

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Wednesday, 10 June 2015

(Extract from book 8)

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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, 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 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 Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. A. Somyurek, MLC
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 Dalidakis, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Morris and Mr Ondarchie.

Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning — Ms Bath, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Leane, Ms Shing, Ms Tierney and Mr Young.

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

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, Mr Perera and Ms Ryall.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Mr Dalidakis and Ms Patten. (*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 — Acting 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

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.
Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Assembly.
Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.
The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

Wednesday, 10 June 2015

Tourism and major events

440. MRS PEULICH — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Tourism and Major Events): What is the total number of department staff seconded to the Minister's private office and what are their position titles as at 23 February 2015.

ANSWER:

As the Member would be aware, Departmental Liaison Officers (DLO) are employed by Departments to assist Ministers and their offices with departmental liaison and administrative functions.

Their position title is Departmental Liaison Officer.

Veterans

442. MRS PEULICH — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Veterans): What is the total number of department staff seconded to the Minister's private office and what are their position titles as at 23 February 2015.

ANSWER:

As the Member would be aware, Departmental Liaison Officers (DLO) are employed by Departments to assist Minister and their offices with departmental liaison and administrative functions.

Their position title is Departmental Liaison Officer.

Regional development

465. MRS PEULICH — To ask the Minister for Regional Development: What is the total number of department staff seconded to the Minister's private office and what are their position titles as at 23 February 2015.

ANSWER:

As the Member would be aware, Department Liaison Officers (DLOs) are employed by Departments to assist Ministers and their offices with departmental liaison and administrative functions.

Their position title is Departmental Liaison Officer.

Public transport

530. MS PATTEN — To ask the Minister for Agriculture (for the Minister for Public Transport):

- (1) Of the eight million dollars assigned to the St Georges Road shared path upgrade, what amounts have been allocated
- (2) What date will the work on the St Georges Road shared path upgrade commence.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as that date the question was raised:

As the matter falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, the question should be raised with the Hon Luke Donnellan MP.

Agriculture

537. MS DUNN — To ask the Minister for Agriculture: With regard to the granting of exemptions from the Management Standards and Procedures for Timber Harvesting Operations in Victoria’s State Forests 2014 Standards (“the Management Standards”):

- (1) How many applications for exemptions have been received to date.
- (2) How many applications for temporary variation of the Management Standards have been received to date.
- (3) How many exemptions have been granted to date.
- (4) How many requests for temporary variation to the Management Standards have been received to date.
- (5) Will the Minister provide a summary of any exemptions and temporary variations to the Management Standards that have been granted, including the companies, locations and the details of any exemptions and temporary variations that have been granted.

ANSWER:

As the Minister responsible for the Code of Practice for Timber Production 2014, which incorporates the Management Standards, the granting of exemptions relating to the Management Standards is the responsibility of the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water. However, I am informed that:

1. One application has been received.
2. No applications for temporary variation of the Management Standards have been received
3. No exemptions have been granted to date.
4. No requests for temporary variation to the Management Standards have been received.
5. None have been granted and therefore a summary cannot be provided.

Environment, climate change and water

541. MS DUNN — To ask the Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade (for the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water): In relation to the Federal Government’s recent announcement to provide \$1.5 million to support “mechanical fuel load reduction trials” as part of the National Bushfire Mitigation Program, is the Government planning or preparing to participate in any trials in Victoria and if so:

- (1) Where in Victoria will any of the trials be conducted.
- (2) When will any Victorian trials commence.
- (3) How many hectares will be included in each area of any trials in Victoria.
- (4) Will any of the trials be held on Victorian land that is not otherwise available for commercial logging and, if so, what areas.
- (5) What agencies or corporations will be involved in any trials in Victoria.
- (6) Will commercial products be removed from the forest during any Victorian trials and, if so, what products.

- (7) Has the Victorian Government committed funding to any trials and, if so, how much funding has been allocated.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Australian government has allocated \$1.5 million dollars to the Australian forest industry to undertake mechanical fuel reduction trials. There are currently no funded projects on Victorian public land. My department continues to liaise with the Federal department on any proposed future trials in Victoria.

The Victorian Government is committed to reducing bushfire risk. Fuel management, which includes planned burning and mechanical fuel reduction, is one strategy for reducing bushfire risk.

Mechanical fuel reduction works already take place on public land. In 2013-2014, fuel on approximately 12 000 hectares of public land was treated by mechanical works.

The Victorian Government is willing to explore additional opportunities for mechanical fuel reduction where they form part of an integrated suite of strategies to reduce risk and where they contribute to environmental outcomes.

Agriculture

542. MS DUNN — To ask the Minister for Agriculture: In relation to the Victorian Auditor-General's report of December 2013 Managing Victoria's Native Forest Timber Resources:

- (1) What is the status of the implementation of each of the 11 recommendations of that report, are they —
 - (a) fully implemented;
 - (b) partially implemented; or
 - (c) not implemented.
- (2) If a particular recommendation has been fully implemented, what constitutes the actions that have ensured its complete implementation.
- (3) If a particular recommendation has been partially implemented or not implemented —
 - (a) what constitutes the actions taken to date to implement;
 - (b) what remaining actions will ensure complete implementation;
 - (c) when is full implementation expected; and/or
 - (d) why will full implementation not be achieved.

ANSWER:

The Department of Economic, Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, and VicForests are implementing the recommendations of Victorian Auditor-General, detailed in the Managing Victoria's Native Forest Timber Resources report.

I am informed that:

- recommendations 7 and 9 have been implemented;
- actions to implement recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are underway and are being progressively implemented and are expected to be fully completed by 2017; and
- actions relating to recommendations 5, 8, 10, and 11 are ongoing.

Agriculture

543. MS DUNN — To ask the Minister for Agriculture: What forms of direct and/or indirect financial support of any kind is provided by Government to entities and/or individuals or partnerships that deliver logging and/or logging haulage services for logging coupes managed by VicForests, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Grants.
- (2) Loans.
- (3) Underwriting of leases of assets and/or loans.
- (4) Stamp duty, payroll or other tax concessions.
- (5) Debt write-offs.
- (6) Subrogation of debts or claims.

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government offers a range of programs and grants generally to assist Victorian businesses. The Department of Economic Development also offers, for example, assistance to all businesses through the Business Victoria website and Victorian Government Business Offices.

Details about Victorian Government grants and their recipients can be found at www.vic.gov.au/grants. Additionally, you can find details about general grants, vouchers and assistance programs available to Victorian businesses at: <http://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance>.

Public transport

544. MS DUNN — To ask the Minister for Agriculture (for the Minister for Public Transport): In relation to the current suspension of rail services to Stony Point, please provide details of:

- (1) Any causes of the ‘boom gate’ failures that have been identified.
- (2) The measures being investigated to prevent recurrence of the problems.
- (3) The timeframes for implementation of any preventative measures.
- (4) The expected timeframes for the recommencement of services.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

On Monday 30 March 2015, Metro suspended the Stony Point line following two safety incidents in March where level crossings were not operating correctly.

These faults occurred due to a lack of contact between the train wheel and the rail. This is where debris such as sand, leaves or rust interferes with the wheel to rail interface, and as such interferes with track detection of a train in section. Metro implemented a number of mitigations following earlier faults including deploying safe workers to manually monitor the crossing, imposing a speed restriction, and further scrubbing and vegetation works.

At no stage did a train proceed through a crossing when the booms were in the up position.

Public Transport Victoria and Metro have now identified that the solution is the installation of axle counters on the track, which do not rely on the wheel to rail interface to detect a train in section. Works are currently underway to install the axle counters and the works are scheduled for completion by end of June 2015. Buses will replace trains until late June.

Corrections

548. MR O'DONOHUE — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Corrections):
How many prisoners were in the Victorian male prison system on —

- (a) 13 April 2015;
- (b) 20 April 2015; and
- (c) 27 April 2015.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

There were 5842 male prisoners on 30 April 2015.

Corrections

549. MR O'DONOHUE — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Corrections):
How many prisoners were in the Victorian female prison system on —

- (a) 13 April 2015;
- (b) 20 April 2015; and
- (c) 27 April 2015.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

There were 431 female prisoners on 30 April 2015.

Corrections

550. MR O'DONOHUE — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Corrections):
How many male prisoners were held in police cells in Victoria at 7am on —

- (a) 13 April 2015;
- (b) 20 April 2015; and
- (c) 27 April 2015.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

There were 114 male prisoners in police cells at 7 am on 30 April 2015.

Corrections

551. MR O'DONOHUE — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Corrections):
How many female prisoners were held in police cells in Victoria at 7am on —

- (a) 13 April 2015;
- (b) 20 April 2015; and
- (c) 27 April 2015.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

There were 6 female prisoners in police cells at 7 am on 30 April 2015.

Corrections

552. MR O'DONOHUE — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Corrections):
How many current parole orders were there on —

- (a) 13 April 2015;
- (b) 20 April 2015; and
- (c) 27 April 2015.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

There were 1128 current parole orders on 30 April 2015.