

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

1, 2 and 3 September 2015

(Extract from book 12)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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

Legislative Council standing committees

Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure — 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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The Hon. D. K. DRUM

Leader of the Greens:
Mr G. BARBER

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ¹	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel	Western Metropolitan	DLP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Dalidakis, Mr Philip	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	V1LJ
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Elasmar, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

² Appointed 15 April 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

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

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WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 1 September 2015

West Gate distributor

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Melhem

Raised on: 23 December 2014

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

The Victorian Government is assessing a market-led proposal to construct the Western Distributor. A decision is expected to be made by the end of the year.

Office of the Victorian Government Architect

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 6 May 2015

REPLY:

The Office of the Victorian Government Architect has been relocated to the Department of Premier and Cabinet to reflect their whole of government role, effective 15 May 2015.

An expression of interest process has now begun to attract the best talent for the position of the future Victorian Government Architect. The role is considered a legacy position, independent of politics. The successful candidate will have the capacity to influence design and innovation across the state.

Funding 2014/2015

\$1.8M in budget papers

However, this was later confirmed to the OVGA to comprise \$1.2M (core funding), with the remaining \$0.6M required to run the Victorian Design Review Panel to be recouped through transitioning to a fee-for-service model. This was against the recommendations of an independent evaluation of the program, which proved the VDRP delivered an efficient and effective process to uplift the quality of significant projects in the interests of all Victorians, and suggested it was not yet sufficiently embedded in the market place to transition to this funding model.

Funding 2015/2016

\$1.7M in budget papers

The OVGA has embedded the services of the Design Review Panel in their core activities to meet demand and is seeking centralised funding.

Due to efficiencies in the delivery of the VDRP and other services, the OVGA is confident it can deliver its objectives and Government priorities for \$1.7M.

VicForests logging coupes

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 24 June 2015

REPLY:

As outlined in the Our Environment, Our Future election policy, the Victorian Government strongly supports a consensus approach to the establishment of any new national parks. The Government is in the process of establishing an Industry Taskforce that will bring a consensus and best practice approach to reach common ground on the issues facing the timber industry, such as job protection, economic activity and species conservation.

It is not appropriate to pre-empt any decision or deliberation of the Industry Taskforce by making amendments to the areas allocated and vested to VicForests for the harvesting and selling of timber resources.

Yarra Ranges tech school

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Mulino

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government is investing \$125 million to establish ten Tech Schools across the State.

The Yarra Ranges is one of ten areas that will benefit from the Tech Schools initiative. The Tech Schools will be high-tech centres of learning excellence delivering education and training to students from government and non-government schools using leading edge technology, discovery and innovation.

The Tech Schools will be a shared learning environment, managed and operated by a partnership of local schools, local government, TAFE, university and industry partners. Local partnerships for each Tech School are being established to lead the planning and development and eventually manage the Tech School. Workshops have been held at each Tech School location across Victoria throughout July and August to establish these partnerships which will be driving the planning forward.

I understand that the Yarra Ranges stakeholder workshop held on Monday 10 August and led by Mr Mulino went very well. It provided a valuable opportunity for local school leaders to begin discussions on the planning and development processes of their Tech School. Stakeholders also discussed the opportunity to co-locate the new Tech School on the re-opened Lilydale site.

Regular forums and workshops will continue to be held as part of the planning process and I would be delighted to join with key stakeholders and my colleague Mr Mulino at a future planning session in the Yarra Ranges.

Bus services

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

The Public Transport Victoria (PTV) website already contains patronage data for the Metropolitan Bus network.

The research shows the number of boardings for each bus route for the financial years 2008-09 to 2011-12; annual patronage and average daily patronage.

CityLife Church school program

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I am as concerned about the material distributed at Fairhills High School by Citylife Church as parents are, and have the right to be. The material appears to be in conflict with Department of Education and Training policy, and is completely out of step with Department approaches to sexuality education.

I can advise that the Department is investigating this matter, to gain a complete understanding as to the content of the program and how it came to be offered in the school.

Bellarine Peninsula police resources

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

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

In order to safeguard the operational independence of the Chief Commissioner of Police, the Victoria Police Act 2013 ensures that responsibility for the management and control of Victoria Police rests with the Chief Commissioner, who is responsible for the allocation and deployment of police officers and protective service officers across the state. The government will continue to work closely with the Chief Commissioner about overall police resourcing across the state.

In May 2010, the Labor Government committed funding to deliver an additional 1966 police to the frontline. This led to an increase of 77 police in the Western Region Division 1, which includes the Geelong and Surf Coast police service areas.

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 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, including Geelong.

The government is also investing \$7.8 million over four years to provide for more police to be stationed in the growing areas of Bellarine and Geelong and for longer opening hours at Drysdale, Portarlington and Queenscliff.

Fifteen new sworn police officers will be deployed in the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong area to meet current and future demand.

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.

In supporting rural and regional communities across Victoria, the government also provided \$11.5 million to deliver on its commitment for a new secure, encrypted digital radio network. The upgrade will enable police working in regional areas to communicate more securely, preventing members of the public listening in on police operations.

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.

Western suburbs hepatitis services

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Western Metropolitan Region for his question, his interest in hepatitis, and his strong advocacy for people of the area he represents.

I recently met with Hepatitis Victoria and attended a forum highlighting the impact hepatitis is having on the community. I recently announced that in recognition of the importance of the need for a response to this challenging issue I will be holding a round-table for experts and those affected by viral hepatitis to assist in identifying key actions that need to be taken on behalf of the community.

The Andrews Labor Government invests in a wide range of activities to respond to viral hepatitis, including delivering health promotion, community-based care and support, chronic disease management, peer education and directly addressing the stigma and discrimination that can be experienced by people living with viral hepatitis. Target populations include those living in the west of Melbourne.

Recurrent funding is currently provided to: Hepatitis Victoria, the Multicultural Health & Support Service, La Trobe University, Family Planning Victoria, Living Positive Victoria, the Victorian AIDS Council, Harm Reduction Victoria, Networking Health Victoria, the Victorian Infectious Diseases Service, the Victorian Infectious

Diseases Reference Laboratory, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, North Richmond Community Health Service and Melbourne University.

The Government also supplements the Commonwealth immunisation program by providing free hepatitis B vaccination for at-risk populations, including people living with HIV or hepatitis C, household contacts of people living with hepatitis B, injecting drug users, prisoners and people who are immunosuppressed.

Funding is provided for the nurse-led Integrated Hepatitis C services, located at ten sites across the State. This service supports patients undergoing treatment.

Over \$9 million is allocated per year to the Needle and Syringe Program. This investment can prevent almost 19 000 new hepatitis C infections over a 10-year period. A further \$1.8 million for the program's expansion was announced in March 2015 as part of the Government's Ice Action Plan.

Importantly, the number of prisoners assessed and treated for hepatitis C will also increase under a new \$2.2 million health program funded by the Government. A statewide network of hepatitis clinics will be established at every Victorian prison to ensure up to 280 prisoners are treated over the next two years.

The Government is investing in supporting new service models for management of viral hepatitis. For example, the Government has recently established Victorian Guidelines for the accreditation of General Practitioners to become community-based prescribers for hepatitis B treatment. Funding has already been provided to train 50 General Practitioners, a portion of which are located in Melbourne's western suburbs.

Sector-wide consultations have been held for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, to develop strategic advice for the Government as priority areas of response in Victoria. This advice is currently being collated.

The Government will continue to work with key sector stakeholders to shape future priorities in this important area.

Custody officers

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 4 August 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.

Nagambie ambulance services

Raised with: Minister for Ambulance Services

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

I value the important work undertaken by the Community Emergency Response Team in Nagambie, both in supporting the community and Ambulance Victoria. I understand Ambulance Victoria has been working closely with the team to support the important work of these volunteers, and this support will continue.

The allocation of new ambulance resources are based on Ambulance Victoria's operational priorities and broader health system requirements. Ambulance Victoria considers many factors when reviewing the type of ambulance resourcing available to a community including: population, demand, demographics, existing health infrastructure, response times, community support, proximity to full-time branches, and sustainability of operating any service.

I appreciate the importance the community of Nagambie places on ambulance services that are responsive to them or their loved ones in times of emergency.

The Andrews Labor Government recognises that there are significant issues to be addressed across the ambulance system following the deterioration in the service in recent years.

Concerns raised at the Nagambie community forum and meeting with Nagambie Ambulance Service Community Alliance will be considered by the Ambulance Performance and Policy Consultative Committee, and will help inform their final report, due by the end of the year.

Truck curfews

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children

Raised by: Mr Melhem

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

On 29 January 2015, VicRoads introduced new night and weekend curfews on Moore Street and extended existing truck curfews on Somerville Road to include the school drop-off and pick-up times.

Traffic counts conducted since the start of the new curfews indicate 75 per cent fewer trucks are travelling on Somerville Road during school times and 41 per cent fewer trucks are using Moore Street at night.

VicRoads will continue to undertake enforcement activities on these roads and others within the surrounding area that are subject to curfews.

VicRoads recently released the results of the traffic counts to the local community. Community information sessions were also held to provide the community with the opportunity review the data collected and provide feedback. The feedback received from the residents on these streets since the introduction of the new curfews has been overwhelmingly positive.

Gippsland Carers Association

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

This is a matter for the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing.

Foetal organ trading

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

Buying and selling of human tissue including foetal tissue is prohibited by the Human Tissue Act 1982.

I am not aware of any buying or selling of foetal tissue, including foetal organs in Victoria that is occurring in breach of the Act.

Donating foetal tissue including organs may be occurring in Victoria and is allowed under the Human Tissue Act 1982.

A woman may donate a foetus for research purposes following her informed consent.

The National Health and Medical Research Council National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), updated in 2015, provides the national guidelines on this matter.

If you have any information or evidence that trade in human tissue, including foetal tissue, is occurring in Victoria I suggest you provide that information to the police.

Eltham ambulance station

Raised with: Minister for Ambulance Services

Raised by: Ms Wooldridge

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that:

- The Andrews Labor Government is committed to working with paramedics to end the ambulance crisis.
- Funding of \$20 million was provided in the 2015 State budget to fulfil the Andrews Labor Government's 2014 election commitment to upgrade ambulance stations across Victoria.
- This investment was part of our \$99 million budget commitment to improve ambulance services in Victoria.
- The Department of Health and Human Services has worked with Ambulance Victoria to identify high priority ambulance stations to be redeveloped with this funding.

- I recently announced six ambulance stations that will be redeveloped through this budget investment. Further announcements will be made in coming weeks.

Gippsland ambulance services

Raised with: Minister for Ambulance Services

Raised by: Ms Shing

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that:

- The Andrews Labor Government is committed to working with paramedics to end the ambulance crisis.
- Funding of \$20 million was provided in the 2015 State budget to fulfil the Andrews Labor Government's 2014 election commitment to upgrade ambulance stations across Victoria.
- This investment was part of our \$99 million budget commitment to improve ambulance services in Victoria.
- The Department of Health and Human Services has worked with Ambulance Victoria to identify high priority ambulance stations to be redeveloped with this funding.
- I recently announced six ambulance stations that will be redeveloped through this budget investment. Further announcements will be made in coming weeks.

Northern Victoria Region ambulance services

Raised with: Minister for Ambulance Services

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that:

- The Andrews Labor Government is committed to working with paramedics to end the ambulance crisis.
- Funding of \$20 million was provided in the 2015 State budget to fulfil the Andrews Labor Government's 2014 election commitment to upgrade ambulance stations across Victoria.
- This investment was part of our \$99 million budget commitment to improve ambulance services in Victoria.
- The Department of Health and Human Services has worked with Ambulance Victoria to identify high priority ambulance stations to be redeveloped with this funding.
- I recently announced six ambulance stations that will be redeveloped through this budget investment. Further announcements will be made in coming weeks.

National Ice Taskforce

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 6 August 2015

REPLY:

Addressing the devastating effects of ice use in Victoria, particularly in our rural and regional areas, is of critical importance for the government. Our Ice Action Plan delivers \$45.5 million in new investment to reduce the demand, supply and harms from ice.

The matter you seek a commitment on falls within the portfolio of the Minister for Mental Health, Martin Foley MP. I will raise the matter with Minister Foley on your behalf.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 2 September 2015

Firefighters

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services

Raised by: Ms Patten

Raised on: 11 June 2015

REPLY:

I acknowledge the sentiments expressed by you to those firefighters and other service men and women who are suffering Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Victoria's career and volunteer firefighters including the firefighters of the Thomastown Metropolitan Fire Brigade fire station, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community.

The government is aware that firefighters have duties beyond responding to fires, are often first on scene and can be exposed to horrific scenes, including fatal motor vehicle accidents, train accidents and suicides.

A \$0.2 million, two year pilot will provide a specialised support service for firefighters suffering from PTSD consistent with the government's election commitment to support firefighters with PTSD. This pilot program, to be delivered by specialists at Post Trauma Victoria, based at the Austin Health Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital, will help identify PTSD in firefighters, and enable early access to services to help increase recovery. The pilot will commence following a consultation and design process with the fire services.

The Victorian Government's presumptive legislation commitment is to firefighters who contract certain cancers. This means Victoria's workers' compensation scheme will be amended to create a legal presumption that if a firefighter (paid or volunteer) contracts certain types of cancer after defined service periods (or turnouts), their firefighter work will be taken to have contributed to the contraction of the disease, unless proven otherwise. This new presumption will make it simpler for firefighters to access compensation in the unfortunate event that they contract certain cancers.

Family violence

Raised with: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence

Raised by: Ms Patten

Raised on: 5 August 2015

REPLY:

I would like to thank the Member for raising the issue of the over-representation of men perpetrating family violence, and the services available to address harmful behaviour.

As you rightly point out, men's behaviour change programs are designed to hold perpetrators to account, while providing opportunities to engage men who want to take responsibility for and change their violent behaviour. Importantly, the programs also provide support to the partners and ex-partners of men in the program, ensuring that the safety of women and children is paramount in program delivery.

Family violence is a whole-of-community harm, that requires a whole-of-community set of solutions. That is why the Andrews Labor Government has adopted a whole-of-government approach in addressing this violence, with responsibility for men's behaviour change programs sitting across a number of portfolios. These include Families and Children for the voluntary men's behaviour change programs; the Attorney-General's portfolio for court-ordered men's behaviour change programs; and Corrections where the programs are delivered to men on Community Corrections Orders.

I am advised that respondents to family violence intervention orders at the Heidelberg, Ballarat, Frankston and Moorabbin venues of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria can be directed to undertake a court-ordered men's behaviour change program. The particular postcode areas are those which have been specified by the Attorney-General and published in the Victorian Government Gazette.

While there is currently incredible momentum behind addressing family violence, we know that there is more to be done. That is why the Andrews Labor Government has turned to the Royal Commission into Family Violence to receive expert advice. The Royal Commission has been tasked with providing practical recommendations to address family violence based on an examination of the entire service system from the ground up. During its August session of public hearings, the Commission specifically focused on perpetrator accountability strategies such as men's behaviour change programs.

In relation to calling upon all members of Parliament to be advocates of change, I am advised that the Parliament of Victoria is in the process of undertaking the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program. I would encourage you to contact the Speaker's Office regarding further information on this initiative.

Drysdale bypass

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 18 August 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that its staff have been in contact with Ms Kate Lockhart to arrange a meeting to discuss her concerns regarding the proposed Drysdale Bypass. The Andrews Labor Government recognises the need to maintain safe and adequate pedestrian access to the schools and to the future sports precinct across the proposed bypass route, and is committed to working with the community to arrive at solutions which facilitate this.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 3 September 2015

Patterson Lakes waterway management

Raised with: Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 4 August 2015

REPLY:

Quiet Lakes residents have been calling for Melbourne Water to fund the running of a bore to pump water into the lakes to address a blue-green algal concern.

Residents of Quiet Lakes used to pay Melbourne Water an additional charge for the flushing of the lake, however residents requested Melbourne Water remove that charge, an issue you were aware of at time.

Melbourne Water did remove the charge, following an independent review requested by the former minister. As a consequence, Melbourne Water stopped flushing their private lake.

As such, Melbourne Water's current responsibility is to ensure the quality of the water is suitable for boating and other activities, as well as keeping the community informed if there are algal blooms-which it is doing.

This is in keeping with the 'beneficiary pays' approach recommended to the previous government, and signed off by the previous water minister and communicated to you at the time.

Melbourne Water will continue work with residents on water quality issues.