

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

15, 16 and 17 September 2015

(Extract from book 13)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
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Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
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Legislative Council committees

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

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

Legislative Council standing committees

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

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

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

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

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

Joint committees

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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Leader of the Greens:
Mr G. BARBER

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Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
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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
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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
Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

² Appointed 15 April 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

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

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WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 15 September 2015

Ballarat West employment zone

Raised with: Minister for Employment

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government strongly supports the development of the 438 hectare Ballarat West Employment Zone (BWEZ) as a key generator of jobs and investment for the people of Western Victoria.

The BWEZ project is a partnership between the State Government and the City of Ballarat. The parties have worked closely with business and community interests including the Committee for Ballarat in the development of this exciting new industrial precinct.

Recent activity completed in relation to the project includes:

- Approval of the Cultural Heritage Management Plan in July 2015.
- Completion of land assembly with the Stage 1 precinct consolidated as one freehold title in August 2015.
- Approval of the Planning permit for the development of the Stage 1 subdivision by Council in August 2015.

I am also pleased to advise that the Government is currently in confidential negotiations with a number of businesses interested in buying land at BWEZ.

I can also confirm that works on site are expected to commence in October 2015.

Dairy industry

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Mr Purcell

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

Linear Capital is a joint venture which has prepared proposals to source milk from Victoria and New South Wales to process and export as infant milk formula to China.

The sale of a dairy farming business to potential investors is a commercial arrangement for the parties concerned. It is inappropriate for government to intervene in individual commercial transactions. The government encourages farmers to seek appropriate advice, such as from their solicitor and accountant, when considering offers from potential investors.

Sunbury municipality

Raised with: Minister for Local Government

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

I am advised that over 200 people attended the Transition Auditors meeting which was conducted in an orderly and respectful manner. By all accounts it provided an opportunity for the people of Sunbury to express their views, and inform themselves.

The Transition Auditors were appointed in April this year to provide the Government with independent advice on financial and non-financial implications of the separation of Sunbury. Their terms of reference ask them to ensure all current and relevant information regarding the financial and service delivery implications of the separation process is made public and is accessible to Hume City Council residents and to engage actively with all relevant stakeholders potentially affected by the proposed separation of Sunbury from Hume.

This public information evening was an important part of that engagement process and follows the distribution of a series of information sheets by the Transition Auditors that have been widely distributed throughout Hume, including in local newspapers. The Auditors have also held a series of face to face meetings with interested community members.

The Transition Auditor process is an independent review aimed at identifying all of the issues involved in the separation of Sunbury from Hume in order to safeguard the interests of local residents and ratepayers. I am informed that the process the Auditors have undertaken has been comprehensive and thorough and that residents of Hume have welcomed the opportunity to be engaged about all of the issues involved.

This is in stark contrast to the previous government who botched the process. It is disappointing to see the Liberal Party try to undermine the Transition Auditors rather than help deliver the best outcome for the community.

I look forward to receiving the Transition Auditors report.

Southern Cross Firearms

Raised with: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade

Raised by: Mr Bourman

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

A vibrant small business sector is essential to jobs growth and economic wellbeing in Victoria. This is a particularly important issue in interface council areas such as the Shire of Cardinia, which, I understand, is where Southern Cross Firearms Indoor Sports Shooting Range will be established.

The Victorian Government certainly understands the many challenges associated with starting a business, such as raising start-up funds and finding the best location. I am pleased to learn that Mr Chris Moore, managing director of the proposed sporting facility has been innovative in establishing a well-designed website to generate local support and secure capital through crowdfunding.

I also understand that Mr Moore has commenced discussions with his local council to arrange the necessary approvals and permits.

Through Small Business Victoria, the Victorian Government provides a range of low cost or no cost information, programs and services to assist Victorian businesses. In addition, the Small Business Mentoring Service, supported

by the Victorian Government, provides experienced business mentors to assist business operators with objective business management advice. To this end, I would like to offer Mr Moore a complimentary business mentoring session to assist the development of his new business.

Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

Raised with: Minister for Local Government

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

The current funding formula was introduced by the former Liberal Government just over 12 months ago, after consultation with councils and Library corporations including the Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation.

If the Liberal Party believe that their funding formula is a failure, the Andrews Labor Government is willing to consult the sector on how to clean up their mess. It is a process the Government has quickly become experienced at.

Maribyrnong planning application

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

31 Edgewater Boulevard, Maribyrnong, is a proposed mixed use development within the City of Maribyrnong. A planning permit was originally issued by Maribyrnong City Council, at the direction of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), in 2010 for a licenced club with not more than 70 electronic gaming machines. The approved development included a residential hotel of 50 rooms. I understand that Council as the Responsible Authority determined that the use of the land for a residential hotel did not require a planning permit under the Comprehensive Development Zone, Schedule 3 (CDZ3) controls, under the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme. This Comprehensive Development Zone is a specialised planning zone that councils can tailor to achieve a desired outcome. Council applied this unique zone to the entire Edgewater residential estate to support the redevelopment of the land in 2001.

In 2014, the permit holder lodged an application to amend planning permit TP708/2007 to add one additional storey to the approved building. This change allowed the development to include 12 dwellings (which would replace the residential hotel). The use of land for a dwelling does not require a permit in the Comprehensive Development Zone Schedule 3. The only reason planning approval was required was for buildings and works and a reduction in car parking requirements.

An amended planning permit was issued on 22 July 2015 at the direction of the VCAT following an agreement being reached between the applicant and Maribyrnong City Council.

In Victorian planning schemes, gaming premises is a prohibited use in the residential zones in which most people live. In addition to the prohibition of gaming premises in residential zones, all Victorian planning schemes contain a 'Gaming' particular provision at Clause 52.28 that allows councils the ability to prohibit gaming machines in strip shopping centres and shopping complexes by specifying these in the schedules to this clause. This allows councils to consider gaming impacts in areas undergoing substantial, mixed use change.

Goulburn Valley Health

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

The delivery of the most suitable range of health services in appropriately designed facilities is of the paramount importance to the Labor Government.

The recent State Budget announcement of \$1.0 million for planning and development work for Goulburn Valley Health's Shepparton campus will enable the progression of planning for the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health (including detailed capital planning and costings) to ensure that the funding requirements for the redevelopment are properly understood.

Following four years of cuts and crisis inflicted upon our health system by the former government, the needs right across our state are great, and addressing them will require significant funding and appropriate sequencing.

This work will form the basis for all future planning and development work for Goulburn Valley Health and is a necessary pre-cursor to any capital bid for a staged redevelopment of the health service. Unlike the previous government who chose to disregard and neglect the needs of the local community, the Andrews Labor Government is committed to supporting Goulburn Valley Health to deliver the best possible service to Shepparton and its surrounding districts.

I have also appointed the Member for Shepparton District, Suzanna Sheed MP, to Chair a Community Advisory Group to ensure community needs are at the centre of the redevelopment of Goulburn Valley Health.

The Government is currently seeking nominations for the Community Advisory Group, with a closing date of 18 September 2015.

The purpose of the Community Advisory Group is to provide an information and discussion forum for local interest groups and to provide a structure for community views to be communicated to Government.

The panel will work in partnership with Goulburn Valley Health and will provide leadership in promoting community participation and advocacy during the planning for the 'redevelopment process. It will act as advisor of community related issues to Goulburn Valley Health and the department and will provide a 'bridge' to the wider community.

I look forward to working with Shepparton's new local member on this into the future.

Mornington Peninsula police numbers

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

A well-resourced police force, with a strong commitment to community engagement and policing, is critical to keeping communities safe.

In May 2010, the Labor Government committed funding for an additional 1966 police to the frontline. This led to an increase of 140 police in the Southern Metro Region Division 4, which includes the Mornington Peninsula police service area.

The Andrews Labor Government's first budget in 2015-16 delivered a record \$2.5 billion to Victoria Police to continue their important work in keeping our community safe.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$148.6 million over four years to redeploy 400 police to our communities where they are needed. This will occur by recruiting, training and deploying 400 custody officers to initially supervise prisoners at around 22 police stations across Victoria.

The custody officers may also be progressively deployed to other locations over time, depending on the resourcing needs and allocation of resources by Victoria Police, allowing police officers to return to the frontline where they belong. The new custody officers will initially work at six police stations.

Under Victorian law, I cannot direct the Chief Commissioner about the allocation or deployment of police officers to or at particular locations in accordance with section 10 of the *Victoria Police Act 2013*.

However, I can assure Mr Crump that the Mornington, Hastings and Rosebud Police stations on the Mornington Peninsula provide a 24 hour police response and service the Mornington Peninsula Police Service Area-(PSA). All police stations on the Mornington Peninsula including non 24 hour stations have an increase in police numbers during the summer holiday period. I assure you that the residents of the Mornington Peninsula will continue to receive a 24-hour police response from frontline officers every day of the year.

Police in the Mornington Peninsula PSA are focusing on crime prevention by working with the local council, community groups, business, schools, venue operators and event and festival organisers, and in utilising Facebook and Eyewatch. Liquor licensing and public order operations including Operation Parmetter and Operation Crosscourt are targeting antisocial behaviour, liquor licensing and responsible service compliance.

Vehicle and road safety operations are being conducted across the Mornington Peninsula including booze and drug bus operations, back road patrols and Automatic Number Plate Recognition activities.

If any person on the Mornington Peninsula requires urgent police assistance, they should contact Victoria Police on the emergency number '000'. Calls made to '000' are processed and responded to by the closest appropriate police personnel.

During the 12 months to 31 March 2015 there was a slight overall increase in offences of 1.7 per cent recorded for the Mornington Peninsula Local Government Area. Assaults have fallen by 16.9 per cent and property and deception offences have decreased by 9.7 per cent.

The government is working with the 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 key priority focus for Victoria Police.

Actions to address the key drivers of crime were also announced in the 2015-16 State Budget, with the government investing \$81.3 million including \$40 million for the Royal Commission into Family Violence and \$4 million to support stakeholder engagement.

On 5 March 2015, the government released the Ice Action Plan, which was developed on the advice of the Premier's Ice Action Taskforce. The government's new investment of \$45.5 million, also outlined in the 2015-16 State Budget, focuses on priority initiatives to reduce the supply, demand and harm of a drug that is ruining lives.

Under the Plan, the government will spend \$18 million over four years to expand drug and rehabilitation services in Victoria, helping to address the impacts that Ice is having on communities.

A new Ice Help Line and dedicated website — www.ice.vic.gov.au have already been set up to support families, service providers and other community members as part of a \$4.7 million investment in broader community support services.

The government has announced a total of \$17.7 million for new drug and booze buses and to maintain the level of 100 000 roadside random drug tests per year, for the next two years, taking more alcohol and drug affected drivers off our roads.

I am assured by the Chief Commissioner of Police that the allocation of police resources across Victoria is continuously monitored by respective command officers, with a view to maintaining an optimum law enforcement response.

The government understands the impact crime has on local communities and believes that a comprehensive and multi-layered approach needs to be taken to preventing crime.

One of the most important approaches to keeping the communities safe is to provide young people with opportunities to encourage them to make positive choices for their future, through education, training, jobs and appropriate support, instead of being caught in a cycle of crime and incarceration.

Fire services property levy

Raised with: Treasurer

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government has fixed the Coalition's botched Fire Services Property Levy, so firefighters and emergency services workers can get the resources they need to protect our homes and save more lives.

The previous Coalition Government botched the implementation of the Levy, setting the Levy's rates too low to fund our firefighters properly.

This error under-funded Victoria's fire services by \$21.8 million in 2014-15. Without any changes, firefighters and families across Victoria would have been short-changed even further this year by \$63.3 million.

This would've put people and properties across Victoria at risk.

The 2015-16 Victorian Budget covers up the shortfall the Coalition left behind, and boosts resources for Victoria's fire services.

It is a 0.2 per cent increase compared to the Coalition's original estimate in the 2014-15 Budget.

This ensures that our emergency services are adequately funded and able to best service the community when we need it most.

All revenue collected through the Levy goes to supporting the State's fire services. As the 2015-16 Budget states, our Government's significant additional support for the fire services is funded through general revenue, not the Levy.

The Government guarantees that home owners, business operators and farmers in your electorate will not be serviced by under resourced fire protection services because of the shortfall the previous Government left behind.

Fishermans Bend development

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert

Raised on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

I am currently receiving advice from the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA) and my Department on the options to recast the strategic planning of Fishermans Bend to create series of distinct neighbourhoods which will consider the need for improved links to public transport and access to education facilities.

I have asked the MPA to establish a Taskforce, with members from councils and other government authorities, to provide technical expertise to develop five distinct neighbourhood plans, community engagement plan and Infrastructure Plan in consultation with stakeholders and the community.

The Taskforce will work with the relevant stakeholders and the community to develop updated plans which will showcase best practice-urban. renewal that enables appropriate development and growth, protects local amenity and brings forward the necessary transport, education and community infrastructure to support these new communities.

I have also established a Ministerial Advisory Committee to provide advice to me about the detailed planning work the Taskforce is undertaking.

Recognising growing. enrolment pressure on schools in the area, the Labour Government has committed \$11.5 million to build a new South Melbourne Park Primary School and \$2.3 million to refurbish a building in Port Melbourne as a campus for Albert Park College.

Men's mental health

Raised with: Minister for Mental Health

Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins

Raised on: 19 August 2015

REPLY:

Social inclusion and community engagement can protect against anxiety and depression and also suicide. This is why events such as the *beyondblue* Cup are so important. The Victorian Government has committed to fund *beyondblue* to continue to do this important work and will work closely with *beyondblue* to align future initiatives to meet the needs of Victorians.

In developing the government's 10 year mental health strategy, we are exploring the issues that are pertinent for men such as help-seeking behaviour, access to services and suicide prevention. Stakeholder consultations are underway for the strategy which will be delivered later this year.

Kindergarten funding

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 19 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government provides per capita funding to service providers for each eligible child attending a funded kindergarten program in the year before school. The contribution towards the cost of operating a kindergarten program varies depending on the setting in which the program is delivered.

I understand that operating a kindergarten service in a rural context, such as Willow Grove Kindergarten and Erica Preschool, can be particularly challenging, especially where enrolments fluctuate from year to year.

The Victorian Government provides additional support to these services, including higher per capita rates and annual grants. The eligibility criteria for these grants have not changed since 29 November 2014. Where there are concerns about the viability of these services, the Department works with providers and local government to help ensure that all children can access a kindergarten place.

I commend Willow Grove on providing a kindergarten program to its local community over the last 33 years and can confirm that the kindergarten will be receiving funding through the Small Rural Grants Initiative in 2015. I also understand Willow Grove has 19 enrolments in 2016 and is expanding the service to include three year old children, which will support its financial viability into the future.

I encourage Willow Grove Kindergarten and Erica Preschool to work with their cluster manager, YMCA Ballarat and the Department's South Eastern Victoria Regional Office regarding options to support ongoing viability.

Kindergarten funding

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 20 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Under the National Quality Framework Victorian kindergarten services will be required to move from an educator to child ratio of 1:15 to 1:11 or better from the start of 2016, in line with other states and territories. The improved ratios will allow staff to give more individual attention to each child and support better learning outcomes.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing up to \$83.7 million over four years in additional funding to support kindergartens to transition to the improved educator-to-child ratios. This substantial investment will support sessional kindergartens and help them to maintain or increase their enrolment levels.

This funding boost will also ensure all vulnerable children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy and Early Start Kindergarten will continue to access three and four year old kindergarten programs free of charge or at low cost.

It is the choice of each kindergarten provider how it responds to the new ratios.

Encouraging services to maintain or increase enrolments will ensure that Victoria upholds its high kindergarten participation rate. Therefore the funding is designed to incentivise kindergartens to offer more places.

Where group sizes do increase, there will be an additional qualified educator to support the delivery of the program. This will benefit all children with higher quality and more individualised attention.

I understand that some service providers are still working through how best to implement the new ratio and I encourage them to contact the Department of Education and Training for assistance.

The Andrews Labor Government has also committed \$50 million over four years to develop modern and flexible early childhood facilities across Victoria and help ensure that every Victorian child has access to local, high quality kindergarten and other early childhood services. This represents an increase in State Budget funding for children's capital of 35 per cent compared to the previous four years.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing directly in children's capital, unlike the former Coalition government that continues to claim Commonwealth investment as its own. This new and expanded infrastructure will support the implementation of new ratios from 2016.

It is disappointing that despite the rhetoric, the former Minister and Coalition Government did nothing to prepare the sector for the implementation of the new ratios — there was no plan, no progress and no funding.

Williams Landing school

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 20 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Thank you for raising your concerns about school provision in the Williams Landing area. I am conscious that it is an area of high growth and your concerns have been noted.

I am advised that the Department met with the City of Wyndham in August to review local provision issues. I have also asked the Department to meet with other stakeholders such as developers and the local community to further understand the school provision needs of Williams Landing.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure, as demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million to school facilities in the 2015-16 State Budget to build, upgrade and maintain school assets. This is more than double the average annual investment in school infrastructure over the past four years.

This unprecedented level of investment included fast-tracking and expanding the New Schools PPP Project in February this year, adding two additional schools, to deliver 15 new schools earlier for the communities that need them the most. These new schools in our state's fastest growing areas will open their doors to students in 2017 and 2018.

The funding provided through the State Budget represents a crucial first step in creating the Education State, and we will continue to invest in school facilities throughout this term of government.

Student disability funding

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Mulino

Raised on: 20 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian community can contribute to the review of the Program for Students with Disabilities in a number of ways.

Since July 2015, renowned human rights practitioner, Dr Graeme Innes, has facilitated in-person consultations with peak industry bodies, principal and teacher associations, disability advocates and unions.

In August 2015, parents, carers, students, principals, teachers, disability professionals and advocates were invited to share their thoughts on how we can maximise the learning of students with disabilities, through written submissions to the review team. The submission process will close on 30 September 2015.

In early September, the Victorian community will also be invited to participate in a structured online feedback on how we can improve the Program for Students with Disabilities.

Details about the review including the consultation process are available on the Special Needs Plan website at www.education.vic.gov.au/specialneedsplan

The recommendations from the review will be provided to the Government in November 2015.

Emergency services first responders

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 20 August 2015

REPLY:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Reverend John Pilmer PSM and the Reverend Dr John Broughton for their valuable work as Senior Police Chaplains in supporting our police officers and employees. Reverend Pilmer has had an esteemed career and I acknowledge his continued advocacy for Victoria Police, emergency service workers and the Victorian community. Reverend Dr Broughton is Victoria Police's senior police chaplain. Their submission for a proposed First Responder Support Service, to assist secondary victims of serious crime is appreciated.

The Government is still considering the proposal and will be in touch with Reverend Pilmer shortly.

Bolwarra Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Unprecedented growth in enrolments across the state has put significant pressure on the Department of Education and Training's relocatable asset base. The previous government failed Victorian students by halving the investment in school infrastructure. When the capital budget is cut by more than half, it has a devastating impact on schools.

There was a 500 per cent increase in portables being ripped out of school communities and moved to growth corridors because the Coalition failed to build new schools. It is a travesty that with the growth of our student numbers there is not one new school due to be opened in 2016.

The Department's Relocatable Building Program utilises student enrolment data to balance and prioritise the classroom needs of more than 1500 government schools. Relocatables are transferred from schools which have more classrooms than required to schools without the classroom capacity to meet growth in student enrolments.

We are taking action to repair the extensive damage inflicted by the Coalition's cuts to education, but we can't repair them instantly.

Following recent conversations with the school community, the Department inspected the facilities to identify options for improvement to ensure students will have access to appropriate classrooms following the removal of the relocatable building. This may include removing the gas heaters and installing reverse-cycle air conditioners.

The Department is working closely with the school on the possible upgrade options to achieve an outcome that is fair for all.

The relocatable classroom will not be moved until these works have been completed.

The Department will also ensure that the site of the relocatable is made safe and returned to an acceptable standard so it can be used as additional outdoor space.

Custody officers

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government's first budget in 2015-16 delivered a record \$2.5 billion to Victoria Police to continue their important work in keeping our community safe.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$148.6 million over four years to redeploy 400 police to our communities where they are needed. This will occur by recruiting, training and deploying 400 police custody officers to supervise people in police custody at an initial 22 police stations across Victoria.

Police custody officers will undertake custody management duties including processing and supervising detained people, managing visitors to police cells, facilitating access to health services and appearance before court.

Work is underway to implement the government's commitment, including the development of a legislative framework to create the police custody officer role and provide appropriate powers; protections and accountabilities to perform these important duties.

The legislation will be introduced to Parliament in the coming months. The staged recruitment, training and roll out of police custody officers will also commence in the coming months.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Pakenham South West Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Mulino

Raised on: 2 September 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I thank Mr Mulino for the adjournment matter raised regarding the new Pakenham South West primary school in Pakenham.

I am very excited to confirm that the Pakenham South West Primary School is one of 15 high priority new schools being delivered through the New Schools Public Private Partnership (PPP) Project. The new schools-with a capital totalling \$291 million make this the largest ever schools building project in Victoria. Government has expanded and fast-tracked the Project to deliver more new schools earlier and has enhanced the project scope to support delivery of much needed additional community facilities.

Government is committed to delivering the Education State and providing a first class education starts with investment in school infrastructure. The New Schools PPP Project, combined with the \$111 million delivered through the 2015-16 State Budget, will ensure that 21 new schools will open across 2017 and 2018.

These much needed new schools will ease the significant enrolment pressures experienced by many existing schools in Victoria's growth areas. The Cardinia Shire is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria and Government is committed to delivering first class facilities and new social infrastructure to meet the needs of this rapidly growing community.

One of the greatest benefits of the PPP model for delivering schools is that the private sector is responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the facilities and grounds, meaning that principals and teachers can focus on what they are there to do-teach and lead our kids.

The New Schools PPP Project will also utilise private sector innovation and economies of scale to deliver additional benefits at the school sites in line with Government's education agenda, including provision of community facilities and programs through an innovative partnership with the YMCA. Most of the new schools will also be co-located with existing or planned Council early learning centres and are adjacent to sporting facilities. This will provide exciting social infrastructure hubs for these growing communities.

The local communities for the new PPP schools will be consulted throughout the project development, with information sessions to be held prior to and during construction as well as prior to the school openings.

Local Reference Groups will also be formed to assist in making important decisions in the establishment of the new schools such as school name, uniform selection and curriculum offering.

I would be very pleased to visit the site for the new Pakenham South West Primary School during construction to receive an update on the progress and to discuss the project with local stakeholders.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 16 September 2015

Leadbeater's possum

Raised with: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

As promised in our election commitment, the Andrews Labor Government is supporting the establishment of a taskforce to reach common ground on future issues facing the timber industry, including job protection, economic activity and the protection of our unique native flora and fauna and threatened species, such as the Leadbeater's Possum.

This process has commenced and includes representatives from MyEnvironment, the Victorian National Parks Association, the Wilderness Society, the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union and the timber industry.

The government will consider any reasonable recommendations or consensus proposals the taskforce makes, including any interim measures needed to better protect forest values such as coupe deferrals. The government expects that potential interim protection measures will be considered early in the taskforce's deliberations.

Homesafe

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 3 September 2015

REPLY:

To support the Andrews Labor Government's Homesafe trial of 24-hour public transport on weekends, the government has provided funding to Victoria Police for an additional 109 Protective Services Officers (PSOs) and 62 police officers.

These additional resources will form part of the current PSO and transit police workforce to provide transport security, with PSOs patrolling train stations and transit police providing roving patrols on all train lines during the 12-month trial.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 17 September 2015

McKinnon Road, McKinnon, level crossing

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

The rail line will be lowered below McKinnon Road as part of the Andrews Government, Level Crossing Removal Project, which will remove 50 level crossings in metropolitan Melbourne.

This level crossing removal has been packaged together with the level crossings at North Road, Ormond; Centre Road, Bentleigh and Burke Road in Glen Iris. Construction to remove the dangerous level crossing at Burke Road has started, with construction at North Road, McKinnon Road and Centre Road to start later this year.

To remove the rail line and rebuild the stations at North, McKinnon and Centre roads no private land acquisition is required.

For any questions on the level crossing removals the community can call the Level Crossing Removal Authority on 1800 762 667.

West Gate distributor

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 19 August 2015

REPLY:

Stage 1 of the West Gate Distributor, which extends from Footscray Road to the intersection of Whitehall Street and Moreland Street, will deliver benefits including improved access to and from the Port of Melbourne and improved movement for local traffic, pedestrians and cyclists. This section of the project includes the widening of Moreland Street to provide a four-lane divided road with an upgraded connection to Footscray Road, new signalised intersections at Footscray Road, Parker Street and Whitehall Street with Moreland Street, the widening and strengthening of Shepherd bridge over the Maribyrnong River and a new dedicated shared use path crossing the Maribyrnong River.

Stage 1 of the West Gate Distributor is in the tender phase with tenders closing in September 2015. VicRoads expects construction to commence in late 2015.