

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

7 August to 20 August 2015

(Extract from book 11)

Internet: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Education	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Employment	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Industry, and Minister for Energy and Resources	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. J. F. Garrett, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Training and Skills	The Hon. S. R. Herbert, MLC
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Police and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Kairouz, MP

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Mr Drum, Ms Hartland, Mr Herbert, Ms Mikakos, Ms Pulford, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, and Ms Wooldridge.

Procedure Committee — The President, Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Davis, Mr Jennings, Ms Pennicuik, Ms Pulford, Ms Tierney and Ms Wooldridge.

Legislative Council standing committees

Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure — Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Morris, Mr Ondarchie and Ms Tierney.

Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning — Ms Bath, #Mr Bourman, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, #Ms Hartland, Mr Leane, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, Ms Shing, Mr Somyurek and Mr Young.

Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues — Ms Fitzherbert, Mr Melhem, Mr Mulino, Mr O'Donohue, Ms Patten, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Springle and Ms Symes.

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

Port of Melbourne Select Committee — Mr Barber, Mr Drum, Mr Mulino, Mr Ondarchie, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Shing, and Ms Tierney.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Council*): Ms Bath, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Staikos and Ms Thomson.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O'Brien, Mr Pakula, Ms Richardson and Mr Walsh

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Council*): Mr Elasmarr, Mr Melhem and Mr Purcell. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Nardella and Ms Ryall.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Ms Patten and Mr Somyurek. (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon, Mr Northe and Ms Spence.

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson, Mr Tilley and Ms Ward.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn. (*Assembly*): Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards, Ms Kealy, Ms McLeish, and Ms Sheed.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O'Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells.

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Ms Patten. (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing. (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O'Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Mr Dalla-Riva. (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kealy, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto.

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 A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

President: The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President: Ms G. TIERNEY

Acting Presidents: Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmar, Mr Finn, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mr Ramsay

Leader of the Government:
The Hon. G. JENNINGS

Deputy Leader of the Government:
The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:
The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

Leader of The Nationals:
The Hon. D. K. DRUM

Leader of the Greens:
Mr G. BARBER

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ¹	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel	Western Metropolitan	DLP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Dalidakis, Mr Philip	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	V1LJ
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Elasmar, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

² Appointed 15 April 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP — Labor Party; ASP — Australian Sex Party;
DLP — Democratic Labour Party; Greens — Australian Greens;
LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals;
SFP — Shooters and Fishers Party; V1LJ — Vote 1 Local Jobs

CONTENTS

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

7 AUGUST TO 20 AUGUST 2015

<i>Eastern Metropolitan Region</i>	2707
<i>Eastern Victoria Region</i>	2707
<i>Northern Victoria Region</i>	2708
<i>South Eastern Metropolitan Region</i>	2708
<i>Western Victoria Region</i>	2708
<i>South Eastern Metropolitan Region</i>	2709
<i>Eastern Victoria Region</i>	2709
<i>Western Victoria Region</i>	2710
<i>Eastern Metropolitan Region</i>	2710
<i>Eastern Victoria Region</i>	2711
<i>Western Metropolitan Region</i>	2711
<i>Eastern Victoria Region</i>	2712
<i>Western Victoria Region</i>	2712

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers and received by Hansard in the period shown.

7 August to 20 August 2015**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

Question asked by: Ms Dunn
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 26 May 2015

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Eastern Metropolitan for her question.

The Government recognises the many health and environmental benefits of cycling to Victorian communities.

I am advised by VicRoads that parts of the land for the Syndal to Heatherdale bike track are owned by Melbourne Water. Whitehorse City Council and Monash City Council have not signed operational agreements with Melbourne Water relating to the sections of the track running through their municipalities.

Operational agreements need to be in place before any proposal is considered further by VicRoads.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Bourman
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 26 May 2015

ANSWER:

The allocation of \$5 million in the 2015-16 Victorian Budget will enable the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) to increase the investigation and enforcement of domestic animal breeding establishments through the RSPCA Special Investigation Unit to support Labor's election commitment to crack down on and shut puppy farms.

To effectively manage the negative impacts of wild dogs, private and public land managers must work together in a strategic and proactive manner that utilises a range of management practices. The government supports proactive control methods including aerial and ground baiting, exclusion fencing and good animal husbandry, along with some reactive measures such as trapping and shooting, to minimise wild dog attacks on livestock, and in some cases, environmental values.

An additional \$2 million over four years was allocated last year for aerial and remote ground baiting in remote areas in Gippsland and North East Victoria. No changes to this allocation have been made. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning has scheduled the next round of aerial baiting for Spring 2015.

The government considers that community participation is central to wild dog management and is working together with communities to develop local approaches for wild dog control in each of the 15 wild dog management zones across Gippsland and the North East.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Young
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 27 May 2015

ANSWER:

The Scallop Dive (Port Phillip Bay) Fishery was established in late 2013. A Total Allowable Commercial Catch (TACC) is set annually based on the evidence provided through a scallop abundance survey and consideration of the objectives of the Fisheries Act 1995. These considerations related, specifically, to the sustainability of the scallop resource and related habitat and ecosystems of Port Phillip Bay, provision of recreational fishing opportunities and the promotion of sustainable commercial fishing opportunities. The 2015/16 TACC is 146 tonnes.

Recreational harvest is protected through the establishment of two recreational fishing exclusion zones in the areas most valued by recreational fishers; maintaining recreational access to all of Port Phillip Bay; maintaining the current no minimum length on recreational scallop harvest and retaining the existing bag limit of 100 scallops.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 10 June 2015

ANSWER:

The government took its commitment for the Friday before the AFL Grand Final to become a public holiday to the State Elections. The government is implementing this commitment in line with our election mandate.

The Grand Final Friday public holiday will benefit your constituents by allowing them to join in the excitement of the Grand Final Parade and other related celebrations. The Grand Final Friday long weekend is expected to benefit many Victorians, including regional tourism businesses that receive a significant proportion of their annual income over long weekends.

Victorians are working harder than ever, and a public holiday will give them more time to spend with their families. Public holidays create opportunities for your constituents to participate at council events, and boost community engagement.

As you have acknowledged, weekends and public holidays are opportune times for communities to celebrate significant events. This new public holiday will allow councils to bring their community members together to celebrate a uniquely Victorian event.

Councils are responsible for service provision decisions throughout the year including public holidays. I am confident that councils will have regard for the particular needs of the communities they serve and strike the right balance on service provision with any cost considerations.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Morris
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 11 June 2015

ANSWER:

The request to amend the Lal Lal wind energy facility planning permit is currently under assessment by department officers. I understand the proponent recently revised their request. Consequently the department is still considering the most appropriate process, including any level of community consultation that may be required.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Rich-Phillips
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 23 June 2015

ANSWER:

In the 2015 State Budget the Victorian Government provided \$20 million to undertake planning and pre-construction work to duplicate Thompsons Road. This is in addition to the \$500,000 in planning funds announced in February 2015.

The funding will enable VicRoads to progress the project in readiness for construction. Preliminary activities include design, surveys, environmental studies, traffic modelling, utility services investigations and stakeholder consultation. Local residents and land owners will be engaged to provide input and comment on the proposed upgrade as part of these preliminary activities.

The timing for construction of the Thompsons Road upgrade is dependent on approval of the project scope and allocation of funding.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr O'Donohue
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 23 June 2015

ANSWER:

As you know, since 21 June 2015, passengers using Pakenham and Sunbury stations have been requested to board more frequent Metro services when travelling to the city, as has long been the case for people using stations such as Dandenong, Sunshine, and Broadmeadows. Pakenham services currently run on average every eight minutes during the weekday morning peak.

As you noted, the consultation sessions for the Government's Regional Network Development Plan are currently underway, and are focused on regional train, coach and bus services. Although the Gippsland consultation sessions did not include a session at Pakenham, your constituents can still participate in the online discussion or provide feedback through the online survey. Further information is available on the PTV website:

<<http://getinvolved.ptv.vie.gov.au/regional-network-development-plan>>.

As you are aware, the Andrews Labor Government has announced a multi-billion dollar program to transform the Pakenham and Cranbourne lines. The Cranbourne and Pakenham Rail Upgrade will create thousands of jobs, ease congestion and reduce travel times for the one million people living in Melbourne's south-east corridor. It includes the removal of all level crossings between Dandenong and Caulfield stations, and the purchase of 37 next generation, high-capacity trains.

The Cranbourne Pakenham Rail Upgrade will boost capacity by up to 42 per cent on the Cranbourne–Pakenham line every day — accommodating an extra 11,000 passengers in the morning peak — and boost capacity across the network by freeing up existing trains.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Premier
Asked on: 24 June 2015

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government is committed to communicating with communities across Victoria, including those in regional and rural areas. This is reflected in the Victorian Government Regional Communication Policy, available publicly on the Department of Premier & Cabinet website.

I can advise the Member that Victorian Government departments, bodies and entities must ensure that 15 per cent of their annual net total campaign media expenditure is placed with regional and rural media. This includes dedicated regional press. As of May 2015, the Victorian Government is exceeding that target, with 18 per cent of total 2014-2015 media spend allocated to regional media.

I can also advise the Member that my department meets regularly with representatives from regional newspapers, including the Victorian Country Press Association, of which I understand many excellent country newspapers in the Western Victoria Region are members.

I encourage the Member to support the great newspapers in the Region to continue to engage with the Victorian Government.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Leane
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 24 June 2015

ANSWER:

To enable us to expedite the Heatherdale Road Level Crossing Removal Project to be delivered at the same time as the Blackburn Road Project, consultation was undertaken including:

- An online community survey in March /April 2015 to better understand community attitudes to the level crossing, also providing respondents with the opportunity to leave additional feedback at the end of the survey.
- Pop up information booths at Heatherdale station.
- Brochures mailed out to residents providing contact for the community to ask questions or give feedback.
- Door knocking residents and businesses directly abutting the project site to talk about the project and discuss impacts.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority is now working closely with the preferred contractor for the projects to engage with the community on key issues. Further opportunities for the local community, including residents, traders, community groups and councils to have a say on the Blackburn Road and Heatherdale Road Level Crossing Removals will include:

- A community information session will be held on 24 August 2015, to share more detailed designs and information about the construction programs, impacts and mitigation strategies.
- Meetings with relevant key stakeholders including Whitehorse and Maroondah Council, local traders, businesses, sporting clubs and schools to provide an opportunity to learn more about the project, provide feedback on the designs and have their questions answered.
- A Stakeholder Liaison Group will be formed with representatives from the local community and stakeholder groups to provide feedback into the project and help disseminate information into the wider community.

Once construction begins, the project team will ensure that local residents, businesses and other stakeholders are kept up to date with the projects and their progress via the project web pages, information flyers, on site information boards and local newspaper advertising.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Bath
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 24 June 2015

ANSWER:

Effectively managing the risks from wild dogs requires a strategic, pro-active and effective approach utilising a range of management practices. The current approach is consistent with the Action Plan for Managing Wild Dogs in Victoria 2014-2019 released in 2013. Government, the community, industry and other land managers work together to reduce the negative impacts of wild dogs on their land. Aerial baiting as a means of controlling wild dog populations in six remote areas of Gippsland and north east Victoria continues to be part of Victoria's approach to enhance the management of this pest species. The next round of aerial baiting is scheduled for Spring 2015. The previous Coalition Government allocated money for one baiting season in each financial year; the former Minister made absolutely no plans for an Autumn baiting in 2014.

The current approach to wild dog management recognises the importance of local knowledge and experience and provides opportunities for the community to help develop each of the 15 wild dog management zone work plans. The community is encouraged to participate in this annual planning process. Landholders that are experiencing wild dog incidents in which stock are maimed, killed or harassed should contact the local senior wild dog controller for advice on immediate actions to mitigate further losses. When verified that the stock losses are due to wild dog attack and movement, the wild dog controller will undertake an assessment of the current control undertaken in the area and determine whether any modifications are needed. The wild dog controller may implement additional control using reactive tools and techniques such as trapping, opportunistic shooting and baiting.

The investigation and response to sheep losses in Gembrook referred to in the Member for Eastern Victoria's question is an example of government staff and local shire rangers working together. I understand that in this particular example it was agreed that the losses could be attributed to one or more domestic dogs and the local shire ranger managed the incident accordingly.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Finn
Directed to: Minister for Local Government
Asked on: 25 June 2015

ANSWER:

As the Member is aware I have appointed Transition Auditors to ensure the necessary planning and work is done to resolve issues and ensure local residents are not left worse off by the separation.

In respect to the question about timing I refer the member to the Victorian Government Gazette No. G 15 from 16 April 2015.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr O'Donohue
Directed to: Minister for Ports
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Government has time to get the decision right regarding the location of Victoria's second container port. That's why we will commission Infrastructure Victoria to undertake a thorough assessment of potential locations, which will include the Port of Hastings and a location on the western side of Port Phillip Bay.

On completion of this work, Infrastructure Victoria will make a recommendation to Government on its preferred location for Victoria's second container port, for a Government decision.

Should Hastings be determined as the preferred location, Government will then outline the next steps, including the timing for the recommencement of any studies required for approvals.

It should be noted that the Port of Hastings is an existing, operating port which currently handles the import and export of oil and gas products. These bulk port operations will continue to service Victoria for the foreseeable future. The Port of Hastings Development Authority will also continue to respond to requests from proponents who seek to use the facilities at the Port for other bulk trades.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Sport
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Government is currently working with the City of Greater Geelong to ensure the full scope of works for Stage one of the Drysdale Sports Precinct is delivered. Stage one of the project plans to deliver a premier Australian rules football/cricket oval, multi-use fields catering for soccer and other sports, sports lighting, car parking and a relocatable pavilion which is planned to be replaced with a permanent facility in Stage two. I can confirm the Government's commitment of \$3.5 million towards this important community project for Drysdale. Staff from my department will continue to work with the City of Greater Geelong to ensure the facilities meet the sporting needs of the Drysdale community.