

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

**14, 15 and 16 April 2015**

**(Extract from book 5)**

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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

**Economy Infrastructure Legislation Committee** — Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Dalidakis, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Morris and Mr Ondarchie.

**Economy Infrastructure References Committee** — Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Dalidakis, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Morris and Mr Ondarchie.

**Environment and Planning Legislation Committee** — Ms Bath, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Leane, Ms Shing, Ms Tierney and Mr Young.

**Environment and Planning References Committee** — Ms Bath, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Leane, Ms Shing, Ms Tierney and Mr Young.

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

**Legal and Social Issues References Committee** — 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 Elasmr, 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*): Mr Battin, Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson and Ms Ward.

**Family and Community Development Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Lovell. (*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*): Mrs Fyffe, 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.

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

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*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

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Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David <sup>1</sup>	Eastern Victoria	Nats
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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
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Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
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Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
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Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

<sup>1</sup> Resigned 25 February 2015

<sup>2</sup> 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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**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Tuesday, 14 April 2015**

**West Gate distributor**

**Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety**

**Raised by: Ms Hartland**

**Raised on: 10 February 2015**

**REPLY:**

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

The Government is committed to understanding and balancing the needs of the community, industry and environment through a rigorous planning, investigation and consultation process in the planning and delivery of the West Gate Distributor.

A significant amount of planning and development work has been undertaken around stage one of the West Gate Distributor Project. An Expression of Interest has been released to the market for the first stage of the West Gate Distributor.

VicRoads has developed a stakeholder engagement and communications strategy to inform the community of progress and to seek feedback regarding the details of the first stage of the West Gate Distributor.

Plans for the first stage include the separation of bicycles and vehicular traffic across Shepherd Bridge and the Government will work closely with local groups to deliver this.

Detailed planning for the remaining sections of the West Gate Distributor will include investigation of the route alignment and potential impacts to land, traffic modelling, utility services, flood mitigation, air quality and contaminated land management. Traffic noise and the use of noise mitigation measures will be part of the planning investigations.

Over coming months, we will be consulting with a wide range of stakeholders including local residents, the Port of Melbourne, the Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay and Melbourne councils, the Victorian Transport Association and the Maribyrnong Truck Action Group.

**School completion rates**

**Raised with: Minister for Education**

**Raised by: Ms Tierney**

**Raised on: 10 February 2015**

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Completing Year 12 or an equivalent qualification is considered the best foundation from which to launch a secure future. Evidence shows that young people not completing a secondary school qualification are less likely to make a successful transition to long-term, full-time employment and may be more likely to be disadvantaged in later life.

The Great South Coast Group is an alliance of government, business and the local community seeking to improve the region's education attainment rates and reduce the number of young people in the region who are leaving school early.

Beyond the Bell, the Great South Coast Education Attainment Project, seeks to lead a cultural shift in the way communities and service providers work to support the region's young people and improve their chances of attaining Year 12 or equivalent to better prepare them for a successful transition to the next phase of their lives.

The Government shares this project's goals, which include supporting young people to maximise their participation in education and make a successful transition to further education, training or into employment which may include ongoing education.

I would be pleased to meet with Great South Coast Year 12 or Equivalent Attainment Project working group with Ms Tierney to discuss this issue.

### **Beaumaris secondary college**

**Raised with: Minister for Education**

**Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert**

**Raised on: 11 February 2015**

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

This Government is committed to investing in education. It is a priority for us, and a crucial part of making Victoria the education state.

During the election, we committed funding to create a standalone school at Sandringham College's Beaumaris campus. We committed to begin that process in our first year of government and required work to de-merge has commenced.

I can reassure the local member that the project at the Beaumaris campus is a priority for this Government, and we are committed to deliver a standalone school.

We are currently going through a due diligence process and will shortly be establishing a Planning Committee. This committee will include representatives from the Department, local schools, the wider local community and the local council, to drive this project forward. I'm sure that she will understand that, given the scope of this project, it will be crucial to engage a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that we get the best outcome for the school and the community.

### **Kindergarten funding**

**Raised with: Minister for Families and Children**

**Raised by: Mr Leane**

**Raised on: 11 February 2015**

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises that high quality early years services are vital to giving every child the best start in life.

The National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education provides 15 hours of kindergarten for all four year olds in Victoria in the year before school. This Agreement was a significant achievement of the previous Federal and State Labor Governments.

Under the Federal Abbott Government, this Agreement is set to expire at the end of this year, putting the additional kindergarten hours funded through this Agreement in doubt for more than 70 000 Victorian children.

I understand that the lack of an ongoing Federal Government commitment to funding universal access is causing significant uncertainty for the sector, with kindergarten services already planning their budgets, timetables, enrolments and staffing needs for 2016.

On coming to Government, I immediately wrote to the then Federal Assistant Minister for Education, Sussan Ley, seeking an urgent meeting. I followed up with a letter to the Federal Minister for Education and Training, Christopher Pyne, also seeking an urgent meeting and re-iterated these same comments in a letter to the Federal Minister for Social Services, Scott Morrison, as the Minister responsible for the co-ordination of early childhood development.

On 20 March, I met with the Federal Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Training, Scott Ryan and re-iterated my concerns about the Federal Abbott Government's lack of commitment to date to support quality universal early childhood education for Victorian children.

The Premier has also written to the Prime Minister about the importance of continuing this National Partnership Agreement.

Victoria needs an ongoing, sustainable funding agreement with the Commonwealth Government to ensure children can continue to access 15 hours of kindergarten beyond this year. I will keep you informed as to my continued advocacy on this matter, and any responses from the Commonwealth Government.

### **Shepparton bypass**

**Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety**

**Raised by: Ms Lovell**

**Raised on: 11 February 2015**

#### **REPLY:**

I thank the Honourable Member for Northern Victoria for her question.

The Goulburn Valley Highway is the principal route for road freight and general traffic travelling between Melbourne, inland New South Wales and Brisbane. The Shepparton community and the City of Greater Shepparton have been calling for the construction of a full duplicated bypass for many years.

A reservation for the bypass was included in the Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme in 2006 and a business case, including a risk based estimate, for the Shepparton Bypass was submitted to Infrastructure Australia under the Infrastructure Priority List for consideration in 2013. However, the project was not listed to be funded as part of the Nation Building Program (2014-15 to 2018-19) in the Commonwealth Government announcement.

I am aware that the Shepparton Bypass is one of five key infrastructure projects being put forward by the Committee of Greater Shepparton. However, at an estimated cost of \$750 to \$950 million, Federal funding will be required to make the project a reality.

The Government is committed to delivering the projects that Regional Victoria requires; the projects that we were elected to provide. Projects that will deliver real economic development to our regional centres and drive efficiency improvements for our industries.

**Road safety**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety

**Raised by:** Ms Symes

**Raised on:** 11 February 2015

**REPLY:**

I refer to your Adjournment Debate matter regarding the crash on the Northern Highway south of Pyalong, on 28 January 2015.

This was a tragic event that involved a car running off the road, crashing into roadside trees, and killing all four occupants—who were young men (Corey, Chris, Nick and Joshua), all aged in their twenties. I express my heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of each of these men.

Police and Detectives from the Major Collision Investigation Unit are investigating the incident and will be preparing a full inquest briefing report for the Coroner.

Increasingly, road safety initiatives and countermeasures are based on the proven Safe System approach, which strengthens all of the key elements of a safe road transport system — road users, vehicles, roads and speeds as well as post-crash treatment.

Safety barriers, and in particular, wire rope safety barrier has been installed across Victoria to treat sites with a history of run-off-road crashes. Wire rope safety barrier has been shown to be effective in reducing road trauma from vehicles losing control and leaving the road.

VicRoads will work with the Police and Victoria's other road safety partners to examine opportunities to further improve the safety of all road users on our roads, particularly considering any recommendations made by the Coroner.

As you will know, the Victorian Government has dedicated a Ministerial portfolio for Road Safety and I am pleased to be appointed as the responsible Minister. I will be making every available effort with the road safety partners, VicRoads, the Transport Accident Commission, Victoria Police, the Department of Justice and Regulation and the Department of Health and Human Services to implement a 'Safe System' approach, to make our roads safer and more forgiving to prevent and reduce crashes and trauma of this type from occurring across Victoria.

**Horne Street–Gap Road, Sunbury**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 12 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Government is aware of concerns over traffic congestion at this site, which has also been identified by the Hume City Council and in the 2012 and 2014 RACV Redspot Surveys.

In consultation with the Hume City Council, VicRoads will investigate the issues raised about this intersection. Priority issues that require solutions will be considered for funding under future road improvement programs.

**Fruit fly**

**Raised with:** Minister for Agriculture

**Raised by:** Ms Symes

**Raised on:** 12 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to working with communities and industry to continue to combat Queensland fruit fly (QFF).

Managing this pest is important to maintaining Victoria's positive reputation of our goods, especially those from the Sunraysia Pest Free Area (PFA), in both domestic and international markets.

While in Mildura recently, I announced additional funding of \$780 000 to support the local horticulture industry to continue QFF management activities within the PFA.

Despite ongoing investment and efforts to bring QFF under control within the PFA, the number of outbreaks has continued to rise. The former Liberal-Nationals Government voluntarily suspended international area freedom status in April 2014.

The Andrews Government is committed to assisting industry with the delivery of targeted treatment and market access programs to support fruit growers.

An Industry Development Order was gazetted on 10 December 2014 to assist fruit industry bodies to raise the levy funds required to deliver fruit fly control work on an ongoing basis in the PFA.

The Labor Government has also listened to growers and industry representatives in the Goulburn Valley and launched *Ground Up*—a community awareness campaign to support and encourage a local, community-wide response to this pest.

*Ground Up* is providing information to members of the Goulburn Valley community about how they can play their part in managing QFF. We are helping the community to support the industry that supports them.

The Government is currently assisting a newly formed committee of growers and industry representatives by providing secretariat support, linkages to technical experts and access to scientific and other technical information.

This group is working to develop an integrated management approach for the Goulburn Valley based on an agreed strategy and a united voice. Once their planning is further along, the Government will work with them, providing appropriate support.

I am advised that Newman fly (*Dacus newmani*) is a native insect species commonly found across Victoria.

**Prahran electorate secondary school**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education

**Raised by:** Mr Dalidakis

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

During the election campaign, we committed to immediately commence negotiations with Deaf Children Australia about the purchase or lease of the Prahran site for a High School.

We are currently undertaking a detailed assessment of the site and are in discussions with Deaf Children Australia. I appreciate that this is a matter of key importance for the local community.

### **Local government rates**

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government

**Raised by:** Mr D. Davis

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

#### **REPLY:**

I thank the Member of Southern Metropolitan for again raising the current Government's election commitment to implement the Fairer Rating System.

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting councils with clear needs. For example, we have committed to supporting interface councils address their infrastructure needs.

The Fairer Rating System recognises that local councils should continue to have the ability to raise the revenue necessary to provide the infrastructure and services that is needed and wanted by the community. What the policy will do is to increase the level of scrutiny and transparency on such revenue raising decisions and ensure that affordability is also a focus.

If there are infrastructure and services that communities want and need and are prepared to pay for, local councils will be able to make an application to the Essential Services Commission for an exemption from the cap.

### **Taylor's–Kings roads, Delahey**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

#### **REPLY:**

VicRoads advises me that it is aware of the traffic congestion and safety issues at the intersection.

VicRoads has developed a proposal to replace the existing roundabout with traffic signals to improve operation for all road users and relieve congestion at this location.

This proposal will be considered for funding in a future program.

### **East–west link contracts**

**Raised with:** Treasurer

**Raised by:** Mr Leane

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

#### **REPLY:**

In response to the request to send a summary to all state and federal members of Parliament, particularly in the eastern suburbs, of the details of the East–West business case, specifically the details that were hidden before the election I am happy to provide a précis to your office for such purposes upon request.

I share your desire to make sure the Victorian public is fully informed about the full details of the Business Case of the East West Project that the previous Government signed without any mandate of the Victorian people. Details that the previous government kept hidden include:

- a return of only 45 cents to the economy for every \$1 the government was going to spend on the project.
- projections showing that 9 out of every 10 drivers will be worse off, and
- costs for the project that were billions of dollars above the publically stated figures.

I look forward to continuing to work with you on this matter.

### **Goulburn Valley Health**

**Raised with: Minister for Health**

**Raised by: Ms Lovell**

**Raised on: 24 February 2015**

#### **REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government inherited a health system in crisis. That is why we appointed Dr Doug Travis to conduct an independent state-wide review of bed and theatre capacity in the Victorian public hospital system, and to provide recommendations about how to increase the capacity of Victorian hospitals.

There are beds laying empty in Victoria after the former Government ripped \$1 billion out of our health system.

Dr Travis will provide the Government with an interim report at the end of March 2015. I look forward to receiving this report and Dr Travis' advice about how to best apply the Beds Rescue Fund, a \$200 million commitment of the Andrews Labor Government. These recommendations will inform the budget process.

Aside from last minute election promises, while the previous Coalition Government was in office no additional capital flowed to Shepparton health services.

By contrast, the Beds Rescue Fund will be used to open beds and theatres in public hospitals, so that more patients can get the timely treatment that they need.

Service Planning for the primary and extended catchment area of Goulburn Valley Health commenced in September 2014 and is due to be finalised shortly. This will inform masterplanning for the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health. At the conclusion of this process, we can consider priority works.

The staff at Goulburn Valley Health do an excellent job and we greatly value their contribution. I had a productive meeting with the CEO and Chair of the Goulburn Valley Health board last week in Shepparton. After four years of neglect under the former Liberal Government, they face a number of challenges and it was useful to sit down with them to discuss these issues.

The Government will work with Goulburn Valley Health to ensure they continue to deliver high-quality health care to the region now and into the future.

**Monbulk Recreation Reserve**

**Raised with:** Minister for Sport

**Raised by:** Mr O'Donohue

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

**REPLY:**

Providing high quality sport and recreation facilities in Victoria is a key aim of the Victorian Government which made a range of commitments during the election campaign directed at achieving this objective. This includes a \$600 000 investment to redevelop the Monbulk Recreation Reserve pavilion.

The Department of Health & Human Services is currently developing appropriate processes for the funding of election commitments, and has recently engaged with Yarra Ranges Shire Council to further discuss the plans for this and other local projects.

I trust this information has been of assistance to you.

**Geelong defence contract bid**

**Raised with:** Premier

**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring Victoria gets its fair share of work on Commonwealth defence projects, such as the LAND 400 project.

In January this year, I wrote to the Defence Materiel Organisation and defence companies preparing to tender for the LAND 400 project, advocating for Victoria as the optimal base for the program. Subsequently, the Commonwealth Minister for Defence announced the LAND 400 request for tender.

To strengthen the Government's advocacy on the LAND 400 project, the Minister for Industry, Lily D' Ambrosio MP, has recently met with the Minister for Defence, as well as potential tenderers for LAND 400 work.

On Wednesday 11 March 2015, I was pleased to announce the opening of the new Defence Procurement Office in Geelong, which will be based at Deakin University. The Office is open for business and I have written to several major defence companies, including those tendering for the LAND 400 project, encouraging them to contact the Office for assistance to access defence opportunities and base their work in Victoria.

The Office will promote the skill and capability of Victorian and Geelong manufacturers to the largest defence contractors in the world. It will also identify opportunities for growth in defence and non-defence businesses, and help Victorian businesses access local and global supply chains and form industry partnerships.

The location of the Office at Deakin University will allow businesses to draw upon Deakin's world-class research capacity, including in relation to advanced manufacturing and carbon fibre.

The Defence industry is one of the future high growth sectors the Victorian Government is targeting through the new \$200 million Future Industries Fund. The new Defence Procurement Office is one of many Victorian Government commitments that will support manufacturing in the Geelong region. Other support initiatives include the \$7.5 million increase to the Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund, \$3 million for the development of a new Geelong manufacturing hub and the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund.



**Port Campbell rifle range**

**Raised with:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

**Raised by:** Mr Bourman

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Port Campbell Rifle Range is located on Crown land west of Port Campbell, inset into the Port Campbell National Park.

The Corangamite Shire Council will soon begin a feasibility study of a possible geothermal spa tourist development at the site. Joint funding for the study was allocated by Tourism Victoria and Regional Development Victoria in 2014 under the previous Coalition government. Council will be responsible for ensuring the feasibility study includes comprehensive community engagement to properly reflect local perspectives.

Neither the council nor the Victorian Government has taken any decision or made any commitment in relation to developing the site.

The Andrews Government is committed to protecting and enhancing Victoria's coastal environment and other natural areas. The Government recognises the value of such areas in supporting jobs, communities, tourism, wildlife and our liveability. Accordingly, we have committed to working in partnership with councils, local communities, environmental groups and industries to put the care and protection of our environment back on the agenda.

Council met with the Port Campbell Rifle Club, which has occupied the site for approximately 60 years, in December 2014.

**Mornington Peninsula planning scheme**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Mr D. Davis

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

I understand that Mornington Peninsula Shire Council became aware of the presence of the miniature horse at Tayla Hewitt's family property following the receipt of two complaints, one concerning the welfare of the animal and one about amenity impacts.

Keeping the miniature horse on the Hewitt's property, which is 869 square metres in area, is in breach of the Mornington Peninsula Shire General Purposes Local Law. It is not a planning matter. Council's response has been in relation to the local law, not the planning scheme. As such, amending planning provisions would not resolve the situation.

A Shire Ranger has contacted the family about the complaints, however no formal notices have been issued. I am advised that Shire Rangers have the ability to show discretion and work towards a compromise with the family and that this is Council's intention in this case.

**Bacchus Marsh traffic**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety

**Raised by:** Mr Morris

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

VicRoads recently completed the first stage of the Bacchus Marsh Traffic Improvements Package, which included:

- Upgrade of the off-ramp at the Eastern Interchange including resurfacing, linemarking and signage; and
- Safety improvements on Hopetoun Park Road including pavement patching, linemarking and signage.

Before continuing with other works, VicRoads is intending to await the outcome of the Bacchus Marsh Transport Study, which is being managed by the Moorabool Shire Council, and will then seek Government approval to align future works and funding with the identified needs of Bacchus Marsh.

I understand that the study is expected to be finalised shortly.

**Princess Mary Club**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning

**Raised by:** Ms Patten

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

Two applications have been lodged for development and works at the Wesley Church Complex on Lonsdale Street, Melbourne—a heritage permit application under the Heritage Act 1995 and a planning permit application under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The heritage permit application for development, subdivision and conservation work is being considered by the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria. The application includes demolition of the Princess Mary Club.

The Executive Director is the decision maker for the heritage permit. In reaching a decision on the application, the Executive Director is required to consider a range of matters pursuant to the Heritage Act 1995 including any submissions received during the recent public notice given for this application. The Heritage Act requires the Executive Director to balance potential detrimental impacts on heritage significance against arguments submitted by an applicant about the reasonable and economic use of a place or undue financial hardship. In this regard I am advised that the Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust has submitted structural reports and costings in support of the proposed demolition. These documents were available to the public during the advertising of the permit application. I have been informed that a request for further information was made by the Executive Director on 12 March 2015 and that the assessment of the application is on hold pending receipt of that information.

Under the Heritage Act, I have no ability to call in a permit application from the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria. I may intervene only if an appeal is lodged against a refusal of an application or a condition applied to a permit.

The planning permit application for the proposed new development is currently being assessed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Further information was requested from the applicant on 5 February 2015 and the assessment is currently on hold pending receipt of that information. Further, a copy of the application has been provided to the City of Melbourne and referred to relevant referral authorities. Once the Department has completed its assessment, the application will come to me for a determination.

**Kingswood Golf Club site**

**Raised with:** Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

Peninsula Kingswood Country Golf Club Limited (formerly called Kingswood Golf Club Limited) and Peninsula Country Golf Club Ltd are both currently registered as limited by guarantee corporations under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) administered by Australian Securities and Investments Commission.

Consumer Affairs Victoria has no record, documentation or information regarding the merger of the two corporations.

**South West TAFE**

**Raised with:** Minister for Training and Skills

**Raised by:** Ms Tierney

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

On 5 and 6 March 2015, I visited South West TAFE's Portland and Hamilton campuses. These campuses are valued by the respective communities and local industries. This visit saw South West TAFE around the table with 20 local industry and community leaders. Businesses like Alcoa and Keppel Energy in Portland require responsive local training to help improve productivity and remain competitive.

In Hamilton, South West TAFE work with RMIT at the one campus. This region has thrived through its agricultural base, and will continue to innovate with local quality training solutions. It is for these reasons that I reinforced to these communities the linking of the Government's Back to Work plans with skills development, the role of the \$320 million TAFE Rescue Fund including the \$4 million in immediate support for South West TAFE announced last month, the \$200 million Regional Jobs Fund and the VET funding review that will deliver more stability to the training system.

**Royal Commission into Family Violence**

**Raised with:** Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

**Raised by:** Ms Crozier

**Raised on:** 26 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to tackling family violence at its core, while supporting those who have been impacted by this harm. The Royal Commission into Family Violence is an opportunity to create generational change in how we as a government and as a community respond to family violence.

The Royal Commission has been tasked with providing practical recommendations to improve support for victims of family violence and measures to address the impact on victims. The findings of the Royal Commission will strengthen how we as a community protect the vulnerable, punish the guilty and save lives.

The Royal Commission is now accepting submissions from those who have experienced or who have come into contact with people affected by family violence. An issues paper has been developed to provide guidance to individuals and organisations in making their submissions. This and further information on how the Royal Commission is supporting those who make a submission is available at [www.rcfv.com.au](http://www.rcfv.com.au).

Additionally, the Royal Commission will be undertaking a range of community consultations, including sessions with people directly affected by family violence and those who work in the sector. These community consultations will be held in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Royal Commissions shine light on an issue like no other and will influence many women in making the decision to change their lives forever.

### **Mildura Base Hospital**

**Raised with: Minister for Health**

**Raised by: Mr D. Davis**

**Raised on: 26 February 2015**

#### **REPLY:**

I recently visited Mildura Base Hospital to see first hand the building improvements that were recently completed. Mildura Base Hospital has set out clinical service areas in a way that will enable the hard working clinicians and healthcare workers to be more responsive to the needs of patients.

I noted with interest the following statement in Mr Davis's Adjournment, 'as the former Minister for Health, I worked hard to bring that hospital back into public ownership.' This would not have been required if the Kennett Government had not signed the State up to the appalling privatised Mildura Base Hospital deal in the first place.

As it is for all public health services, the focus of the Andrews Labor Government is on service outcomes. Our objective is ensuring the terms of the Mildura Base Hospital's service agreement are met and the community gets the best possible service.

I look forward to working with Mildura Base Hospital and the local community to ensure the health service remains responsive to the needs of Mildura and the Sunraysia district.

### **West Gate Bridge**

**Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety**

**Raised by: Mr Finn**

**Raised on: 26 February 2015**

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the transport network in Melbourne's west. This includes the delivery of the West Gate Distributor Project. This project will improve truck access to the Port of Melbourne from the west, remove trucks from residential streets in Melbourne's inner west and provide additional capacity on the West Gate Freeway.

On 21 January 2015, the Government announced an Expressions of Interest process to commence the West Gate Distributor Project. This process is for the construction of the first stage of the project, which is expected to commence in late 2015 and take approximately 18 months to complete.

In recent years, VicRoads completed strengthening of the West Gate Bridge, which enabled an increase in the number of traffic lanes to five lanes in each direction. VicRoads also implemented a 'managed motorway' system on the Princes Freeway, with real-time traffic management, variable speeds and network monitoring.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving public transport and roads to give all Victorians a better commute to work and a better quality of life. Public transport and roads are needed to meet future demands on our transport system. The State Government has outlined its priorities for upgrades to the rail network, which include the removal of 50 rail level crossings, and building the Melbourne Metro Rail Tunnel.

### **Arthurs Seat chair lift**

**Raised with:** Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

**Raised by:** Ms Pennicuik

**Raised on:** 26 February 2015

#### **REPLY:**

The development of this proposal and the relevant Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) hearings occurred during the term of the previous Coalition government and VCAT has now made a determination on the matter. I have encouraged the developer to work as hard as possible to address issues raised by the community about this proposed development.

### **Rural addresses and numbering system**

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government

**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay

**Raised on:** 26 February 2015

#### **REPLY:**

Victoria has led the way in ensuring rural properties are correctly identified and introduced a Segmentation and Road Direction Map in the early 1990s. This Map segmented long roads into 99.9 kilometre sections to ensure a maximum of 4 digit numbers.

This meant over half of Victoria's councils had begun or completed some form of rural addressing when the Australian / New Zealand Standard for rural addressing (AS/NZ 4724:20000 Geographic Information Rural Addressing) was being implemented in Victoria through the Rural Addressing Project through 2001 to 2004.

To minimise disruption and integrate with established rural numbering Victoria departed from the Standard and retained the 4 digit number segmentation.

This is the only inconsistency with the Standard. A further audit of rural addressing in over 47 local Government areas was conducted in 2012 resulting in further guidance to local councils on rural addressing issues.

Further improvements in the system are being made through the spatial framework dataset product Vicmap Address. Local councils around Victoria are supplying address information into this dataset which is then made available to all levels of government. This is increasingly being used by emergency services and other authorities.

Other issues such as numbering direction, numbering commencement points and inconsistencies are now very minor in Victoria. Changing the system to rectify them would cause great inconvenience and disruption to residents and unnecessary costs.

The Victorian Government is continuing to work with councils to improve the quality of address information including the Property Information Program and the Rural Address Quality Improvement Program.

These programs have contributed to Victoria having the highest quality, most accurate addressing information in Australia and Victorian councils have discharged their responsibilities in achieving this outcome properly and professionally.

**Royal Commission into Family Violence**

**Raised with:** Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

**Raised by:** Mr Elasmarr

**Raised on:** 17 March 2015

**REPLY:**

Mr Elasmarr raised an important question about how electorate officers support people wanting to make a submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence. I am informed that when a constituent inquires to an electorate office about the process of making a submission to the Royal Commission, the office should refer them to the Royal Commission directly. The Royal Commission can be contacted between Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm on 1800 365 100 and its webpage is [www.rcfv.com.au](http://www.rcfv.com.au). The Commission's webpage provides extensive information about the Royal Commission, the submission process and contacts for support services.

Submissions to the Royal Commission can be made online at [www.rcfv.com.au](http://www.rcfv.com.au), by email at [enquires@rcfv.com.au](mailto:enquires@rcfv.com.au) or by post to PO BOX 535, Flinders Lane Vic 8009.

**Corrections advisory committees**

**Raised with:** Minister for Corrections

**Raised by:** Mr O'Donohue

**Raised on:** 17 March 2015

**REPLY:**

The Women's Correctional Services Advisory Committee (WCSAC) was established in 2003 to provide independent strategic policy advice to the Minister for Corrections, particularly in response to the 84 per cent growth in female prisoner numbers between 1998 and 2003.

WCSAC provides a formal mechanism for non-governmental input into the development of responses to the increasing pressure on the corrections system due to the growth in women's prison numbers.

Membership of WCSAC has consisted primarily of non-government stakeholders with an established record of working in areas related to women's correctional services.

Committee members are appointed by the Minister and contribute their experience and skills to the committee on a voluntary basis. Committee membership is for a maximum two-year period.

I appointed the new WCSAC Chair, Ms Jaclyn Symes MLC, on 12 March 2015.

The Justice Health Ministerial Advisory Committee has made a valuable contribution to date, particularly in the development of the prisoner health status framework and advice on managing the ageing prisoner population.

The inaugural Chair of the Committee, Mr Trevor Carr, tendered his resignation as Chair in late 2014, following his resignation as the Chief Executive of the Victorian Healthcare Association.

I am pleased to advise that the appointment of a new Chair is being finalised and the Committee is expected to meet in the near future.

**Family violence**

**Raised with:** Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich

**Raised on:** 17 March 2015

**REPLY:**

Information about how to make a submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence is available on the Commission's website [www.rcfv.com.au](http://www.rcfv.com.au). The Royal Commission can be contacted between Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm on 1800 365 100. The Terms of Reference tasks the Royal Commission to consider a range of communities in its findings. The Terms of Reference to the Royal Commission can be found at [www.rcfv.com.au](http://www.rcfv.com.au).

The member should be aware that for too long the system has been broken. We know the causes of family violence and what we need now are the solutions. The Royal Commission into Family Violence is a significant opportunity to help those most in need.

***Ice Action Plan***

**Raised with:** Minister for Police

**Raised by:** Ms Symes

**Raised on:** 17 March 2015

**REPLY:**

I refer to the matter raised by you regarding the Ice Action Plan and the experiences of frontline police in tackling this destructive drug.

I plan on visiting the Wangaratta Police Station in the near future with the Member for Northern Victoria and the Parliamentary Secretary for Justice, Ben Carroll MP. I look forward to speaking with the local police about their experiences out in the community.

Ice is having a devastating impact on our rural and regional communities. Wangaratta Police Service Area is particularly feeling the effects of ice where drug offences are of critical concern for local police and the community.

Local police, health services and community organisations, through the auspices of the Rotary Club of Wangaratta, recently participated in a community ice forum, demonstrating their collective commitment to support their community's fight against ice.

The Ice Action Plan, announced on 5 March 2015, is an important first step in addressing the complex challenges presented by ice. As you have indicated, the government has committed \$45.5 million in new investment. This investment and associated actions target the things that cannot wait to reduce the supply, demand and harm of a drug that's ruining lives.

The Ice Action Plan will provide greater resources to Victoria Police to take drug affected drivers off our roads and help catch the criminals manufacturing and distributing this deadly drug.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

**Portland National School building**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education

**Raised by:** Ms Tierney

**Raised on:** 17 March 2015

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Victorian Government and we are committed to spending \$530 million on school facilities during the period 2015–2018. Our challenge is now to responsibly balance and prioritise the needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria, all in varying condition.

The Government is aware that Portland Primary School has maintenance and capital needs, particularly in relation to the heritage listed school building.

I have asked the Department of Education and Training to work with Portland Primary School to assess the building.

**Fire services property levy**

**Raised with:** Minister for Emergency Services

**Raised by:** Ms Hartland

**Raised on:** 18 March 2015

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government supports the principle of the property-based fire services funding which funds Victoria's fire services. This was a recommendation of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission following the devastating Black Saturday fires, and established by the previous Labor Government.

The levy funds the operations of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB). The budgets of the fire services are set out in the State Budget Papers, which are publicly available and reviewed by the Auditor-General. The total amount of levy budgeted to be collected is also published in the State Budget Papers.

The CFA and the MFB are also required under the Financial Management Act 1994 to publish detailed Annual Reports, which evidence the funding received through the fire services property levy.

**Avalon Airport**

**Raised with:** Minister for Industry

**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay

**Raised on:** 18 March 2015

**REPLY:**

I thank the Honourable Member for Western Victoria for his question.

Avalon Airport is an important piece of Victoria's aviation infrastructure. As you are aware, unfortunately the former Coalition Government failed to secure the long term future of Avalon Airport, instead signing a one year



deal with Jetstar to get them through the last election. And like its other public transport commitments, the former Coalition Government committed to building Avalon Rail Link failed to deliver.

Avalon Airport has the facilities to cope with staging large-scale events, such as the recent Australian International Airshow and Aerospace & Defence Exposition. In addition to the strong public support for the breathtaking flying displays, this major event draws thousands of defence industry leaders from around the globe. It provides a valuable opportunity for Victoria's defence, aerospace and aviation companies to showcase their capabilities to international contract decision makers.

It is in this context I launched Victoria's air capability statement, entitled Victoria: Providing Complete Capability—Aviation and Aerospace. I invite the Honourable Member to peruse this policy statement, and you will see it is focused on the technical capabilities in this state's defence and aerospace industry companies. As the Member should be aware given the former Coalition Government published a similar capability statement, the point of Victoria: Providing Complete Capability—Aviation and Aerospace is to keep Victorian defence industry companies uppermost in the minds of our allies and defence primes as they scour the world for suppliers to their global defence projects. The defence industry is one of the six priority industry sectors for the Andrews Government's economic agenda.

Beyond the staging of the Airshow, the Victorian Government wants to see Avalon grow in popularity among airlines and passengers. To this end, the Victorian Government notes that Avalon Airport has submitted its draft Master Plan to the Commonwealth Government for approval. The plan outlines a bold vision for the development of aviation and non-aviation activities for the next 20 years.

The Victorian Government is playing its part on the airport's development, including progressing planning issues surrounding the reservation of a land corridor for a future rail connection to the airport.

I can assure you that the government appreciates the potential that Avalon Airport presents and is working hard to see that potential realised.

### **Burnside Children's and Community Centre**

**Raised with:** Minister for Families and Children

**Raised by:** Mr Eideh

**Raised on:** 19 March 2015

#### **REPLY:**

The Minister for Families and Children: I am informed as follows:

The Burnside and Caroline Springs Family Hub will be a critical part of this new and growing community. It will provide a broad range of integrated services, ensuring the best care and support for families and optimal learning and development for young children.

Construction is underway and the centre is due to be open to the community in 2016.

The Andrews Labor Government's \$50 million commitment to build and upgrade kindergartens across Victoria will support the development of a number of new Integrated Children's Centres in areas where they are urgently needed. Commitments of \$1.6 million respectively have been made for new centres in Doreen South, Highton, Ballarat and Altona.

The Government's investment in early childhood infrastructure will also support the development of new early learning centres, the upgrade of existing early learning facilities and minor capital projects at hundreds of kindergartens across Victoria.

This investment will be focused where it is needed most, to meet growing demand for kindergarten and other early childhood services and to support better outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

The Department of Education and Training is currently planning for the implementation of this important initiative and further details about the rollout of the program and application process will be announced later in 2015.

### **Wodonga Middle Years College**

**Raised with: Minister for Education**

**Raised by: Ms Lovell**

**Raised on: 19 March 2015**

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Victorian Government and we are committed to spending \$530 million on school facilities during the period 2015–2018. However, State Budget constraints do not allow for all school building projects to be immediately funded, and the challenge is to balance and prioritise the needs of over 1500 schools across the state.

The Government is aware that schools such as Wodonga Middle Years College may have maintenance and capital needs. While the upcoming 2015-16 State Budget will primarily focus on allocating funding to election commitments and other priority projects, the needs of all government schools will be assessed during the budget processes. The government will use all available data, including condition assessments and pre-existing project plans, when allocating funding in this and future State Budgets.

In addition to the capital works program, the Government directly allocates funding annually for maintenance to schools through the Student Resource Package. I encourage schools to use this funding to address maintenance issues as they arise.

### **Fire services property levy**

**Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services**

**Raised by: Mr Ramsay**

**Raised on: 19 March 2015**

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government supports the principle of the property-based fire services funding. This was a recommendation of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission following the devastating Black Saturday fires, and established by the previous Labor Government.

This government is finalising its new industrial relations policies to ensure a fairer industrial relations framework that respects the important role unions play in the workplace. The government will not comment on the specifics of particular negotiations. The government will also ensure that industrial negotiations are resolved in a manner which is fiscally responsible but that also recognises the important role firefighters play in protecting the community.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

**Duck season**

**Raised with:** Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

**Raised by:** Mr Young

**Raised on:** 19 March 2015

**REPLY:**

Currently, there are approximately 48 000 people licensed to hunt game animals in Victoria. Of these, around 26 000 have licences for duck hunting. As the Member is aware, the 2015 duck hunting season opened on 21 March and will close on 8 June.

Hunting supports a range of businesses and industries across the State, including firearm supplies retailers, camping and boating stores, petrol stations, general stores, as well as many regional motels and hotels.

In 2013, the Victorian Government commissioned an economic assessment into game hunting in Victoria. This assessment revealed that hunting was worth \$439 million to Victoria's economy, supporting almost 3500 full time jobs. Sixty per cent of expenditure occurred in small towns and regional centres throughout country Victoria.

Small businesses play a pivotal role in Victoria's economy and provide around half of the state's private sector jobs. Around 28 per cent of small businesses are in regional Victoria. These businesses are at the heart of rural and regional development and provide employment which sustains local communities. Diversified economies that support small businesses across several industries are more resilient to market fluctuation.

Game hunting in Victoria continues to grow. Since 2001, there has been a 63 per cent increase in licence holders. Regional economies will continue to benefit from this growth.



**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Wednesday, 15 April 2015**

**St Albans level crossing**

**Raised with: Minister for Public Transport**

**Raised by: Mr Finn**

**Raised on: 11 February 2015**

**REPLY:**

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

The St Albans level crossing is one of the 50 level crossings that this Government has committed to remove over eight years.

In April 2014, the State Government, in conjunction with the Federal Government, jointly committed around \$200 million in funding for the removal of this level crossing. The project involves lowering the railway under Main Road and building a new premium train station. The train station car park will be moved and a new bus interchange and pedestrian overpass will be created.

A range of benefits will be delivered to the community including improved safety, reduced congestion and economic uplift of the activity area.

VicRoads has worked closely with key stakeholders such as the Brimbank City Council, the local community, Public Transport Victoria, VicTrack and Metro Trains Melbourne, during the project's development.

On 29 January 2015, the two shortlisted proponents submitted their proposals, which are currently being evaluated.

Major construction is expected to be underway in 2015.

Early works have commenced at Main Road. The existing rail stabling facilities at St Albans have been relocated to the proposed Calder Park Stabling Yard to make room for major construction. This work was completed in December 2014.

Work is currently underway to relocate services and utility lines in the rail reserve including rail signal cables, electricity lines and telecommunications cables. This work is expected to be completed in April 2015.

Progress on early works demonstrates the Victorian Government's commitment to this project and to the people of St Albans.

**Keysborough South bus service**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport

**Raised by:** Ms Springle

**Raised on:** 24 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government has committed \$100 million to improve Victoria's bus networks. These improvements include adding more routes, expanding others, increasing frequencies, restoring cut services and fixing the missing links in Melbourne's growth areas.

The proposed new bus service in Keysborough South will be considered for funding as part of this initiative.

**Mental health support**

**Raised with:** Mental Health

**Raised by:** Ms Hartland

**Raised on:** 25 February 2015

**REPLY:**

The Government will deliver its election commitment to assist services that deliver targeted community support to some of our most vulnerable citizens.

The former Government's botched mental health recommissioning process delivered significant disruption to some services and placed vulnerable people, in particular women escaping family violence, at risk.

This has been further exacerbated by the Commonwealth Government's refusal to commit funding to not only mental health but also homelessness, health and housing services in Victoria.

**Sandringham East Primary School**

**Raised with:** Education

**Raised by:** Mr Dalidakis

**Raised on:** 26 February 2015

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for this Government who has committed to spending \$530 million on school infrastructure projects over the next four years.

As you know, during the 2014 election campaign, the Government made an election commitment to engage with Sandringham East Primary School on their capital funding requirements.

I have asked the Department of Education and Training to engage with Sandringham East Primary School regarding their current and future requirements.

The Department will provide ongoing support to Sandringham East Primary School during the planning and delivery of their future capital works projects, helping to ensure the best outcome for the school and local community.

**Austin Hospital paediatric surgical services****Raised with: Health****Raised by: Ms Wooldridge****Raised on: 26 February 2015****REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to ensuring young Victorians are provided with high-quality care in the most appropriate and safe settings. This is in stark contrast to the former government which ripped \$1 billion in funding from our health system, leaving it at crisis point.

In relation to Austin Health's paediatric surgical services, I am advised that Austin Health's general paediatric surgery program is provided by a single, part-time surgeon, and represents only a small proportion of Austin Health's paediatric services.

This is ultimately a clinical decision for Austin Health and Northern Health to determine the best, safest, arrangement. However, I understand from my discussions with both health services that any future transfer of general paediatric services will result in a more timely and higher quality level of care, service and safety for these young patients.

I am advised that senior clinicians at Austin Health reviewed the current model of paediatric general surgery service provision following the request of the current part-time general paediatric surgeon to reduce their working hours. The review has raised concerns about the viability of the program due to the low patient volumes and difficulties providing adequate coverage for out of hours surgical services.

Northern Health runs a larger paediatric surgery service, which is expanding and has three paediatric surgeons credentialed to support the service. I am advised that Northern Health has met with all three surgeons and formulated an on-call roster to cater for the expanded service. Senior representatives from the Department of Health & Human Services have also recently met with Dr Wheatley to discuss her concerns.

The Austin will continue to provide paediatric emergency department services as well as other paediatric surgery including ear, nose and throat, orthopaedics and plastic surgery.

**Mooroolbark East Primary School****Raised with: Education****Raised by: Mr Mulino****Raised on: 17 March 2015****REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The Government has a strong and ambitious agenda to grow educational opportunities for all Victorians. Education is the window of opportunity for people, as well as a key driver of economic success and prosperity for our state.

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Victorian Government and we are committed to spending \$530 million on school facilities during the period 2015–2018.

As you will be aware, the Government committed \$1 million to Mooroolbark East Primary School during the 2014 election campaign, to upgrade the sports hall and improve teaching spaces.

The Department of Education and Training has commenced planning for all schools announced as election commitments, including Mooroolbark East Primary School.

I would be delighted to visit Mooroolbark East Primary School to see first-hand the dedication of the school community.

### Werribee Cemetery

**Raised with: Health**

**Raised by: Mr Finn**

**Raised on: 18 March 2015**

**REPLY:**

I refer to the matter raised in the Legislative Council on 18 March 2015 by Mr Finn, Member for Western Metropolitan Region, concerning the physical appearance and condition of the Werribee cemetery.

The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust is a Class A cemetery trust, responsible for the management of the cemetery.

The Department of Health & Human Services has contacted the Chief Executive Officer of the trust, with respect to the matters that have been raised. The CEO has advised the department that:

- She has contacted Mr Finn to discuss his constituents' concerns and has invited him to meet with her on site to further discuss the cemetery master plan, new conservation management plan and mausoleum extension;
- In recent months a range of general maintenance works have been undertaken at the cemetery addressing concerns raised by members of the public, and that there are a number of new works and improvements planned for the site in the upcoming months;
- The Trust actively engages the community through its Community Advisory Committee and would be supportive of the creation of a "friends of the cemetery group" for the Werribee cemetery; and
- The trust will continue to conduct weekly inspections to ensure that maintenance of the cemetery meets community expectations.

I understand that the maintenance and management of cemeteries is important and have asked my department to keep me advised about this matter.

### Police numbers

**Raised with: Police**

**Raised by: Mr O'Donohue**

**Raised on: 19 March 2015**

**REPLY:**

The government is committed to a well-resourced police force, with a strong commitment to community engagement and policing. Victoria Police has now completed the recruitment of 1700 additional police budgeted for by the Labor Government in 2010. Other additional recruitment provided for by the previous government is also almost complete.

As part of the government's election commitments, \$148.6 million will be allocated to transition the management of police cells to new custody officers, releasing around 400 frontline police back into the community, where they can focus on tackling crime and keeping the community safe. Victoria Police is working towards implementing this important initiative.

The deployment of police resources is a matter for the Acting Chief Commissioner of Police. The government has already stated that it is consulting with police command about whether further resources are needed. I am assured by the Acting Chief Commissioner that allocation of police across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective command officers, with a view to maintaining an optimum law enforcement response.



The government is working with the Acting Chief Commissioner to ensure Victoria Police is appropriately resourced to tackle law and order issues facing the Victorian community, including family violence and the use of Ice and other illicit drugs. These issues remain a focus for Victoria Police.

On 22 February 2015, the government launched Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence to explore solutions for Family Violence prevention and identify strategies to strengthen Victoria's response. The Royal Commission will report its findings by the end of the year. The government is also investing \$22.7 million in family violence initiatives to ensure that victims continue to receive support while the Royal Commission develops a long-term solution. Additionally, on 5 March 2015, the government released the Ice Action Plan and has committed \$45.5 million to reduce the supply, demand and harm of a drug that is ruining lives.

The government has also committed to delivering \$15 million for new drug and booze buses and \$4.5 million to expand the capacity of Victoria Police's Forensic Drug Branch to help drug profiling and intelligence gathering. This additional funding will see the forensic analysis capacity boosted by 16 per cent and assist with the backlog following cuts of the Baillieu/Napthine Government.

Thank you for raising the matter with me.



**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Thursday, 16 April 2015**

**City of Wyndham emergency accommodation**

**Raised with:** Housing, Disability and Ageing

**Raised by:** Dr Carling-Jenkins

**Raised on:** 18 March 2015

**REPLY:**

I acknowledge the matter raised by the Member for Western Metropolitan, Dr Rachel Carling-Jenkins regarding the issue of crisis and emergency accommodation in the Western Metropolitan Region, and in particular the proposal for a crisis intervention and service hub that has been developed by the H3 Alliance Wyndham.

I am aware of the strong involvement and advocacy work that the Alliance has undertaken over a number years in relation to issues such as housing support and homelessness in the Wyndham area.

It would be no surprise to the Member that demand for housing and homelessness services in Wyndham, and across Victoria continues to remain high. Unfortunately, despite rising house prices the former government presided over a cut of \$470 million over 4 years to housing services in Victoria. This has created greater pressure on homelessness services.

I am advised that my department has been engaging with the H3 Alliance Wyndham on a regular basis and that senior departmental staff have met with the H3 Alliance to discuss their proposal.

As an important next step, the department has committed \$10 000 towards a feasibility study to further investigate the viability of a crisis intervention model in Wyndham.

I am expecting to meet with Alliance representatives shortly and look forward to hearing directly about the issues of concern to them.

**Fairfax Regional Media job losses**

**Raised with:** Employment

**Raised by:** Mr Purcell

**Raised on:** 18 March 2015

**REPLY:**

I share the Member for Western Victoria's concerns regarding the proposed reduction of around 80 staff across Fairfax's Victorian regional operations.

As I publicly stated on 12 March, cutting staff will not only hurt regional newsrooms, it will hurt regional Victorians. I continue to call on Fairfax to reconsider its plans to sack journalists and editors, and to maintain a strong presence in regional Victoria.

Whilst I have been assured that no newspapers will be closed, it is still my view that a reduction in staff at mastheads, including but not limited to The Standard, will have a severely detrimental impact on the quality of journalism produced, and I have conveyed this view to representatives of Fairfax.

Despite assurances that no final decisions have been made, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources are maintaining contact with Fairfax and will make support available to any impacted workers through the Victorian Government's Business in Transition Support program, including assistance with further training and employment.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to growing our industries and creating jobs across regional Victoria.

As part of our Back to Work plan, a \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund will be established to support population growth, establish new regional business centres, attract families and workers to regional Victoria, and assist job creating projects.

Additionally, other measures in the plan will also address unemployment in regional Victoria, including:

- The Back to Work Act—a \$100 million fund that provides relief to businesses hiring unemployed youth, the long-term unemployed and retrenched workers;
- The Premier's Jobs and Investment Panel, which will draw on a \$500 million fund to support high priority initiatives, as well as provide advice to the Premier on economic policy directions to underpin job creation and long term prosperity in Victoria; and
- The \$200 million Future Industries Fund, which will support six high-growth sectors where our State has the potential to lead the world in.