

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

21 August to 3 September 2015

(Extract from book 12)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

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Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
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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 and Mr Melhem. (*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**

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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
Elasmr, 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

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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.

21 August to 3 September 2015**Western Victoria Region**

Question asked by: Ms Tierney
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 17 March 2015

ANSWER:

VicRoads advises me that plans to provide visitor signage to the Bunjil Lookout were included as part of this project. VicRoads expects that the signs will be installed by the Golden Plains Shire by mid September 2015.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Davis
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 14 April 2015

ANSWER:

I understand that Boroondara City Council (Council) are in the process of considering Amendment C195 to the Boroondara Planning Scheme. Amendment C195 seeks to introduce the *Mailing Road Built Form Guidelines* into the Boroondara Planning Scheme.

I am advised that Council underwent a process of exhibitioning the amendment followed by a review of submissions by a Planning Panel. Council has resolved to split the adopted amendment and will subsequently submit it to me for my determination. My Department will assess the proposed amendment prior to a recommendation being made to me.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Symes
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 15 April 2015

ANSWER:

The 'Travel Happy — Share the Road' campaign will focus on the impact that mood and driver behaviour can have on road safety.

All Victorian road users, regardless of their mode of transport, have a responsibility to make safe choices while on the road, and the Share the Road campaign will help to highlight the importance of positive, caring behaviour for all road users.

The campaign will see a number of road safety partners work together to actively promote the importance of safe driving and road use that shows awareness of other road users.

The campaign involves a series of community-based events, and is supported by an advertising campaign featuring road safety ambassadors including Mick Malthouse, Matt Keenan, Charlie Farren and Paul Mercurio. The material includes promoting a better understanding of safe driving for truck driver, pedestrians, bike riders and motorcyclists.

The Travel Happy team will be attending regional community events throughout the year to encourage all Victorians to share the road. In northern Victoria, the Travel Happy team will be out and about sharing tips, advice and incentives to keep Victorians travelling happy and promoting road safety at the Farm and Road Safety Expo in Rochester, the RACV Great Victorian Bike Ride in Bendigo, the Alexandra Truck Ute and Road Show, the Bendigo Easter Festival and the 40th Historic Winton Motor Raceway.

The Parental Role Modelling campaign is administered by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and highlights the role parents play in shaping the driving behaviour of their children.

The campaign aims to reduce road trauma among drivers aged 18 to 25, who make up 12 per cent of drivers in Victoria yet account for around one in five deaths.

It follows international research linking the driving style of parents with that of their children in their first year on their P-plates.

Actions like speeding or talking on the phone while driving are things children might pick up from the back seat without parents being aware. Our actions as adults have a powerful effect on children and we, as a community, need to set the right example early on.

This is the first time that the TAC has directly targeted parents of primary school children in order to reduce road trauma, with parents of children aged 5 to 12 the primary audience.

These two campaigns highlight the Andrews Labor Government's commitment to improve road safety for all road users.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Drum
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 10 June 2015

ANSWER:

The Department of Education and Training is working constructively with the main contractor, Contract Control Services (CCS), as well as the project superintendent and various project consultants, to resolve the payment issues as a matter of urgency.

I am advised that a Departmental representative has convened, on site, with the main contractor, various sub-contractors (including their legal representatives), the project superintendent and sub-consultants, in a meeting specifically called to address and resolve the issues at hand.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Drum
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 23 June 2015

ANSWER:

The Department of Education and Training is working constructively with the main contractor, Contract Control Services (CCS), as well as the project superintendent and various project consultants, to resolve the payment issues as a matter of urgency.

I am advised that a Departmental representative has convened, on site, with the main contractor, various sub-contractors (including their legal representatives), the project superintendent and sub-consultants, in a meeting specifically called to address and resolve the issues at hand.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Dunn
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 25 June 2015

ANSWER:

VicRoads has prepared a communications plan for the implementation of the curfew trial, which includes a range of communications activities, including community information 'drop-in' sessions and a community reference group, as well as advertising and a letter 'drop' informing impacted residents and traders of the curfews.

A community reference group will be established to evaluate the trial. Input will be sought from local residents, representatives from local businesses and community interest groups, as well as key industry and government stakeholders. VicRoads will invite expressions of interest for the community reference group via the VicRoads website and local advertising.

Local residents and businesses are invited to provide feedback at the community information sessions, as well as submit written or verbal feedback to VicRoads.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Lovell
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Labor Government has provided \$161.4 million in funding for 2015-16 to Goulburn Valley Health to meet increased demand and to plan for proposed redevelopment. That's \$10.1 million more than Goulburn Valley Health was provided in last year's budget.

As part of the Government's \$200 million Hospital Beds Rescue Fund, Goulburn Valley Health has been provided with funding to open eight more acute inpatient beds. This will enable an extra 635 patients to be treated every year.

A capital redevelopment planning exercise is also underway at Goulburn Valley Health with an allocation of \$1 million being made in the 2015-16 Victorian Budget to commence this very important project. This project will focus on the capacity of the Goulburn Valley Health emergency department as a very high priority within the context of overall health service capital planning.

The Government's massive investment in health will help Goulburn Valley Health admit and treat more patients, sooner.

In addition, the Department of Health & Human Services continues to support health services such as Goulburn Valley Health to implement a range of strategies to improve patient flow in the emergency department and the timeliness of commencement of patient treatment. These strategies include implementing new models of care, such as Goulburn Valley Health's new short stay observation unit which provides an alternative to admission to an inpatient bed, fast tracking of low acuity patients and supporting alternative care options for patients attending the emergency department.

Labor governments always invest in health and we are committed to improving access to health services across Victoria to ensure every Victorian can receive the care they need in a timely way, closer to home.

Northern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Patten
Directed to: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

There is no issue of greater importance to the Andrews Labor Government than tackling the scourge that is family violence. We know that while there is no community that has not been touched by this harm, there are tragically some that experience it at greater levels than others. As a government we are committed to identifying long-term solutions that are victim centric, while holding perpetrators to account.

As you are aware, the Royal Commission into Family Violence is currently underway and is due to deliver its findings and recommendations to government in February 2016. As part of its Terms of Reference, the Commission was tasked to examine the entire system from the ground up, and to provide a practical set of solutions.

As part of the Andrew Labor Government's 2015-16 State Budget, \$81.3 million over five years has been allocated to family-violence. This funding will benefit many Victorians across the state who are experiencing, or at risk of, family violence. The funding package includes a boost to the statewide family violence peak body, Domestic Violence Victoria, to increase their capacity to provide advocacy of family violence issues and develop best practice guidance for the family violence service sector.

The Andrews Labor Government also supports and funds Safe Steps, the statewide family violence response centre which provides crucial crisis support. Its services ensure that all Victorian women and children, no matter where they live, can access immediate assistance and referral to other support services.

The government is also committed to the expansion of the Risk Assessment and Management Panels (RAMPs), an initiative which was piloted in Hume City Council — in which Broadmeadows is situated — as well as in the City of Greater Geelong. This initiative brings together family violence services, police, child protection, Corrections Victoria and other services to deliver an integrated response to identify and respond to women and children at high risk of family violence. This initiative is also designed to increase perpetrator accountability.

Royal Commissions shine light on an issue unlike no other. That is why we have established a \$16 million Family Violence Fund, in addition to our election commitments. The Family Violence Fund is being used to respond to critical and unforeseen demand on family violence services, that arise during the course of the Royal Commission.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Hartland
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

VicRoads, on behalf of the Victorian Government, is managing the delivery of the West Gate Distributor Project.

VicRoads expects the construction of Stage 1 to commence in late 2015. Construction will take approximately 18 months, with completion in mid-2017.

While the Government has previously indicated that truck bans would be introduced in the inner west to ensure trucks use the West Gate Distributor or Western Distributor, VicRoads does not intend to introduce additional truck curfews as part of the Stage 1 works.

VicRoads does not expect any significant increase in truck movements through the Footscray/Yarraville area as a result of these works.

Separate to this, VicRoads recently presented the results of the inner-west truck counts to the community, showing the progress made in reducing truck traffic in Footscray and Yarraville following the introduction of expanded truck curfews in January 2015.

The expanded curfews are designed to strike a balance between the needs of the local community and local truck operators to address safety, noise and air quality issues. The expanded curfews in Footscray and Yarraville were installed after extensive community and industry consultation. VicRoads will continue to monitor truck traffic in the area and undertake targeted enforcement, as required.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Dunn
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

I am informed that the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) received a complaint in relation to the building constructed at 3/178 Wonga Road, Ringwood North on 29 June 2015. The VBA wrote to the complainant on 2 July 2015 advising that the matter was under assessment and that further information was being sought from the relevant parties.

The VBA has advised that a technical assessment of the building permit documentation is being conducted and that a site inspection was undertaken at the property on 17 August 2015. The VBA has advised that once the assessment is completed the complainant will be notified of the outcome and of any actions to be taken.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan (SWRRIP, or Statewide Plan) does not identify the Kingston Green Wedge as an existing waste hub. It describes the broader Kingston/Clayton/Dingley Precinct as an 'Existing hub of state importance'.

Hubs reflect areas in which there are current activities however the location and activities of hubs may change over time.

The Statewide Plan recognises the Kingston City Council adopted the Kingston Green Wedge Plan in 2012, and that the position of the Council is that no part of the hub should exist in the green wedge.

Ministerial consideration of approval of Amendment C143 will be subject to the provisions contained under Part 3 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The Statewide Plan does not pre-empt the Minister for Planning's decision on Amendment C143.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Bath
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

To secure parking at the Epping site buyers (retailers and florists) and sellers (stand licence holders and store lease holders) were required to lodge Expressions of Interest (EOI). Businesses that did not lodge an EOI between December 2014 and February 2015, were not allocated a bay in the initial allocation process.

Store holders were offered exclusive use of the bays immediately behind their stores up until the commencement of trading when these bays are made available to retailers. Truck and semi bays with loading capacity have been provided to stand holders during the trading period for the days on which they have a licence to trade. Retailers that lodged an EOI on time were allocated bays in accordance with their usage patterns, based on data supplied by the Melbourne Market Authority (MMA). Ballots were then conducted in June 2015 to determine the location of their bays.

The MMA has received a number of requests from retailers who did not participate in the EOI process but require parking at Epping. Parking is being allocated to these retailers on a similar basis to the EOI process outlined.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Leane
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

The level crossings at Mountain Highway and Scoresby Road in Bayswater are included as part of the Andrews Government's Level Crossing Removal Project, which will remove 50 level crossings in metropolitan Melbourne. Previous work under the former Government left a boom gate to the maintenance yards, LXRA has reviewed this and improved the design to ensure no boom gates are left at this location.

Community consultation is an critical part of our commitment to the Level Crossing Removal Project, and the Level Crossing Removal Authority will be working closely with the local community as well as Knox City Council to provide more information on the removal of these level crossings.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr O'Donohue
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Labor Government is moving to end confusing rules and inequity for some V/Line passengers by applying a consistent pick up and set down policy across the network.

Passengers using Pakenham and Sunbury stations are now requested to board the more frequent Metro services when travelling to the city. This has long been the case for people using stations such as Sunshine, Broadmeadows and Dandenong.

The initial focus will be on communication with passengers to encourage behaviour change, although there may be a need to consider enforcement options in the future.

I regret to read of the impact that these changes will have on Mr Cahill, however it is not feasible to introduce exceptions to a policy that aims to provide consistency across the network.

I am, however, pleased to inform Mr O'Donohue that I expect these changes have been warmly welcomed by his constituents on the Gippsland line beyond Pakenham.

The Andrews Labor Government agrees that people have the right to feel safe on public transport in Victoria, regardless of where or what time they are travelling. To increase public safety, Protective Services Officers (PSOs) have already been deployed to 177 railway stations, where they patrol from 6.00 pm until the last train seven days a week.

With the introduction of the Homesafe trial, metropolitan trains will run hourly through the night on Friday and Saturday and V/Line coaches will depart Southern Cross Station for Traralgon at around 2am. This trial will be

supported by an additional 109 Protective Services Officers and an additional 62 transit police, to offer passengers a safe and affordable journey home.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Tierney
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

I wish to thank Ms Tierney for her interest and ongoing support of VET and TAFE in the Western Victoria Region.

As many know, on coming to Government it was clear that Victoria's economy was facing a number of key challenges, including rising unemployment. Under the former Liberal Government, Victoria had one of the highest rates of youth unemployment of all mainland states, with regional areas hardest hit.

That's why the Government established the \$50 million TAFE Back to Work Fund. The Fund is supporting the Andrews Labor Government's Back to Work Plan to grow jobs and get people back to work, while improving the financial viability of TAFE institutes and supporting the skills needs of local communities.

I am aware that youth unemployment in Victoria's south west remains a problem and so I appreciate Ms Tierney's concern for the continued sustainability of South West TAFE.

As Ms Tierney has noted, \$4 million was provided to South West TAFE through the TAFE Rescue Fund to help the institute continue to support the ongoing provision of high-quality training across the region. A further \$1.6 million has been allocated from the TAFE Back to Work Fund to South West TAFE for the Core Skills for Work initiative.

South West TAFE's Core Skills for Work initiative will address two major barriers to employment in Victoria's south west:

- Long term unemployment of unskilled school leavers and people returning to work due to a lack of basic employment skills or work experience.
- Limited interpersonal engagement of traditional traineeships which are lowering their appeal to potential employers and students.

Specifically, the initiative will provide 270, 12 month traineeships over four years, and will help students to collaborate, network and learn alongside their peers, potential employers and schools.

It will focus initially on skills needed for customer facing, administrative, and office work environments, which have been identified as skills gaps by employers. It will then expand into personal services, with the potential to be applied to a number of other high demand industries into the future.

This is a great initiative that will create real opportunities for people struggling to enter the employment market. Through the TAFE Back to Work Fund, South West TAFE is delivering a training initiative that addresses skills needs in key industry growth sectors, that helps businesses boost productivity, and that will ultimately lead to real jobs for young people in Victoria's south west.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Finn
Directed to: Minister for Health
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Early Childhood Intervention Services program provides a range of support to children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders. It provides services that are long term and specialised.

This program is funded by the Department of Education and Training and falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Families and Children. I will raise the matter with Minister Mikakos on your behalf.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Wooldridge
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 6 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government acknowledges that the Research Country Fire Authority (CFA) Brigade has been in existence since 1950 and has played a significant role in protecting the local community from the threat of fires as well as providing resources during other major fire events, such as the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983, and the North East and East Gippsland fires in 2003, which lasted for nearly two months.

The government has committed to deliver 70 trucks comprising of 40 heavy tankers, 20 medium tankers and 10 medium pumpers at a cost of \$33.5 million as part of an overall tanker replacement program, in order to ensure the fleet remains fit for purpose.

As part of this commitment, the Research CFA Brigade has been flagged as a priority to receive one of the medium tankers, which has been identified by the CFA as the appliance that will best meet the needs of the Brigade. The medium tanker flagged for the Research CFA Brigade is included in the 2015-16 build program for these tankers, which will potentially see the brigade receiving a new vehicle in December 2015.

It should be noted that the government's election commitment was not for a pumper, but for the purchase of a new fire tanker for the Research CFA Brigade. There is a distinction between the two types of vehicles.

Pumpers have large pumps that run off the engine so they can only be operated whilst parked. They are used mostly in urban areas and require a static or reticulated water supply. Tankers carry their own water supply and have pumps that can be used whilst the truck is in motion. They are predominantly used in bushfire and are fitted with crew protection systems in case of burn-over.

The CFA has advised that operationally the Research CFA brigade does not require a pumper and is not scheduled to receive one through any of its programs. The government is providing the Research CFA Brigade with the appliance it actually needs.

The Victorian Government greatly appreciates the tireless work of all CFA brigades including the Research CFA Brigade and will continue to support our firefighters .

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Rich-Phillips
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 6 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Government has announced the first 17 sites to be completed by mid 2018 including, three level crossing removals on the Frankston line at North, Centre and McKinnon roads. Construction has commenced at the first of these 17 at Burke Road.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority is currently undertaking early planning and engineering assessments for all remaining level crossing sites to be delivered under the Andrews Government's Level Crossing Removal Project in order to determine a removal schedule that minimises disruption to our road and rail networks and provides the best outcomes for local communities.

As part of these planning works it is expected that community consultation will begin at a number of sites in the coming months and the Andrews Government will be making further announcements about the timetable for other sites in the coming months.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Lovell
Directed to: Minister for Regional Development
Asked on: 6 August 2015

ANSWER:

Regional Victoria's best days are in front of it. The Andrews Labor Government has established the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund (RJIF) to support major projects, create the jobs and industries of the future, and build stronger regional communities.

The RJIF is divided into three parts focusing on major projects, employment, and communities. Each is designed to make the most of regional Victoria's strengths and attractions, and ease pressure on families, companies and community groups after four years of neglect under the previous Coalition government.

Labor is investing in industries of the future and the projects we need, harnessing the strength of our communities to attract more families, create more jobs and get regional Victoria back on track.

While applicants are expected to make a financial contribution or source third-party funding, RDV funding can be used in conjunction with other State Government funding sources.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Davis
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 6 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Melbourne Metro Rail Project (MMRP) will be terrific for commuters using South Yarra station. MMRP will free up two extra tracks for additional direct services between South Yarra and the city. With "turn up and go" services residents of South Yarra will not need a timetable and the South Yarra precinct will become one of the best serviced public transport areas in the state.

The MMRP allows for longer high capacity trains which require longer platforms and it is difficult to accommodate lengthy platforms in South Yarra without causing significant impacts to the surrounding area during construction, including increased land acquisition.

Detailed analysis by the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority has confirmed that connecting South Yarra station to MMRP would cost nearly a billion dollars for very little benefit.

Passengers travelling east from South Yarra station will have a seamless connection to both the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines by boarding a Frankston line service and interchanging at Caulfield station.

Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Leane
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 18 August 2015

ANSWER:

I wish to thank the Member for his question and ongoing interest in and support of the important election commitment by the Andrews Government to reopen the Lilydale site.

The sale and re-opening of the Lilydale site is the subject of a Request for Proposal process for which all Victorian TAFE and dual sector universities were eligible to participate.

The period for responses closed on 30 July and we are excited with the level of interest and detail of the responses received. The Department is currently undertaking an evaluation of the responses to achieve a best value result that will best meet the region's future education and training needs, delivering high quality, innovative and viable TAFE and higher education services on the site.

We are on track and anticipate the re-opening of the campus in the first half of next year with the opening of the Tech School to follow.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Rich-Phillips
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 20 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to completing the duplication of Thompsons Road between Eastlink in Carrum Downs and Berwick-Cranbourne Road in Clyde North, including the rail level crossing removal at Cranbourne near Merinda Park station.

In the 2015 State Budget, \$20 million has been committed to the project, in addition to \$500,000 committed earlier this year to facilitate an early start to the necessary planning and pre-construction works required to progress the project.

VicRoads advises me that a wide range of pre-construction and site investigation works are currently being undertaken for this project, including detailed traffic modelling that will help refine the scope of the project for further consideration of funding in subsequent State budgets. The commencement and completion dates of the upgrade will be confirmed once the final scope of the project is approved.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 20 August 2015

ANSWER:

I appreciate that volunteers of the Country Fire Authority in your region would like more time to be engaged in the review process. However, I have requested that Mr O'Byrne deliver a report to me by 30 September 2015 so that all agencies involved can focus on preparations in advance for the next summer fire season.

The Terms of Reference identify the key stakeholders for the purpose of the Review. These stakeholders have been contacted and requested to provide written submissions responding to the issues identified in the Terms of Reference. In order to allow time to review the submissions, obtain clarifications and further information, undertake independent research and then prepare his report and recommendations, Mr O'Byrne has requested all stakeholders to provide their submissions by 31 August 2015.

Given the importance of the issues being considered by the Review, Mr O'Byrne has also invited written submissions from interested members of the public. These submissions must also be provided by 31 August to allow sufficient time to consider the information and views provided. Members of fire services brigades are welcome to make an individual submission if they prefer.

Submissions can be uploaded via the dedicated Fire Services Review webpage: <https://myyiews.justice.vic.gov.au/fireservicesreview> and hard copy submissions can be addressed to Mr O'Byrne at: Fire Services Review, Level 30, 121 Exhibition Street, Melbourne VIC 3000.

As the review must be completed in advance of the summer season, it is not possible for Mr O'Byrne to extend the nominated time frames.

Should you have any queries about the Review process, please contact the Review Secretariat at fireservicesreview@justice.vic.gov.au.

Thank you for your interest in the Fire Services Review.