

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

18 September to 8 October 2015

(Extract from book 14)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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Legislative Council committees

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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 — 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.

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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 Bourman, 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

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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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
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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
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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

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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.

18 September to 8 October 2015**Western Victoria Region**

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

ANSWER:

When introducing a new bus network, Public Transport Victoria (PTV) has to find a balance between providing a fast, direct and frequent journey and also providing coverage in local neighbourhood routes. PTV aims to have most homes in urban Geelong within 400-600 metres of a bus route.

I have requested that PTV review the Geelong bus network within six months of implementation to identify what further improvements can be made. A consultation session was held in Lara to address these concerns. Further community workshops have been held in Geelong as part of the Regional Network Development Plan with further workshops to speak to the community about the bus network and to identify any concerns following implementation.

PTV is currently investigating the performance of the Corio-Lara link and will continue to review the implementation of the bus network and address any issues if deemed necessary in future network changes.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Bourman
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 4 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Labor Government understands how vital it is for families across the state to enjoy well deserved leisure time with their families and friends. Public holidays provide a crucial and necessary opportunity for families and friends to join together as a community. As the Grand Final public holiday falls within school holidays, it will also help take the pressure off families juggling work and child care, giving Victorian families more time they can spend together.

Following the Government's decision to introduce Easter Sunday and the Friday before the Australian Football League (AFL) Grand Final as public holidays via notice in the Victorian Government Gazette, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) to analyse the potential impact of the policy on the Victorian economy as required under the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994.

As part of the RIS process, consultations were had with 16 entities including business groups and industry associations representing members across metropolitan and regional Victoria, as well as small businesses, the AFL and employee unions, to gauge the anticipated impact of the policy. The RIS was then released for a 28 day period of public submissions, and all submissions were considered.

Victoria has over 532 000 small businesses. Nearly 63% of them are micro businesses that do not employ staff. The RIS process saw 109 submissions from those 532 000 businesses.

On 19 August 2015, I published a Notice in the Victorian Government Gazette appointing the new public holidays.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 5 August 2015

ANSWER:

I am advised that the South Eastern Victoria Region is presently undertaking a review of all schools within the region that have a Neighbourhood Enrolment Boundary. As part of this review, the views of neighbouring schools will be sought as to the impact of the Neighbourhood Enrolment Boundary on their operations. The review process is designed to provide greater clarity and transparency to the student placement process.

Following consideration of all feedback received through the consultation process, as well as analysis of the enrolment trends and site limitations affecting schools, a decision will be made as to the retention, modification or removal of a neighbourhood enrolment boundary. It is expected that this process will be completed by the later part of term 4 2015.

A state-wide condition assessment audit of all Victorian Government schools has been undertaken to establish a clear and consistent picture of schools' needs. Parkdale Secondary College will be considered for further capital works within this context against other statewide priorities.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Employment
Asked on: 6 August 2015

ANSWER:

The high rate of unemployment in some parts of Victoria, including Frankston, is a significant concern.

Between December 2010 and December 2014, the unemployment rate for the LGA of Frankston rose from 5.2% to 7.7% (Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Market Data).

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to alleviating unemployment in Frankston and across our State by investing in our economy, creating new jobs and growing industries.

Our Back to Work plan aims to create sustainable and high value jobs for all Victorians by growing our traditional industries and investing in emerging sectors to foster employment.

As part of the plan, we have established:

- The Back to Work Scheme — a \$100 million fund to support new job creation through the provision of payroll tax relief to employers who hire unemployed young people, the long- term unemployed and retrenched workers;
- The Premier's Jobs and Investment Panel — an independent body, supported by a \$508 million fund, which will provide advice to the Premier on economic policy directions to underpin job creation and long term prosperity in Victoria; and
- The Future Industries Fund — a \$200 million fund which will support the development of six sectors with high growth potential.

This investment comes on top of the Government's \$25 million commitment to the Chisholm Institute's Frankston campus Stage 1 redevelopment project.

Chisholm TAFE has also been funded \$2.9 million from the \$50 million TAFE Back to Work Fund to deliver four innovative programs that will benefit Frankston residents. The funding will allow Chisholm to work with the

construction industry, health care providers, the emerging vinyl design and application sector and engineering industry to focus on areas where there are skills gaps and develop training which leads to future jobs.

Furthermore, the Andrews Labor Government's \$63 million revitalisation of the Frankston Station Precinct will transform the heart of Frankston into a safe, modern hub for transport, TAFE and shopping.

We're getting on with the job in Frankston after four years of neglect from the former failed Liberal Government.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 18 August 2015

ANSWER:

Thank you for raising this matter with me. I can assure you that this issue is a high priority for both myself and my Department.

The Lead Deputy Secretary Agriculture, Energy and Resources from my Department has personally spoken with Mr Lloyd about the situation. Marketing advice from a departmental sheep industry specialist is also being offered to Mr Lloyd.

Note that there are currently no restrictions in place on the sale of livestock or livestock products from the Lloyd's property as a result of potential chemical contamination from the CFA Training College at Fiskville.

The Department will continue to maintain contact as necessary with Mr Lloyd to ensure he and his family are supported on this issue.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Finn
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 19 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government has already identified the first 17 level crossing removals and made significant progress with eight awarded for construction and construction underway at Burke Road.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority is currently undertaking early planning, investigations and consultation for the remaining sites, including Buckley Street, and will provide recommendations to the Government later this year as to the optimal timing and packaging of the removal of all 50 level crossings. This will form part of the Project business case and will take into account a range of factors including minimising disruption to the road and rail network, site-specific conditions, the design solution and delivering value for money.

The Victorian Government clearly identified that the funding for the removal of Victoria's 50 worst level crossings would come from the lease of the Port of Melbourne. The quickest way for the Buckley Street crossing to be removed is for the member of the Legislative Council to support the lease of the port.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 19 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Labor Government's Homesafe trial of all night public transport on weekends is about getting people home safer and sooner.

Based on advice of Victoria Police, there will be a range of security and safety measures in place during the trial to keep passengers safe.

The Andrews Labor Government has invested in an additional 109 PSOs to be stationed at the premium stations operating during the trial.

Additional transit police will patrol all 15 train lines and non-premium stations, including Seaford and Chelsea.

Seaford and Chelsea stations, like all stations on the metropolitan network, have CCTV coverage and an emergency assistance button for passenger safety.

Victoria Police's priority is to ensure delivery of the Homesafe commitment. Victoria Police will continually assess the situation during the Homesafe trial and redeploy resources as needed.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Lovell
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 20 August 2015

ANSWER:

The Andrews Labor Government understands how vital it is for families across the state to enjoy well deserved leisure time with their families and friends. Public holidays provide a crucial and necessary opportunity for families and friends to join together as a community. As the Grand Final public holiday falls within school holidays, it will also help take the pressure off families juggling work and child care, giving Victorian families more time they can spend together.

Following the Government's decision to introduce Easter Sunday and the Friday before the Australian Football League (AFL) Grand Final as public holidays via notice in the Victorian Government Gazette, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources engaged PricewaterhouseCoopers to undertake a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) to analyse the potential impact of the policy on the Victorian economy as required under the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994.

As part of the RIS process, consultations were had with 16 entities including business groups and industry associations representing members across metropolitan and regional Victoria, as well as small businesses, the AFL and employee unions, to gauge the anticipated impact of the policy.

The RIS provides an estimate of the impact of the additional public holidays. The RIS found that lost production from the new public holidays is estimated to be between \$717 million and \$898 million annually. The benefits of individual leisure time are estimated to be between \$156 million and \$312 million annually. This does not include the wider benefits that can be expected to accrue to families and the broader community associated with coordinated leisure time.

The analysis in the RIS was independently verified by the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission prior to the RIS being released for a 28 day period of public submissions. All submissions were considered.

Victoria has over 532 000 small businesses. Nearly 63% of them are micro businesses that do not employ staff. The RIS process saw 109 submissions from those 532 000 businesses.

On 19 August 2015, I published a Notice in the Victorian Government Gazette appointing the new public holidays, delivering on the Government's election commitment.

As Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade, I look forward to continuing to meet with Chambers of Commerce and industry groups across the state, to discuss how the Labor Government will help small and local business to grow and remain competitive. I am happy to meet with the Shepparton Chamber of Commerce and Industry when I am next in the region.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr O'Donohue
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 1 September 2015

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government greatly appreciates the work done by the Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers and the vital contribution made towards keeping our state safe.

I appreciate the concerns raised by you on behalf of your constituent Mr Sean Grondman, Captain of the Belgrave Heights and South Fire Brigade and its members, regarding the time frame of the Fire Services Review. However, I have requested that Mr O'Byrne deliver a report to me before the beginning of the summer fire season so that all agencies involved can focus on preparations in advance of the season. The purpose of the review is to ensure that Victoria maintains its world-class fire services, focussing on major issues facing fire agencies.

This comprehensive review of the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB) and the CFA will ensure our outstanding firefighters have the support they need to protect our communities from challenging emergencies into the future. The review will inquire into and make recommendations on the resourcing, operations, management and culture of both fire services.

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 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 also invited written submissions from interested members of the public to be provided by 31 August. Members of fire services brigades were also welcome to make an individual submission.

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.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Fitzherbert
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 1 September 2015

ANSWER:

Thank you for your question regarding the facilities at Port Melbourne Primary School.

Providing a first-class education for our students starts with investing in school buildings and infrastructure. In response to increasing enrolment pressures at inner-city primary and secondary schools, the Department of Education and Training has provided a number of two-storey relocatable classrooms to schools with constrained sites.

I am pleased to confirm that Port Melbourne Primary School will receive a double-storey relocatable building during the 2016 school year. This will ease the pressure on existing facilities at the school and enable accommodation for up to 925 students. In the meantime, I am advised that the school has sufficient classrooms for its projected enrolment at the start of the 2016 school year.

The Department annually assesses each school's current and future enrolment, as well as its infrastructure entitlements according to facility schedules, and I can assure you that the Department will continue to work closely with Port Melbourne Primary to monitor its future growth and resolve any accommodation issues as they arise.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Morris
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 2 September 2015

ANSWER:

The formation of a dedicated park was a commitment made before the election, and the government will deliver on it.

The community was very clear that it wanted the area to be a designated park for a wide range of recreational activities, including bush-walking, mountain bike riding, picnicking, nature orienteering, dog walking, horse riding, prospecting and environmental education. The best fit this range of activities is a Regional Park, and this is supported by the community, including the Friends of the Canadian Corridor, the City of Ballarat and the Wadawurrung Aboriginal Corporation.

In line with our commitment to the people of Ballarat, this government will be introducing legislation that will establish the park by the end of this year.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 2 September 2015

ANSWER:

Thank you for your interest in the Shire of Golden Plains' proposed Bannockburn Emergency Services Precinct. The Victorian Government commends the Golden Plains Shire Council for its vision for Bannockburn, and for identifying opportunities to improve facilities for the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES).

The government is currently working on a statewide framework that will ensure the best use of its resources to support emergency service organisations. Emergency Management Victoria is developing a shared asset strategy to identify the current and future equipment and facility needs of emergency service organisations. This strategy will include identification of service co-location opportunities and will take a sector-wide approach to achieve joined up outcomes that are community focused.

Decisions about co-location and capital works priorities remain with the CFA and VICSES. The Emergency Management Commissioner, Mr Craig Lapsley has met with the Chief Executive Officer of the Golden Plains Shire Council, and Mr Lapsley has requested the CFA and VICSES to give this matter due consideration.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Rich-Phillips
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 3 September 2015

ANSWER:

The current Enrolment Policy with the Department of Education and Training (DET) is to ensure students have access to neighbourhood schools and the freedom to choose other schools subject to facility limitations. The designated neighbourhood school is the school that is nearest the student's permanent residence, unless the regional director:

- needs to restrict new enrolments at a school.
- has designated the neighbourhood boundaries for the school.

Designated Neighbourhood Enrolment Boundaries (zones) will only be considered by a Regional Director if a school's population is such that demand for school placement is creating facility limitations. The installation of a zone would not be considered for Le Page PS as the circumstances for a zone do not apply given current DET policy. South Eastern Victoria Region (SEVR) is currently conducting a review of enrolment practices and all schools have been given an opportunity to provide feedback to this review. The Department of Education and Training is currently working closely with the Principal, School Council and Le Page Primary School local community to consider a range of options for the future in meeting the needs of the students of their community.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 3 September 2015

ANSWER:

As previously stated, 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 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.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water
Asked on: 3 September 2015

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government remains committed to working with communities to reduce their exposure to future flood risk.

The Central Goldfields Shire applied for and was successful in obtaining funding through the Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme (NDRGS) to implement the recommendations of the Carisbrook Flood and Drainage Management Plan. Council has engaged the services of North Central Catchment Management Authority (NCCMA) to project manage the vegetation management works component.

The NCCMA has been working closely with local government and other community members (including Trish Coutts) of the Steering Committee that helped develop the Carisbrook Flood Management Plan to define the scope of works. These works commenced around May 2015 with the poisoning of exotic trees at the project site, and are scheduled to continue at the end of October.

In relation to the cost of offsets, the legal requirements to offset native vegetation in Victoria apply to all individuals and government agencies. The scheme is designed to ensure that there is no net reduction in native vegetation in Victoria as a result of human activities.

The estimated cost of native vegetation offsets required at Carisbrook is \$20 000. The total funding that has been allocated to Carisbrook flood mitigation projects to date is \$2 958 000.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Fitzherbert
Directed to: Minister for Education
Asked on: 16 September 2015

ANSWER:

Thank you for your question concerning the proposed site expansion of Albert Park Primary School by road closure and requesting I visit Albert Park Primary School.

Albert Park Primary School has experienced continued enrolment growth in the area with this translating to pressure on the schools limited dispersal space.

The school and the Department of Education and Training have recently met with representatives of the City of Port Phillip to discuss the possibilities of expanding the site through the closure of the 'T' intersection at Moubay and Bridport Street West. As you would appreciate this is a complex issue not just concerning the school but also the broader community.

The Department will continue to support the school and work closely with the City of Port Phillip to explore the opportunities presented by the proposal.

I am happy to visit the school when my schedule permits.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Morris
Directed to: Premier
Asked on: 17 September 2015

ANSWER:

Decisions on party candidates are a matter for the Victorian Labor Party and not the Victorian Government.