

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

24, 25 and 26 November 2015

(Extract from book 17)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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Legislative Council committees

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 — 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 Bourman, Mr Elasmarr and Mr Melhem. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Nardella and Ms Ryall.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
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Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
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Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
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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, 24 November 2015

Latrobe Valley Industry and Infrastructure Fund

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development

Raised by: Ms Bath

Raised on: 20 August 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is helping the Latrobe Valley — and Gippsland more broadly— to recover from four years of Coalition cuts to local schools, hospitals and services.

The Latrobe Valley Industry and Infrastructure Fund was in fact part of the Latrobe Valley Advantage Fund; established by the former Labor Government.

The reality is that the former Coalition Government closed the Latrobe Valley Industry and Infrastructure Fund to new applications on 30 June 2014.

I note the Latrobe Valley Express reported in September 2014 that the Latrobe Valley Industry and Infrastructure Fund had “run out of money” and that the Member for Morwell, then-Minister the Hon Russell Northe MP, could not say that a re-elected Coalition Government would continue the Fund.

The Andrews Government is of course honouring the approved grants, which will take 2 to 3 years to acquit, as businesses reach milestones that trigger payments to be made.

Through the 2015-16 Victorian Budget, Labor is investing in the things that local families need to live a healthy, safe and comfortable life, and funds the projects that communities and businesses need to create jobs and drive growth.

The Andrews Labor Government has established the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund which will deliver improved services and drive jobs growth in the Valley.

Oakleigh South development

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 1 September 2015

REPLY:

Thank you for raising the matter of the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) for the former Oakleigh South Primary School.

The Oakleigh South Primary School was one of nine surplus Department of Education and Training school sites that was undertaken as part of a pilot Advisory Committee process by the former Minister for Planning. The objective of the pilot was to have an open and timely process for the rezoning of surplus schools to facilitate private sale.

I understand notice was given to properties immediately adjoining and across the road from the school. The Committee also completed a public hearing where residents of Oakleigh South were able to provide their views on the future use of the school. I am aware that the Committee received a number of individual submissions and a petition containing 130 names.

The Committee recommended rezoning the land from Public Use Zone — Education to General Residential Zone and that a DPO applies to the site. The DPO Schedule required the future owner to prepare a development plan that outlines how the site was to be developed. The Schedule outlines all the things the future owner had to take into account when preparing for the development. These include location and type of residential dwellings, sustainable design features, new cycle/pedestrian pathways or new local street networks, and incorporate native vegetation in the design.

The Schedule includes a requirement for consultation to be undertaken but residents do not have third party appeal rights. Consideration of community views is the responsibility of the responsible authority (the Council) as it decides in whether to approve the development plan.

I am satisfied that the Committee completed a robust consultation process with the community in its recommendation to rezone the school and apply the DPO. I encourage you, Mr Peter Foley and local residents to engage with Council to discuss its concerns regarding the proposed development.

Multicultural Aged Care Services

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

Multicultural Aged Care Services Geelong Inc. is a Commonwealth funded service providing the full range of Aged Care Act 1997 (Cwth) services including high and low care residential services, and Home Care packages (including consumer-directed care) delivering in-home care. Multicultural Aged Care Services also has independent living units.

Multicultural Aged Care Services does not receive any funding from the Victorian Government for residential aged care.

In 2013, Multicultural Aged Care Services raised its need for support to convert part of its facility, comprising 14 existing low care places, to a secure unit to accommodate people with dementia who exhibit particularly challenging behaviour. Previously, such people could not be managed within the Multicultural Aged Care Services facility and they were transferred to other services.

Multicultural Aged Care Services sought \$25 000 from the Victorian Government for detailed planning design and work flow analysis for the proposed 14 bed dementia specific facility. Funding was provided through the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Seniors initiative.

I am advised that it was indicated to Multicultural Aged Care Services by the former Napthine Government that the State would not provide capital funds for Commonwealth funded residential aged care services.

I visited Multicultural Aged Care Services in February this year, and I applaud the work they do and their initiative in further developing their service to respond to the needs of people with dementia. However, in keeping with the position of the former government, no State funds will be made available for this purpose.

Police station security

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr Bourman

Raised on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

The government recognises that Victoria Police requires appropriate facilities to support police in the work they do in keeping the community safe. That is why in the 2015-2016 State Budget, we provided Victoria Police with a record budget of \$2.5 billion.

Victoria Police takes the safety of its employees extremely seriously. The organisation has introduced an Operational Safety Policy to enhance the safety and well-being of all employees. The Safety Policy was developed in consultation with police officers and the Police Association and focuses on operational safety equipment, single officer activities and the security of marked police vehicles.

Police are encouraged to conduct risk assessments before and throughout their duties and apply a consistent and common sense approach when responding to operational responsibilities.

Minor works and maintenance at police stations is determined by Victoria Police under the facilities minor works program, where projects are considered in the context of other priorities.

Additional security measures are continuing to be put in place around facilities and security has been progressively increasing across the organisation. As you can appreciate, for security reasons, I am not able to comment on other stations receiving security upgrades.

As you would expect, the government works closely with the Chief Commissioner to ensure Victoria Police is appropriately resourced to tackle law and order issues facing the Victorian community.

While the government determines the level of funding required to resource Victoria Police, the Chief Commissioner is responsible for determining how such resources are allocated, based on assessed operational need.

Aitken College

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

I understand that VicRoads recently met with representatives of Aitken College, including its Principal, Ms Josie Crisara, to discuss the access issues at the entrance of the college. In this meeting, VicRoads discussed several scenarios with the college, ranging from short to long-term solutions.

As you may be aware, VicRoads has recently completed the Mickleham Road corridor duplication study. This study outlines VicRoads' medium to long-term plans for the Mickleham Road corridor, including future duplication and associated intersections.

On 3 September 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed legislation creating Infrastructure Victoria, delivering a key election commitment from the Andrews Labor Government and giving certainty for Victoria's infrastructure pipeline. The new independent body will be tasked with ensuring that Victoria's immediate and long-term infrastructure needs are identified and prioritised based on objective, transparent analysis and evidence. Infrastructure Victoria will consult widely, consider the needs of the whole state and prioritise the projects that deliver the best results.

Consideration of new road projects such as the duplication of Mickleham Road will be considered in this context.

As you may appreciate, VicRoads receives many requests each year for the installation of traffic signals throughout Victoria. All requests are considered and evaluated on a statewide basis with consideration given to factors such as the number and type of vehicles using the intersection, the need to cater for pedestrians, the historical safety record of the site, the impact that treating the intersection would have on the performance of the surrounding road network and the implementation costs.

The installation of traffic signals at the entrance to Aitken College, ahead of duplication of Mickleham Road, will be considered for funding under a future program based on the above criteria.

Given the increasing traffic on Mickleham Road and the long queue times experienced within the college grounds, VicRoads has no objection to the college privately funding the improvements to the college entrance, should the college desire signals before they are funded under a future program.

In the short-term, VicRoads is investigating making signal timing changes to the nearby signalised intersection at Mickleham Road and Dellamore Boulevard to provide more downstream gaps for traffic exiting the college at peak school times.

Kingston green wedge

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

I refer to the matter raised in the Legislative Council on 6 October 2015 by Mrs Inge Peulich, Member for South Eastern Metropolitan Region, seeking clarification on whether a cemetery is planned to be developed in the Heatherton/Clayton South area.

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust has identified land that it believes is suitable to provide additional burial and memorialisation services within Melbourne's South Eastern Region.

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust has submitted a conceptual plan for the acquisition and ongoing management of the site. The proposal is a major project involving substantial expenditure and requires careful assessment by a number of agencies.

I have asked the Department of Health & Human Services to provide me with advice in relation to this matter.

Racecourse Road–Princes Highway, Pakenham

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 6 October 2015

REPLY:

Short-Term Opportunity

VicRoads has considered Mr Mitchell's suggestion to install a dedicated lane along Racecourse Road to improve access for vehicles turning left at the Princes Highway. VicRoads advises me that, due to the geometry and physical constraints of the site, the installation of an additional lane on Racecourse Road could not be achieved without land acquisition and relocation of a number of services, which would involve a significant cost.

The Victoria Government receives many requests each year for road improvements at intersections throughout Victoria. All requests are prioritised based on the extent to which a proposed treatment would improve safety and/or traffic flow. VicRoads considers factors such as the type of vehicles using the intersection, the historical safety record of the site, the impact that treating the intersection would have on the performance of the surrounding road network and the implementation costs.

VicRoads' evaluation of this intersection, based on the above criteria, indicates that it is unlikely to be upgraded in the short term. However, it will continue to be considered for funding under future programs.

Long-Term Opportunity

I acknowledge the pressure being placed on the road network within growth areas. VicRoads is working with the Metropolitan Planning Authority, relevant municipalities and other stakeholders to plan the transport system to appropriately manage travel demands into the future. The population growth and increased development in Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs is leading to increased volumes of traffic along Racecourse Road and other roads in the area.

The Victorian Government is also developing long-term planning initiatives to identify potential future transport solutions to provide for Melbourne's growth. Issues such as where future job locations are to be provided and their relationship with where people live and the transport needs to connect these locations are considered in the long-term planning process. Future options to improve connectivity across Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs will be considered in this context.

In relation to the Pakenham Racecourse redevelopment on Racecourse Road, the intersection of Racecourse Road and Azola Drive will be signalised as part of these works. The signalisation of this intersection will facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians across Racecourse Road.

Drought assistance

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Ms Symes

Raised on: 7 October 2015

REPLY:

I thank the Member for Northern Victoria for requesting that I visit farmers in the north to see first-hand how drought conditions are impacting families, businesses and communities.

Western, northern and central Victoria have received below average rainfall in the past 24 months. Soil moisture levels are well below normal in many areas.

In addition, an unseasonal heat wave in early October came at a critical time for already stressed crops. The full impact will only be known when harvesting activities finish later this year.

On the 9 October 2015, I visited Birchip to hear from farmers, the Buloke Shire Council, Birchip Cropping Group and local businesses.

I can confirm that I will be visiting more farms and communities in October and November to further understand the impacts of current seasonal conditions, including in Northern Victoria.

As you will be aware, I have recently announced that Drought Concessional Loans are now available for Victorian farmers.

Other support measures for farmers include the Farm Household Allowance, Rural Financial Counselling Service and drought management advice and information provided by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

I am working with relevant parts of government to coordinate further measures to support drought-affected families, businesses and communities.

Dairy industry

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Mr Purcell

Raised on: 8 October 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is aware of the importance of adequate power supply to allow dairy industry development.

Regional Development Victoria has been working with dairy farmers in south-western Victoria about upgrading to three phase power supply.

It will continue to work with farmers to explore all available options for access to suitable power supply.

As you will be aware, earlier this year the Victorian Government announced it would establish a \$200 million Agriculture Infrastructure and Jobs Fund as soon as the lease of the Port of Melbourne legislation was approved by Parliament. Improved energy infrastructure could be considered under the fund once it is established.

I intend to visit south-western Victoria before the end of the year.

TAFE funding

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 8 October 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Victoria's economy is facing a number of challenges, including a concerning youth unemployment problem.

This is why the Government established the \$50 million TAFE Back to Work Fund, to support the Victorian Government's Back to Work Plan to grow jobs and get people back to work, while improving the financial viability of TAFE Institutes and supporting the skills needs of local communities.

I am aware that youth unemployment in Melbourne's west remains a problem and so I appreciate Mr Eideh's enthusiasm for the TAFE Back to Work Fund.

Victoria University is the principal public TAFE provider in Melbourne's west. Victoria University is developing a proposal to deliver new skills and jobs in Melbourne's west.

I hope to make an announcement soon.

In addition to the TAFE Back to Work Fund, I was delighted to announce \$15 million to establish Skills and Jobs Centres at TAFEs and dual sector universities across the state. I am pleased that Victoria University will receive a share of that funding to help link jobseekers and employers in Melbourne's west.

National disability insurance scheme

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 20 October 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian government is committed to supporting participants, service providers and the workforce to make the implementation of NDIS a success and to improve services and outcomes for Victorians with a disability.

On the 16 September 2015 the Victorian and Commonwealth governments signed a momentous agreement for the staged geographic roll out of the NDIS across Victoria from July 2016.

This is a significant milestone in the complex job of implementing the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Victoria. We now have certainty on when and where the Scheme will be delivered.

Both the Victorian and Commonwealth governments are making significant financial contributions to the NDIS to ensure that eligible Victorians with disability have choice and control over the support and services they need to meet their goals and aspirations.

People with disability and their families will undoubtedly be interested in details about how and when the Scheme will be rolled out.

Over the coming months, I will be hosting forums across the State to provide more information about the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Victoria. I was pleased to see that over 200 people, including people with a disability their families and local providers, attended the first of these forums in Bendigo on 4 November 2015 and a further 300 in Darebin. A community forum has been scheduled for Warrnambool on 16 December 2015.

Further details of upcoming forums in regional Victoria can be found on the following site <http://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/department-of-health-and-human-services-8554287768>.

123Read2Me

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 20 October 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is making Victoria the Education State, and this starts from birth. I have convened a panel of experts to provide advice regarding the key reform areas outlined in the Education State Early Childhood Consultation Paper. These key directions emphasise the value of early engagement in cost effective, locally supported, high quality, evidenced based learning programs for young children, especially those experiencing disadvantage.

Unlike the former Coalition Government, who cut the Young Readers Program in their first year in office, our Government recognises the importance of developing literacy in young children, particularly for those experiencing disadvantage.

I have received the 123Read2Me proposal and will meet with the project representatives. I am advised that there are other literacy focused initiatives operating in areas of high disadvantage, including those organised through the generous involvement of local community service clubs.

A range of State Government funded initiatives also exist such as:

Supported Playgroups (including those operating in Frankston and the South Eastern region) which actively promote improving parent child interactions and focus on literacy, play and learning.

Maternal and Child Health (MCH) and Enhanced MCH services, which provide the Play Learn Grow materials to increase parent's understanding of their child's health, learning and development, with a focus on early literacy.

Victorian Public Libraries, which provide a rich array of local reading and literacy programs, both onsite, offsite and online designed to engage young children and their families.

Other initiatives targeting children and families in disadvantaged circumstances include Early Start Kindergarten and projects offered through the Frankston Best Start.

Warrnambool Base Hospital

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Wooldridge

Raised on: 21 October 2015

REPLY:

Unlike the previous Liberal government who consistently underinvested in health capital, the Andrews Labor Government, like every Labor Government, is committed to investing in health.

The previous Labor Government approved over \$115 million funding for the stage one development at the Warrnambool Base campus of South West Healthcare. This important work resulted in increased patient bed numbers with a new intensive care unit, special care nursery, inpatient unit and palliative care suites.

Stage one also supported the establishment of the Deakin Medical School and provided new support facilities such as car parks, foyer and pharmacy. The project was completed in August 2012.

Since the completion of the stage one development, South West Healthcare has been able to consolidate its role as the major sub-regional provider, delivering services for the communities of south west Victoria in spite of the over \$1 billion in cuts inflicted by the former Liberal Government.

The current masterplan for the Warrnambool campus of South West Healthcare will form the basis of future capital funding consideration by the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Department of Health and Human Services will continue to work together with South West Healthcare to strengthen and build on the existing health system and infrastructure to ensure access to quality, contemporary and sustainable health services are provided to Victorian / residents. In the recent State budget South West Healthcare was provided with \$440 million, \$16.7 million more than in the previous budget.

The Andrews Labor Government is passionate about improving the health and wellbeing of all Victorians and I look forward to visiting Warrnambool Base Hospital when I am next in the region.

Goulburn Valley Health**Raised with: Minister for Health****Raised by: Ms Lovell****Raised on: 21 October 2015****REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government's provision of \$1.0 million for planning for Goulburn Valley Health is enabling the long awaited progression of planning for the redevelopment of the Shepparton campus.

After four years of neglect from the former Liberal Government, the community's calls for action have finally been heard.

Service planning to identify the future health service requirements for the primary and extended catchment area of Goulburn Valley Health was completed earlier this year. The service plan has provided a 'road map' for the future development of the health service over the next 5-10 years and specifies the major areas of service development and changes to models of care required to address future needs.

This planning was essential to inform the subsequent masterplan and feasibility studies for the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health and to ensure that the facility requirements for the redevelopment will be properly understood. These key tasks are being undertaken with the support and involvement of the Board and Executive of Goulburn Valley Health. The masterplan and feasibility studies will further refine the recommendations of the service plan and will underpin the next stages of the planning and development work for the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health.

The service plan acknowledges that there is a growing demand for cancer services within the Goulburn Valley Health catchment area. It recommends that Goulburn Valley Health partner with Albury Wodonga Health to develop an integrated cancer model for the Hume region.

The Department of Health & Human Services will work with Goulburn Valley health to develop longer term oncology service expansion in line with the current service plan.

Planning and development work for Goulburn Valley Health will be informed by input from the new Community Advisory Group, which is being chaired by the Member for Shepparton District, Suzanna Sheed MP.

The Community Advisory Group that had its first meeting on 16 November 2015 will ensure the community needs are at the centre of the redevelopment of Goulburn Valley Health.

I understand that the first meeting was a success and I look forward to working with the local member and the advisory group to progress this important project.

Essendon Keilor College**Raised with: Minister for Education****Raised by: Mr Finn****Raised on: 21 October 2015****REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The autism base room at Essendon Keilor College, Niddrie Campus, will not be closing. The room and program will continue to operate and will be funded and staffed by the Essendon Keilor College.

The Department of Education and Training has not removed any funding from the operation of the base room.

Workplace learning coordinators

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Shing

Raised on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Workplace Learning Coordinators (WLC) program which provided structured workplace learning for school students was funded from the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, which expired in 2013. In order to enable the Department of Education and Training sufficient time to review school industry programs and identify best practice models, funding was provided to continue the WLC program until the end of 2015. The review which was completed in July 2015 included extensive consultation with WLCs and LLENs.

Last week, I announced that the Andrews Government will maintain the current funding level for structured workplace learning but that the service model would be reformed. The reformed service model will be part of the Government's initiatives under the Education State to support our young people. The new service model will capitalise on local partnerships to ensure schools and education training providers work together to provide an integrated approach to supporting all young people in Victoria to engage, and reengage, in education and training.

The Department has recently met with stakeholders to discuss the new approach to structured workplace learning. These discussions will continue with a Working Group of WLCs and LLENs established to plan the delivery of the new service model for 2016.

Fruit tree netting subsidy

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

The Goulburn Valley region is very important to Victoria's fruit production. The region produces approximately 70 per cent of Victoria's apples and 98 per cent of Victoria's pears.

The Andrews Government is not currently considering a fruit tree netting subsidy.

There is a strong commercial incentive for growers to invest in netting due to the increased market returns they are likely to receive through improved quantity and quality of fruit and as a risk mitigation strategy.

Many existing growers within Victoria's horticulture industry have already established crop netting at their own expense. A significant market distortion could result if these growers were not given retrospective access to a netting subsidy.

Nadrasca**Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills****Raised by: Mr Leane****Raised on: 11 November 2015****REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Nadrasca approached the Department in September this year to apply for a 2016 VET Funding Contract for the Leadership College, an RTO which they own. They were advised by the Department that they did not meet the eligibility criteria for a 2016 VET Funding Contract. This advice was given at a meeting held in October with the General Manager of Nadrasca, as well as via formal correspondence sent to the CEO following the meeting,

Nadrasca's RTO, The Leadership College, was only registered with the Australian Skills Quality Authority in May 2015 and is therefore unable to demonstrate a history of delivery in Vocational Education and Training. This requirement is part of the tougher entry to market requirements that were announced as part of the Review of Quality Assurance in Victoria's VET System released earlier this year. These requirements apply to all RTOs and will strengthen quality in the government subsidised training market.

At the October meeting, the Department advised Nadrasca that they are able to apply for funding in the future.

The Department also offered Nadrasca assistance to link up with Melbourne Polytechnic to explore training and partnership arrangements. Nadrasca and Melbourne Polytechnic have commenced discussions to determine how they will partner together in 2016.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 25 November 2015

Portland Bay School

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 21 October 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Thank you for your question regarding the Portland Bay School feasibility study.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure so that every student, including those at Portland Bay School, has access to a first class education. This has been demonstrated through the allocation of \$730 million into school facilities in the 2015-16 State Budget.

I had the opportunity to visit Portland Bay School on 22 July 2015 and discuss this issue with the Principal, Mr Stephen Crossley, who gave me first hand insight into the infrastructure needs of the school. I understand the importance of finding a long-term and sustainable option to resolve the accommodation issues being experienced at Portland Bay School.

The Portland Bay School feasibility study has been completed following extensive consultation with government schools in the Portland area, the Glenelg Shire Council and the Department of Education and Training. The study assessed the suitability of both co-location and relocation options for Portland Bay School. Potential site options were identified and assessed based on key criteria such as location, traffic issues, site size, access to community organisations and long-term viability.

Portland Bay School has been provided with the findings of this feasibility study, and the Department is working with schools in the area to discuss its findings.

Multicultural affairs

Raised with: Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 21 October 2015

REPLY:

The Victorian Government set aside \$25 million over four years for the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Taskforce.

The guidelines for the grants programs are being developed after extensive consultation with community groups. The guidelines and advice on lodging applications will be announced when they are complete.

Diwali and Annakut exhibition

Raised with: Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

I am pleased to advise that the Victorian Government has been working to make grant programs for multicultural communities clearer and simpler. The new grant programs will better enable our communities to celebrate and preserve traditions and showcase the vibrancy of Victoria's multiculturalism.

I look forward to next year's Diwali and Annakut Exhibition at Parliament House and trust it will continue to grow.

I would encourage the event organisers to contact Mr Hakan Akyol, Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship to further discuss how the exhibition might link in with other Diwali festivals and events, and possible funding opportunities for such a partnership.

Social enterprise sector

Raised with: Minister for Employment

Raised by: Mr Mulino

Raised on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

I thank Mr Mulino for highlighting the important work of social enterprises in Cardinia and note his commitment to growing the sector.

Social enterprises are an incredible tool for creating wealth through sustainable economic activity, are an excellent vehicle for job creation and often provide a mechanism for bringing excluded groups into the labour market.

The Honourable Member has listed a number of excellent examples where social enterprises, both in and close to his electorate, are creating unique employment opportunities for a variety of cohorts.

I would be delighted to visit the Shire of Cardinia with Mr Mulino in 2016 and look forward to engaging with a host of social enterprises, local government representatives and community stakeholders to discuss how the Victorian Government can best support the growth of this important sector.

Diwali festival

Raised with: Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 22 October 2015

REPLY:

The event was the subject of discussions between the Springvale Police Station Management and the event organisers regarding potential issues of anti-social behaviour and general public order. Prior to the event and in consultation with the organisers it was assessed and agreed Victoria Police were not required to be deployed and as such costs were not canvassed.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Wednesday, 25 November 2015

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The event took place on the 25 October 2015 without incident (as was the case in previous years where this event had been conducted). As per the “user pays policy” for police engagement in these events it is not policy or practice to seek “money up front” and any such user pays requirement would be the subject of an applicable contract.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 26 November 2015

Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 20 October 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads will work with Parks Victoria to review the signs to the Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve.

Parks Victoria, as manager of the reserve, would be the responsible authority for funding costs associated with any proposed signage upgrades.

Commercial fishing licences

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 20 October 2015

REPLY:

The policy to remove netting from Port Phillip Bay is a key initiative of the government's Target One Million election commitment to grow recreational fishing in Victoria.

Fishing for key fish stocks in Port Phillip Bay is assessed to be sustainable. The reduction in commercial catch is expected to increase catch rates and size of fish for the recreational fishing sector, and reduce spatial competition. This will enhance recreational fishing opportunities in the Bay for many Victorians, with the potential to attract more visitors from outside of Victoria to fish in Port Phillip Bay.

Under the Bill currently before Parliament, the process to commence removal of netting will commence in early 2016, with the first netting licences surrendered on 1 April 2016.

The Bill specifies a clear path to remove commercial netting from Port Phillip Bay and provides certainty to affected commercial licence holders as to the level of compensation payments.

Any delay in implementation of this policy will cause uncertainty for commercial fishers and their families.

Media reports suggest that the Shadow Fisheries spokesperson and National Party Leader, Hon Peter Walsh, supports the implementation of the policy.

Level crossings**Raised with: Minister for Public Transport****Raised by: Mrs Peulich****Raised on: 20 October 2015****REPLY:**

The Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) is undertaking an extensive community consultation program for the Level Crossing Removal Project: Caulfield to Dandenong.

The consultation program, which is ongoing, has been designed to allow the project team to reach a wide range of stakeholders including residents, commuters, traders, key stakeholders and the broader community.

The consultation began in June this year and has to date involved over 25 'pop-up sessions' at local shopping strips and train stations, seven interactive community feedback sessions at various locations, three trader feedback workshops and bi-monthly briefings to local government councillors.

Interactive community feedback sessions have been held at a range of times to allow the greatest number of community members to attend. They have included sessions during weeknights and on weekends, while 'pop-up sessions' have been held during peak hour travel times at local train stations and during day time hours to allow the project team to engage with shoppers.

The project team is currently undertaking a further round of consultation and engagement which involves reporting back on feedback received so far, and updating the public on the project's progress. Consultation sessions have been held at key community events both during the day, at night and on weekends at locations as diverse as local parks, Farmers' Markets, primary school fetes and even Chadstone Shopping Centre.

For those community members who haven't been able to engage with the project team at these events, two corridor-wide newsletters providing information about the project have been distributed to over 250 000 properties in Melbourne's south-east. The project team has also introduced an online consultation tool that has allowed community members to make comments about specific locations and issues on maps of the project corridor. Over 1500 individual comments have been recorded via this online process.

The LXRA has also introduced a highly innovative community consultation concept, the Community Tender Advisory Panel. This group consists of representatives from the local community who have viewed details of the bidders' designs in development and provided feedback on key elements. This is the first time this approach has been used on a major infrastructure project and demonstrates the exceptional level of consultation being undertaken.