

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

26 and 28 May 2015

(Extract from book 7)

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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 — Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Dalidakis, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Morris and Mr Ondarchie.

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

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

Joint committees

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Heads of parliamentary departments

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

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

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

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Deputy President: Ms G. TIERNEY

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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
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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
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, 26 May 2015

Maiden Gully Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 18 March 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government is committed to investment in education and school infrastructure, and this is why \$730 million for school facilities was announced in the 2015-16 State Budget.

This Budget funding represents a first step in creating the Education State, and we will continue to invest in school infrastructure throughout this term of government.

While the 2015-16 announcement focused primarily on resourcing election commitments and other priority projects, the capital needs of all government schools were assessed during the budget process.

I note your comment concerning the growing student enrolment at Maiden Gully Primary School. The Department of Education and Training closely monitors state-wide residential growth and demographic change, and relocatable classrooms are used to address enrolment trends and fluctuations. I am advised that Maiden Gully Primary School has sufficient facilities to accommodate its current and predicted enrolment, and I have asked the Department to work with the school to monitor further enrolment growth and resolve any accommodation issues.

The Government is also aware that schools such as Maiden Gully Primary School may have maintenance and capital needs. In relation to the former, government schools are directly allocated \$51 million annually for maintenance through the Student Resource Package, and they are encouraged to draw on this to address maintenance issues as they arise.

With respect to the ongoing capital requirements of our education portfolio, the needs of all schools will continue to be taken into account and evaluated when determining priorities for inclusion in future State Budgets and the Government's capital works program.

Elder abuse

Raised with: Minister for Women

Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins

Raised on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

I welcome the question from the member on what is the most serious harm we face as a government and as a community. As the member is aware, family violence manifests itself in many forms and its devastation is felt within every Victorian community.

We know that over the last four years there has been a significant increase in incidents of family violence recorded by Victoria Police. Since 2010, there has been a 70.3 percent increase in family violence incidents. Tragically, it is

often the most vulnerable in our communities who are impacted by this harm and elder abuse has been identified as a key area of concern.

That is why the Andrews Labor Government has established Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence to examine our system from the ground up and make practical recommendations to help end the violence. The Terms of Reference, announced by the Premier and I, tasks the Royal Commission to specifically focus on the needs and experiences of high risk groups within our community including seniors.

The Royal Commission is currently seeking submissions from those who have been affected by family violence and those who work with them. Submissions close on May 29 2015 and to ensure everyone that wants to make a submission can do so, they can be made online, via email or postage. Further information on the process can be found on www.rcfv.com.au or on 1800 365 100.

Royal Commission into Family Violence

Raised with: Minister for Women

Raised by: Ms Crozier

Raised on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is leading the way in preventing family violence and ensuring that those facing this harm have access to the services they need.

Family violence is the most serious law and order issue that we face, a harm that has significantly escalated over the past four years. Victoria Police has recorded that since 2010, there has been a 70.3 percent increase in family violence incidents in Victoria.

I am proud that the Victoria State Budget 2015-2016 has funded all of Labor's 2014 election commitments to prevent family violence, including the implementation of the Australia's first Royal Commission into Family Violence and the appointing of the first Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence.

We know that Royal Commissions shine a light on an issue unlike anything else, resulting in an increase of demand for support services. In regards to the \$4 million initial investment outlined by the Premier and I, \$2million has been allocated in 2014/15 for crisis accommodation and counselling services, and \$2 million has been allocated in 2015/16 for family violence access workers. Funds for crisis support services and counselling services are available immediately and are being directed following consultations with service providers led by DHHS.

Labor has adopted a whole of government response to the prevention family violence. In addition to funding all of Labor's election commitments to address this harm, the Andrews Labor Government has provided \$81.3 million in new family violence funding.

The Andrews Labor Government has made the necessary investment to tackle family violence and create generational change.

Cranbourne-Pakenham rail upgrade

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Mulino

Raised on: 14 April 2015

REPLY:

The Cranbourne-Pakenham rail upgrade will provide capacity to cater for the growing transport needs of Melbourne's South East.

The Cranbourne Pakenham Line Upgrade includes the manufacture of 37 new trains, a new dedicated train maintenance and stabling facility at Pakenham East, the removal of all nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong, the reconstruction of four railway stations, modifications to other stations along the corridor, upgrades to the supply of electrical traction power and signalling upgrades.

The project will significantly boost the capacity of the Cranbourne-Pakenham rail lines for peak period commuters, providing capacity for an extra 11 000 passengers in the morning peak, an increase of 42 per cent. This will greatly benefit both rail commuters, and users of the roads that will no longer be subject to level crossing delays.

The 37 new train trains will be at least 50 per cent locally made, supporting Victorian jobs at both manufacturer and supplier firms. The project will generate many new jobs during the construction phase across a range of industries as well as jobs created with the ongoing maintenance and operation of the new train services.

The construction of the Pakenham East facility is estimated to generate up to 250 jobs comprising those directly involved in on-site construction and people employed in businesses involved in manufacturing and supplying goods and materials for the construction work.

Following deployment of the new trains on the Cranbourne Pakenham line, around 80 new jobs will be created to maintain the 37 new trains operating from the Pakenham East facility and to operate and maintain the new maintenance depot building.

The economic benefits of the investment at Pakenham East include the opportunity for many of the jobs to be filled by people living in the local area and the benefits to other commercial and retail businesses with expenditure of income made from the project.

The new trains will have a much higher carrying capacity and enable more commuters from the local area to travel to work, schools, shops and recreational facilities. Existing trains currently used on the line will be redeployed to other lines to form new services also benefitting commuters.

Work and learning centres

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Raised by: Ms Lovell

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

Supporting Victoria's most disadvantaged job seekers to find and gain work is a priority for the Victorian Government.

Through our Back to Work Plan, we will help to create 100 000 jobs in Victoria over the next two years. Backed by an investment of \$100 million, we will provide payroll tax relief to companies that hire unemployed young people, long-term unemployed people and retrenched workers.

We are also funding other initiatives that will stimulate jobs growth. The \$200 million Future Industries Fund will support firms in high growth sectors to deliver sustainable jobs into the future and the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund will support major projects and create jobs which will build stronger communities in regional Victoria.

I am aware of the important role that the Brotherhood of St Laurence's Work and Learning Centres have played in Carlton, Geelong, Ballarat, Shepparton and Moe, to assist some of Victoria's most disadvantaged people to access employment.

The Brotherhood of St Laurence's work and learning centre model, which is delivered in partnership with local agencies, provides tailored individual support to clients to help address vocational and non-vocational barriers to employment and works closely with local employers to assist clients into employment.

This is a model of support that our most disadvantaged job seekers clearly need but are clearly not getting through the Federal Coalition Government's job services system.

I am aware that the previous Liberal Government in Victoria only funded the Work and Learning Centres for four years and that this funding ceases in June 2015.

It is my pleasure to inform you that, consistent with the government's broader objectives in creating jobs for Victorians, that the Work and Learning programs now have the certainty and security they need, with an ongoing commitment from the Andrews Labor Government in the 2015-16 budget over the next 4 years.

Women with Disabilities Victoria

Raised with: Minister for Women

Raised by: Ms Springle

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

Women with Disabilities Victoria's Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability is a ground-breaking program that is unique, not only in Australia, but internationally. We know that gender inequality is a primary determinant of violence against women.

Women with disabilities experience violence at a higher rate and for longer periods than other women. They can also encounter significant barriers to accessing appropriate services and justice responses. Violence against women with disabilities is both unacceptable and preventable.

The Victorian Labor Government is committed to addressing the root causes of family violence. The Gender and Disability program provides training to those within the sector to assist them in preventing violence against women with disabilities.

This year's budget announced by the Treasurer includes \$2 million for prevention initiatives. I will be working with groups like Women with Disabilities Victoria to ensure that high risk groups receive the support they need through programs like the Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability.

On behalf of the Victoria Government, I would like to thank Women with Disabilities Victoria for the vital work they do in upholding the rights of women with disabilities to live safe lives, free from violence.

Western Highway

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Ms Dunn

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

I am informed that the planning for the Western Highway duplication was done in three stages. The section to which the Member for Eastern Metropolitan refers, is Section 2, between Beaufort and Ararat and was planned under the comprehensive Environment Effects Statement (EES) process.

The route determined through the EES, involved extensive public consultation and the development of several alignment options. During the planning and preliminary design phase, all practical and feasible alternatives, without compromising road safety, were considered with the aim of preserving trees wherever possible. VicRoads publicly exhibited a preferred and alternative option in 2012.

VicRoads' preferred option and alternative option were presented to an independent Inquiry Panel, along with all submissions received from the public. Based on the evidence provided in the proposal and submissions to the Panel, including submissions by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, the Panel recommended that the Minister for Planning approve the "Alternative" alignment. The Panel concluded that, on balance, this was of lower environmental impact.

VicRoads accepted this recommendation and the Minister for Planning approved the alignment which has subsequently been gazetted in the Pyrenees and Ararat Planning Schemes.

I understand that VicRoads has completed additional investigations by an independent consultant on other alignments put to VicRoads subsequent to the current project alignment being approved by the previous Minister for Planning. Contrary to those views expressed by opponents of the project, these other alignments have higher environmental impacts than the approved alignment.

I am satisfied that the Panel did recommend the alignment that, on balance had the least environmental impact. I therefore do not intend to direct VicRoads to stop work on the duplication to allow further environmental evaluations to be undertaken.

Greater Geelong police resources

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

The government is committed to a well-resourced police force, with a strong commitment to community engagement and policing. In February of this year, the Member for Bellarine and I welcomed Victoria Police's announcement that both Portarlington and Drysdale would add an extra day of counter service to their rosters.

As part of the recent 2015-16 State Budget, the Andrews Government is investing \$7.8 million over four years for 15 more police to be stationed in the growing areas of Bellarine and Geelong and for longer opening hours at Drysdale, Portarlington and Queenscliff. The new officers will be deployed in the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong area to meet current and future demand.

In addition, the 2015-16 State Budget includes the government's investment of \$148.6 million to recruit and accommodate 400 custody officers. The transition of the supervision of prisoners held in police cells, from police officers to custody officers, will release 400 police in various locations to return to frontline duties increasing the capacity to provide policing services and public safety outcomes to the community.

The government will also be providing a crime prevention grant of \$30 000 for initiatives to be developed by a newly established Bellarine Crime Prevention Consultative Group, which will be chaired by the local MP and the local Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner.

Under Victorian law, I cannot direct police about the allocation or deployment of Victoria Police in accordance with Section 10 of the Victoria Police Act 2013. These are operational matters for the Acting Chief Commissioner of Police.

We will continue to work with the Acting Chief Commissioner of Police to ensure that Victoria Police has appropriate resources.

Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre

Raised with: Minister for Health

Raised by: Ms Wooldridge

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

The government has no plan to reverse its decision to ensure that all cancer care services provided in the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre are public services available to all Victorians.

Sunbury Road duplication

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

VicRoads is undertaking detailed planning to reserve land for a link between Melbourne Airport and the future Outer Metropolitan Ring transport corridor, including a bypass of Bulla.

The study is seeking to identify suitable routes for these links that will support future traffic volumes in the region, including Sunbury Road traffic. This will in turn enable land to be identified and reserved for those future transport needs.

The future Melbourne Airport Link and Bulla Bypass will ultimately consist of six traffic lanes and include off-road shared bicycle and pedestrian paths.

A public exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment C190 to the Hume Planning Scheme for these links was held from 20 November 2014 to 19 December 2014. Planning Scheme Amendment C190 was considered by a Planning Panel in March 2015 and the Panel's report is expected to be released by mid 2015.

VicRoads reduced the speed limit on Sunbury Road from 100km/h to 80km/h in February 2015 in response to the crash history, which included a fatal collision in July 2014. VicRoads will continue to monitor the safety along this road.

South Yarra railway station

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 15 April 2015

REPLY:

The Melbourne Metro Rail Project allows 20 000 extra people to use our train network in peak hour. Unless we build Melbourne Metro, people in South Yarra and across Melbourne face increased crowding as pressure on the rail network continues to grow.

South Yarra already has a very high level of public transport services, and will continue to have a high level of service when MMRP is built, with these services being less crowded. A new station at South Yarra is not part of the Melbourne Metro project, however that does not mean that improvements to South Yarra Station will not occur in the future.

Improvements to stations are considered by Public Transport Victoria through its network development planning.

The Melbourne Metro Rail Authority will work with Stonnington Council and other South Yarra stakeholders as the project is planned and developed.

With regard to Route 8 tram services, these services are not being cancelled. Any future changes to the tram network will be undertaken in consultation with the community.

Bellarine Peninsula police resources

Raised with: Minister for Police

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 16 April 2015

REPLY:

The government is committed to a well-resourced police force, with a strong commitment to community engagement and policing. In February of this year, the Member for Bellarine and I welcomed Victoria Police's announcement that both Portarlington and Drysdale would add an extra day of counter service to their rosters.

As part of the recent 2015-2016 State Budget, the Andrews Government is investing \$7.8 million over four years for 15 more police to be stationed in the growing areas of Bellarine and Geelong and for longer opening hours at Drysdale, Portarlington and Queenscliff. The new officers will be deployed in the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong area to meet current and future demand.

In addition, the 2015-16 State Budget includes the government's investment of

\$148.6 million to recruit and accommodate 400 custody officers. The transition of the supervision of prisoners held in police cells, from police officers to custody officers, will release 400 police in various locations to return to frontline duties increasing the capacity to provide policing services and public safety outcomes to the community.

The government will also be providing a crime prevention grant of \$30 000 for initiatives to be developed by a newly established Bellarine Crime Prevention Consultative Group, which will be chaired by the local MP and the local Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner.

Under Victorian Law, I cannot direct police about the allocation or deployment of Victoria Police in accordance with Section 10 of the Victoria Police Act 2013. These are operational matters for the Acting Chief Commissioner of Police.

We will continue to work with the Acting Chief Commissioner of Police to ensure that Victoria Police has appropriate resources.

Local learning and employment networks

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills

Raised by: Ms Tierney

Raised on: 5 May 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government has provided funding certainty to Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) in the 2015-16 State Budget.

There are 10 LLENs in your region of Western Victoria.

The Victorian Government recognises the important role that LLENs play in improving education and training outcomes for young people in their local communities, tackling youth unemployment, and facilitating opportunities with potential employers.

I also acknowledge your deep involvement in improving education, training and employment opportunities and outcomes for young people in Western Victoria.

We will provide \$32 million over four years to LLENs, across metropolitan and regional Victoria, to enable them to continue working with young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education and training, to improve their education and employment outcomes.

The Department of Education and Training will consult with LLENs and other stakeholders such as schools, youth services, employers and local government, over the coming months, to ensure their operating model best meets the needs of these unique and diverse communities.

LLENs commenced in 2001, so it is important that as we provide funding certainty to them, that we also consider what operating system, approaches and accountability frameworks are needed to ensure that they meet the pressing need to address youth unemployment and disengagement from education, training and employment you so rightly identify.

Rather than be prescriptive in how these locally driven bodies will achieve this objective we will work with stakeholders in Western Victoria to develop an approach that builds on the capability, knowledge and networks built up since 2001.

Autism-specific and special schools

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 5 May 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Government's Special Needs Plan for Victorian Schools is designed to increase the capacity of schools to support and maximise the learning potential of children with a disability and special learning needs.

The Special Needs Plan will improve teacher capability through the following actions:

- As a condition of teacher registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), all new teachers will be required to complete a special needs component as part of their tertiary studies.
- Existing teachers will also undertake special needs training as part of their ongoing professional development.

To address the requirement that all new teachers must complete a special needs component as part of their tertiary studies, the VIT will introduce a 'mandatory area of focus' on teaching students with special needs. The mandatory area of focus will be incorporated into requirements for Victorian initial teacher education (ITE) courses that are to be accredited or reaccredited by the VIT.

Existing teachers must renew their registration with the VIT annually. As part of this requirement, teachers must undertake 20 hours of standards-referenced professional development each year and make a declaration to this effect.

To address the requirement that teachers undertake special needs training as part of their ongoing professional development it is proposed that teachers make a specific declaration about the professional learning they have

undertaken with respect to the relevant sections of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, Proficient Teacher level:

- 1.5 — Develop teaching activities that incorporate differentiated strategies to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.
- 1.6 — Design and implement teaching activities that support the participation and learning of students with disability and address relevant policy and legislative requirements.
- 4.1 — Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.

The Department of Education and Training is developing a professional learning strategy to support this new requirement.

Local learning and employment networks

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills

Raised by: Mr Mulino

Raised on: 7 May 2015

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government has provided funding certainty to Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) in the 2015-16 State Budget.

There are 6 LLENs in your region of Eastern Victoria.

The Victorian Government recognises the important role that LLENs play in improving education and training outcomes for young people in their local communities, tackling youth unemployment, and facilitating opportunities with potential employers.

I also acknowledge your deep involvement in improving education, training and employment opportunities and outcomes for young people in Eastern Victoria.

We will provide \$32 million over four years to LLENs, across metropolitan and regional Victoria, to enable them to continue working with young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education and training, to improve their education and employment outcomes.

The Department of Education and Training will consult with LLENs and other stakeholders such as schools, youth services, employers and local government, over the coming months, to ensure their operating model best meets the needs of these unique and diverse communities.

LLENs commenced in 2001, so it is important that as we provide funding certainty to them, that we also consider what operating system, approaches and accountability frameworks are needed to ensure that they meet the pressing need to address youth unemployment and disengagement from education, training and employment you so rightly identify.

Rather than be prescriptive in how these locally driven bodies will achieve this objective we will work with stakeholders in Eastern Victoria to develop an approach that builds on the capability, knowledge and networks built up since 2001.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 28 May 2015

Supported accommodation

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Raised by: Mr Finn

Raised on: 6 May 2015

REPLY:

The recent Victorian State Budget included new investment of \$151.1 million over four years for additional disability services.

This will provide up to an additional 830 additional individual support packages for people with disabilities in 2015-16. This is a record investment when compared to the previous government.

The new individual support packages will assist younger people with high and complex needs, who are at risk of entering residential aged care, to have a greater choice about where they will live.

The needs of people with a disability requiring supported accommodation, including young people at risk of or living in a residential aged care service, are recorded on the Disability Support Register.

Younger people with a disability who live in a residential aged care facility will also benefit from the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

I note the Federal Abbott Government has vacated the field with regards to taking up their shared responsibility to make significant funding injections to increase housing options and stock towards the full roll-out of the NDIS.

Multicultural affairs grants

Raised with: Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 7 May 2015

REPLY:

The State Budget funded all lapsing grant programs in the portfolio; honoured all of our election commitments; and provided funding for new initiatives, such as social cohesion and community resilience, and a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) family violence response. Combined, this represents the largest quantum of funding through the Multicultural Affairs portfolio — \$74 million in additional funding over four years.

I am informed that applicants for the major round of the Victorian Multicultural Commission's (VMC) community grants program, which involved a number of categories, have historically been advised of the outcome of their application between May and July.

I also note that the assessment of the VMC's second round of festival and events grants — for events taking place from July to December 2015 — is being finalised. As indicated, the timeframe for announcements is consistent with previous years.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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COUNCIL

Thursday, 28 May 2015

In relation to consideration for future grants processes, we are committed to responding to the needs of our multicultural communities. We are also committed to making the grants process as clear and transparent as possible. There will be clear and broad communication with the sector in relation to any changes.