victorians and also investing in reform that will strengthen our system in the future.

Mental health funding

Raised with: Mental Health

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 28 May 2014

REPLY:

People who are homeless, including those with a mental illness, have benefited from the dedication of St Mary's House of Welcome over many years.

While several homelessness support services, including St Mary's House of Welcome, will no longer be funded to deliver specialist mental health support services, they will no doubt continue to play an important role in assisting people with a mental illness and other vulnerable people to break the cycle of homelessness and secure stable housing.

The recommissioning process for Mental Health Community Support Services (MHCSS) was an open and fair way to bring about reforms that have been subject to extensive dialogue with the sector.

The process attracted strong interest and submissions received were of a high-calibre which demonstrates the depth of experience and expertise available in mental health services in Victoria.

As was the case with all unsuccessful providers, St Mary's House of Welcome has been offered the opportunity to receive a verbal de-brief from officers of the Department of Health regarding their submission.

While St Mary's may receive advice, due to the probity requirements surrounding this process I cannot provide you directly with specific advice as to why St Mary's House of Welcome was unsuccessful.

All members of the public can review the criteria which governed the process through the advertised call for submission document issued to interested parties.

These reforms are practical and grounded. They are about ensuring that people with a psychiatric disability receive the best possible support to live independently and with dignity in the community, and that their families and other carers are well supported in their caring role.

The recommissioning process has not been designed to prevent service providers from offering centre-based programs. Under the reformed program, clients will receive tailored one-on-one support as well as group-based support to help them develop independent living skills, better cope with their mental illness and engage in community activities.

I am confident that people with a psychiatric disability, including those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, will receive improved access and better support as a result of the reforms to the MHCSS program.

In recognition of the particular issues faced by people with a psychiatric disability who are homeless, this group has been explicitly nominated as a priority for service delivery under the reformed system. Responding to the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups is the core business of all MHCSS providers.

Assistance has been provided to St Mary's House of Welcome to assist the smooth transition of clients to the new service delivery arrangements.

Given Ms Mikakos's representations I am sure St Mary's House of Welcome and other MHCSS providers would benefit from knowing whether these reforms, including funding distributions, would be maintained or reversed under a Labor government.

City of Moreland security cameras

Raised with: Crime Prevention

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 29 May 2014

REPLY:

The coalition government's offer of \$250 000 in funding for CCTV infrastructure in and around Sydney Road, Brunswick, was made to council at a meeting between my predecessor, Andrew McIntosh, MP, and council's former mayor, Oscar Yildiz, and Chief Executive Officer Peter Brown on 19 February 2013. This offer was again confirmed with council by letter dated 4 April 2013.

Council subsequently agreed at its 12 June 2013 council meeting that it would accept the funding offer, but a project proposal was not provided to the Department of Justice's Community Crime Prevention Unit until 6 February 2014.

In the subsequent funding agreement executed on 25 February 2014, council committed to have the CCTV infrastructure installed by 30 June 2014.

I am advised that late in June council submitted a project plan indicating infrastructure installation would be completed by 25 July 2014 and sought a variation to the contract to this effect. However, I am advised by the department that council has recently again indicated that it will not meet its committed time lines.

Council staff have advised the department that council is now aiming to have the infrastructure installed by the end of August 2014, but that this is dependent upon approval from third parties.

Given the importance of this project to the local community, I have expressed to council my disappointment at these continued delays nearly 18 months after the initial funding offer was made and have asked that council prioritise finalising this important project as expeditiously as possible.

Disability discrimination commissioner

Raised with: Community Services

Raised by: Ms Mikakos

Raised on: 12 June 2014

REPLY:

The matter raised by Ms Mikakos falls outside the jurisdiction of the Victorian government and the state Minister for Disability Services and Reform.

Local learning and employment networks

Raised with: Higher Education and Skills

Raised by: Ms Lewis

Raised on: 7 August 2014

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The issue of funding for Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Hon. Martin Dixon, MP, Minister for Education.

I have referred this matter to Minister Dixon who will provide a separate letter of response.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 20 August 2014

Ballarat green waste collection

Raised with: Environment and Climate Change

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 12 June 2014

REPLY:

I am pleased to advise that the Victorian government has provided \$500 000 as part of the Building Victoria's Organics Recovery (BVOR) fund to support the Ballarat council to deliver a kerbside green waste service for residents. The member for Western Victoria Region has been a strong advocate for green waste collection. With 60 per cent of organic material ending up in landfill under the former government it is important that we divert as much of this re-usable resource as possible to realise its full economic value.

Ballarat's new kerbside collection service is expected to divert more than 8000 tonnes of organic materials from landfill each year.

As part of the new service residents will receive new bins, along with tips and information about how to ensure they are maximising the amount of organic waste diverted from landfill.

The \$2.5 million BVOR fund supports regional councils like City of Ballarat to collect and process organic and green waste, keeping it out of landfill, reducing emissions and turning it into potentially valuable material, including compost.

In 2010–11 food and garden waste made up more than 40 per cent of household waste sent to landfill. This is a valuable resource that could be put to productive use elsewhere by converting it into a range of valuable soil conditioning products such as compost and mulch.

Removing organic waste from landfill also helps minimise potential environmental and public health hazards. Because of the way organic waste breaks down in landfill; it can create greenhouse gas emissions and, in poorly managed landfills, lead to potential environmental and public health risks.

The Victorian government is supporting practical local action to address these issues, investing almost \$10 million in supporting local governments to better recover organic wastes and turn them into new products like compost, fertilisers and fuels.