

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**8 and 9 November 2016**

**(Extract from book 17)**

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# HANSARD<sup>150</sup>



1866–2016

Following a select committee investigation, Victorian Hansard was conceived when the following amended motion was passed by the Legislative Assembly on 23 June 1865:

That in the opinion of this house, provision should be made to secure a more accurate report of the debates in Parliament, in the form of *Hansard*.

The sessional volume for the first sitting period of the Fifth Parliament, from 12 February to 10 April 1866, contains the following preface dated 11 April:

As a preface to the first volume of “Parliamentary Debates” (new series), it is not inappropriate to state that prior to the Fifth Parliament of Victoria the newspapers of the day virtually supplied the only records of the debates of the Legislature.

With the commencement of the Fifth Parliament, however, an independent report was furnished by a special staff of reporters, and issued in weekly parts.

This volume contains the complete reports of the proceedings of both Houses during the past session.

In 2016 the Hansard Unit of the Department of Parliamentary Services continues the work begun 150 years ago of providing an accurate and complete report of the proceedings of both houses of the Victorian Parliament.

## **The Governor**

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

## **The ministry**

(to 9 November 2016)

Premier .....	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services .....	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer .....	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects .....	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade. ....	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development .....	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports .....	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans. ....	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries .....	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services .....	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Training and Skills, Minister for International Education and Minister for Corrections. ....	The Hon. S. R. Herbert, MLC
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations. ....	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State .....	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation .....	The Hon. M. Kairouz, MP
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs. ....	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Police and Minister for Water. ....	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Industry and Employment, and Minister for Resources ....	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing .....	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development. ....	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence .....	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. ....	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Planning. ....	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary .....	Ms G. A. Tierney, MLC

## **The Governor**

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

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(from 10 November 2016)

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Minister for Police and Minister for Water . . . . .	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
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Minister for Planning . . . . .	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary . . . . .	Ms M. Thomas, MP

### Legislative Council committees

**Privileges Committee** — Ms Hartland, Mr Herbert, Ms Mikakos, Mr O'Donohue, 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 Bourman, #Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Leane, Mr Morris and Mr Ondarchie.

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

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

# participating members

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### 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

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**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 and Ms McLeish.

**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*): 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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The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

**Deputy President:**

Mr K. EIDEH

**Acting Presidents:**

Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Mr Melhem, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mr Ramsay

**Leader of the Government:**

The Hon. G. JENNINGS

**Deputy Leader of the Government:**

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

**Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

**Deputy Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

**Leader of The Nationals:**

Mr L. B. O'SULLIVAN

**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 <sup>2</sup>	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David <sup>1</sup>	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	O'Sullivan, Luke Bartholomew <sup>4</sup>	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin <sup>3</sup>	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	V1LJ
Elasmarr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph	Northern Victoria	ALP	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
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Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP

<sup>2</sup> Appointed 15 April 2015

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 27 May 2016

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

<sup>4</sup> Appointed 12 October 2016

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**

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





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**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.  
 Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Council.  
 Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.  
 Headings reflect the portfolio of the minister answering the question.*

**Tuesday, 8 November 2016**

**Police**

**7007. MR BOURMAN** — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Police) what is the total number of shooters licenses in force per year for the last 20 years.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised by Victoria Police that the completeness of data in relation to the span of this question is limited due to archival reasons. The 2014/15 Victoria Police Annual Report does provide recent and publicly available information on licensing. From the 2014/15 Annual Report I can advise that at 30 June 2015, there were 214 936 current Victorian Firearm Licenses.

Further publicly available information on the function of the Licensing and Regulation Division of Victoria Police can also be found in the Victorian Regulatory System reports prepared by the Commissioner for Better Regulation (formerly the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission).

**Police**

**7008. MR BOURMAN** — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Police) what is the total number of shooters licenses issued per year for the last 20 years.

**ANSWER:**

I am advised by Victoria Police that the completeness of data in relation to the span of this question is limited due to archival reasons. The 2014/15 Victoria Police Annual Report does provide recent and publicly available information on licensing. From the 2014/15 Annual Report I can advise that during that financial year Victoria Police processed 136 837 applications and renewals for firearm registrations, licences and private security licenses. 94.8 per cent of these licenses were approved.

Further publicly available information on the function of the Licensing and Regulation Division of Victoria Police can also be found in the Victorian Regulatory System reports prepared by the Commissioner for Better Regulation (formerly the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission).

**Corrections**

**7124. MS PENNICUIK** — To ask the Minister for Corrections: In relation to women prisoners and in particular their rehabilitation and integration into society which is dependent upon secure housing as well as support programs:

- (1) what is the number of Corrections Pathway housing placements available for women exiting prison post sentence and on parole, and
  - (a) how long must these women wait to access such housing;
- (2) how many women are released from prison and remand without immediate access to stable housing of any kind;
- (3) what percentage increase in availability of stable housing for women prisoners both on parole and post-sentence can we expect in the next 12 months;

- (4) how will the Department of Human Services and the Department of Justice and Regulation housing initiatives referred to in Question on Notice 4896 ensure stable housing for women prisoners exiting prison, and —
  - (a) what percentage of housing will be allocated to them as part of the broader housing reforms for the future; and
  - (b) how will the housing initiatives link into the investment in family violence initiatives particularly with regard to housing;
- (5) what feedback did women prisoners provide on the expansion of the Dame Phyllis Frost centre and how was that feedback implemented;
- (6) will there be additional housing pathways for women prisoners at Tarrengower to facilitate a smooth exit out of prison;
- (7) will there be a transitional facility other than at Tarrengower since Tarrengower is remote and this would make it hard for some women's families to be part of their transition back into community life;
- (8) what assistance is being provided specific to the needs of indigenous women prisoners for their rehabilitation and reintegration into the community including the allocation of funds and types of programs;
- (9) how have indigenous women prisoners been consulted in regards to their needs for rehabilitation and reintegration into the community.

**ANSWER:**

Corrections Victoria operates two housing programs in collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services and a range of Registered Housing Agencies. These housing options represent a combination of capital purchases and nomination rights with Registered Housing Agencies. Information about these programs can be found at: <http://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/home/release/transition+programs/>

Specifically the ReConnect program, launched on 1 January 2015, provides post release support to facilitate the reintegration of exiting prisoners into the community. Information regarding ReConnect can be found at: <http://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/home/release/transition+programs/>. Information about specific housing initiatives falls outside the Corrections portfolio and it's a matter for the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing.

The Prisoner Liaison Group at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre have been provided with updates on the expansion at the prison and an opportunity to inform the design process. By way of example, the design of the new gatehouse was informed by consultation with the women on what is important to their family members and friends when visiting and being processed in the gatehouse.

There are no plans for additional housing service pathways for women exiting Tarrengower, nor a dedicated transitional facility for women.

Information regarding the range of supports and services Corrections Victoria offers Aboriginal women prisoners can be found at: <http://www.corrections.vic.gov.au/home/release/transition+programs/>

Corrections Victoria also has access to two bail properties for Aboriginal women to support their diversion from prison.

Corrections Victoria is currently working with the Department of Health and Human Services to implement a new Aboriginal Transitional Housing Program which will create opportunity for six Aboriginal men and six Aboriginal women to access dedicated transitional housing on release from prison to support their transition and reintegrating to the community. Properties will be custom designed and built to the cultural and reintegration needs for Aboriginal men and women. Access to these properties will also be accompanied by holistic case management support throughout this transition period. The expected timeframe for the completion of this project is 2019-20.

Opportunities are provided for targeted consultation in the development of new initiatives. Consultation is taking place with Aboriginal women prisoners in the planning of this Aboriginal Transitional Housing initiative.

### Police

**7192. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Police): Between 1 January 2015 and 30 June 2016 how many ergonomic chairs have been purchased by the Police Registration and Services Board and what is the total cost.

#### ANSWER:

I would refer the member to the President's ruling from 10 December 2015 regarding 'fishing' questions and ask the member reconsider the priority of the more than 100 'template' questions she alone asked across 20 portfolios in one sitting week.

### Roads and road safety

**7452. MS LOVELL** — To ask the Minister for Agriculture (for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety): Duplication of the GV Highway has progressed to some 15km south of Shepparton to Freeway standard. Planning Scheme amendments for a western bypass of Shepparton have been in place for several years, yet no progress has been made on construction of this urgently needed major infrastructure project. Will the Minister please advise of the priority/scheduling for funding of the GV Highway Shepparton Bypass project.

#### ANSWER:

The continued upgrading of the Goulburn Valley Highway is an important project that requires the joint efforts of both the State and Australian Governments.

The Shepparton Bypass is important, and we will continue to advocate for it. The necessary planning work has been completed, and we would like to see a commitment made from the Australian Government towards this National Highway.

### Energy, environment and climate change

**7486. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change):

- (1) of the 37.8 million visits to Victoria's national parks, what is the breakdown of visits for each national park; and
- (2) If breakdown data totalling 37.8 million visits is unable to be provided, what mechanism and calculation did Parks Victoria apply to ascertain the figure made public.

#### ANSWER:

- (1) Parks Victoria reports on visitation at the estate level and does not breakdown visits at the national or state park level.
- (2) Parks Victoria estimates visits to Victoria's national and state parks (as well as metropolitan parks and piers) using a broad base telephone survey. This survey is conducted every two years in order to assess the number of visits and trends in visitation. The broad based telephone survey uses an overall sample size of 12 000 respondents, with 300 participants fortnightly to account for seasonal variation.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7487. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change):

- (1) of the 16 million visits to Victoria’s major metropolitan parks, what is the breakdown of visits for each major metropolitan park; and
- (2) if breakdown data totalling 16 million visits is unable to be provided, what mechanism and calculation did Parks Victoria apply to ascertain the figure made public.

**ANSWER:**

- (1) Parks Victoria reports on visitation at the estate level and does not breakdown visits at the metropolitan park level.
- (2) Parks Victoria estimates visits to Melbourne’s Metropolitan parks, including Victoria’s national and state parks, bays and piers, using a broad base telephone survey. This survey is conducted every two years in order to assess the number of visits and trends in visitation. The broad based telephone survey uses an overall sample size of 12 000 respondents, with 300 participants fortnightly to account for seasonal variation.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7491. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): Since 4 December 2014, how many Parks Victoria staff members participated in the Aboriginal staff forum relating to building capacity in land and heritage management.

**ANSWER:**

This information is available in the Parks Victoria Annual Report 2014-15, available online at [http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/672438/PRK1509-Annual-Report-2014-15-ONLINE.pdf](http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/672438/PRK1509-Annual-Report-2014-15-ONLINE.pdf).

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7497. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): What is the location, or GPS coordinates, of the 60 key rock climbing spots at Mount Arapiles.

**ANSWER:**

Parks Victoria does not install, manage or promote climbs or climbing areas directly and does not publicly advertise these sites on its website. Further, Parks Victoria does not maintain a list of the ‘60 key rock climbing spots’.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7498. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change):

- (1) as of 13 September 2016, what percentage of the Parks Victoria park sites have been validated to implement the Visitor Experience Framework; and
- (2) what month in 2015/16 did the full launch of the Visitor Experience Framework take place.

**ANSWER:**

Parks Victoria has been utilising the Visitor Experience Framework prior to 2015/16. All landscape-scale management plans released or in development as of 13 September 2016 have utilised the framework since its inception.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7499. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): In regard to the 213 347 volunteer hours recorded in approximately 200 Parks Victoria parks in 2014/15:

- (1) what is the breakdown of recorded hours per park site; and
- (2) if breakdown data totalling 213 347 volunteer hours is unable to be provided, what mechanism and calculation did Parks Victoria apply to ascertain the figure made public.

**ANSWER:**

This information is available in the Parks Victoria Annual Report 2014-15, available online at [http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/\\_/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/672438/PRK1509-Annual-Report-2014-15-ONLINE.pdf](http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/_/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/672438/PRK1509-Annual-Report-2014-15-ONLINE.pdf).

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7502. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): In regard to the management of overabundant native animals in the Parks Victoria estate: Between 4 December 2014 and 13 September 2016:

- (1) what management programs or control has taken place, and
- (2) what were the date periods and the outcome for each cull or control program.

**ANSWER:**

Between 4 December 2014 and 13 September 2016, management programs for overabundant koalas have occurred at Raymond Island, Cape Otway, French Island, Mount Eccles National Park, and Tyrendarra Nature Conservation Reserve. Over this period, 1777 koalas were assessed and of these 860 were given contraceptive implants and 444 were relocated.

For the same period, management programs for overabundant kangaroos have occurred at Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, Murray-Sunset National Park and Wyperfeld National Park. In total 8437 kangaroos were euthanased.

The welfare of native animals is a top priority. These programs are aimed at striking the right balance between ensuring healthy parks and forests and a sustainable population of healthy native animals.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7504. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): What was the financial contribution of Parks Victoria towards the North West Burials Conservation project in:

- (1) 2014/15; and
- (2) 2015/16.

**ANSWER:**

Details of the North West Burials Conservation project can be found in the Parks Victoria Annual Report.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7510. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): as of 13 September 2016, what is the percentage of the Parks Victoria workforce that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

**ANSWER:**

This information is available in the Parks Victoria Annual Report 2014-15, available online at [http://parkweb.vic.gov.au\\_\\_\\_/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/672438/PRK1509-Annual-Report-2014-15-ONLINE.pdf](http://parkweb.vic.gov.au___/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/672438/PRK1509-Annual-Report-2014-15-ONLINE.pdf).

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7516. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): Since 4 December 2014: What is the breakdown of all consultancies and contractors engaged by Parks Victoria, including:

- (1) what services were provided; and
- (2) how much was expenditure was committed to for each engagement.

**ANSWER:**

Details on consultancies engaged over this period are available in Parks Victoria's annual reports.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7522. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): Between 4 December 2015 and 13 September 2016, what is the list of Parks Victoria estate management plans that have either begun to be updated or begun to be developed for the first time.

**ANSWER:**

Details of estate management plans developed by Parks Victoria are available on its website: [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au).

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7524. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): As of 13 September 2016, what is the list of Parks Victoria managed buildings or infrastructure that have an expected life of less than four years (to 13 September 2020).

**ANSWER:**

There are over 30 000 park assets in the Parks Victoria estate including buildings, commercial facilities, roads, boardwalks, observation decks, historic relics, barbeques, toilets, water and wastewater treatment facilities, and park furniture.

All assets support a parks system that connects people and parks and protect the environment.

Parks Victoria takes a risk and service-based approach to building and infrastructure renewal and replacement.

**Energy, environment and climate change**

**7525. MRS PEULICH** — To ask the Special Minister of State (for the Minister for Energy, environment and climate change): With regards to the 2014/15 operating expenses detailed in the Parks Victoria Annual Report 2014/15: What was the government supplementary contribution provided to Parks Victoria since 4 December 2014, for employee expenses as a result of the Grand Final Parade Public Holiday.



**ANSWER:**

Parks Victoria has not received supplementary funding from government specifically for employee expenses due to the Grand Final Parade Public Holiday.

**Education**

**7641. MS WOOLDRIDGE** — To ask the Minister for Training and Skills (for the Minister for Education):  
In relation to the funding for the modernising of St Francis Xavier Primary School:

- (1) has the Government delivered the first milestone payment for the project;
  - (a) if so, when will the works be undertaken; and
  - (b) If not, when will this payment be delivered.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on its election commitment by investing \$120 million to build and upgrade Catholic and independent schools across the State, matching dollar for dollar their sectors' contribution.

As part of its election commitment, the Andrews Government committed \$850 000 to upgrade St Francis Xavier Primary School in Montmorency.

Under the Program, payments are provided to the sector bodies based on milestones achieved. With the signing of the project agreement, the Andrews Government has delivered the first milestone payment, with works scheduled to commence in the first half of 2017.



**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.  
Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Council.  
Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.  
Headings reflect the portfolio of the minister answering the question.*

**Wednesday, 9 November 2016**

**Families and children**

**7032. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children in relation to children living in residential care, in the 2015-16 financial year —

- (1) how many children aged 12 or younger spent time in residential care;
- (2) how many children were aged between 1-5 years old;
- (3) how many 12-year-olds or younger are living with children aged over 16;
- (4) how many children are indigenous;
- (5) how many indigenous children had a cultural support plan in place; and
- (6) as at 30 June 2016, how many 12 year olds are living in residential care.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Data relating to the number of children and young people in out of home care is available on the Department's website.

Data relating to children aged 12 or younger is published in the 2015-16 Department of Health & Human Services Annual Report. Children aged 12 years and under in residential care may be in specialised arrangements to accommodate siblings groups or to care for children with high and complex needs.

In March 2014, the Victorian Auditor-General found that "...there has been a fundamental failure to oversee and ensure the safety of children in residential care." At a time when serious issues relating to residential care facilities was made public, the former Coalition Government failed to take measures to keep children living in residential care safe.

In June 2016, the Victorian Auditor General tabled an audit following up on recommendations made from the 2014 audit, Residential Care Services for children.

This report noted again that "the 2014 audit found that the residential care system had been operating over capacity and was unable to meet the needs of children. As a result, the Department had to buy additional capacity or contingency places known as 'unfunded contingency placements' at a cost of \$24 million in 2012-13."

The 2016 report identified that the former Coalition Government focused on expanding the capacity of the residential care system while the Andrews Labor Government has acted to address systemic issues in the residential care model through developing new models of care to address the needs of children and young people with the most complex needs.

In March 2015, the Andrews Labor Government announced \$43 million for Targeted Care Packages which aim to move children out of residential care into home-based care. These packages are an innovative and flexible solution that will lead to better supported placements and better life outcomes for the children and young people in care. An additional \$19 million was also provided to support children and young people and their families or carers to prevent them from needing to enter residential care.

As a result of our investment in Targeted Care Packages, over 253 children and young people have transitioned from residential care to home-based care, including 51 Aboriginal children.

In August 2016, I also announced \$5.33 million to help develop cultural support plans for Aboriginal children and young people. This will fund 18 new cultural planning positions state-wide at 11 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, as well as a state-wide coordinator.

### Families and children

**7045. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children in relation to child protection and unallocated cases, how many children under child protection had not been allocated a case manager as at 30 June 2016.

#### ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Under the previous Coalition Government, the Victorian Ombudsman released a report in 2011 slamming the then Minister for Community Services' Department of Human Services for "the pursuit of numerical targets overshadowing the interests of children" by closing large numbers of child protection reports, often on a single day, to reduce the number of children on allocation waiting lists.

As the Member has been advised on a number of occasions, data relating to the average rate of unallocated cases by Division is available on the Department's website for the first time, something the previous Coalition Government failed to do. It is also available in the Department's Annual Report.

It is important that the case allocation rate is understood in the context of the increase reports to child protection, fuelled in part by the heightened community awareness of the harms inflicted on children as a result of child abuse and family violence.

This is why the Andrews Labor Government moved quickly on coming to office to increase the child protection workforce.

Since the launch of the Child Protection Recruitment Strategy in May 2015, over 330 child protection practitioners have been recruited across the State. We have achieved this by funding an effective recruitment strategy and addressing the high staff turnover rate that occurred under the previous Coalition Government.

The 2015-16 Victorian Budget allocated \$257 million to boost child protection and family services — the biggest boost in a decade — to enable more children, their families and their carers to get the support they need.

This is in stark contrast to the former Coalition Government who slashed more than 600 jobs from the then Department of Human Services.

All children whose cases are substantiated by child protection are overseen by a senior child protection worker. As such, there is always someone responsible for ensuring the needs of vulnerable children and young people in the system are met.

Our Government is focused on addressing the drivers of increasing child protection reports. The Government's Roadmap for Reform, with its focus on prevention and early intervention together with work underway in response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence, are expected to support more families more effectively earlier.

### Families and children

**7526. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: In relation to children in residential care facilities who are not attending school:

- (1) when does DHHS receive notification from the organisation who has management of residential care facilities and staff when:
  - (a) children in their care have absconded from school;

- (b) children in their care cannot be placed in a school due to issues including behavioural ones and are therefore not receiving any form of education;
  - (c) children in their care are expelled or suspended from school;
  - (d) children in their care are involved in a behavioural incident at school requiring communication between the school and the residential care facility provider and staff;
- (2) what action does DHHS take in relation to answers to questions 1a, b, c and d;
  - (3) how many notifications did DHHS receive from residential care service providers or schools in relation to children under their care not attending or absconding from school between:
    - (a) 1 January–30 June 2015;
    - (b) 1 July–31 December 2015;
    - (c) 1 January–30 June 2016;
  - (4) how many notifications did DHHS receive from residential care service providers or schools in relation to Aboriginal children under their care not attending or absconding from school between:
    - (a) 1 January–30 June 2015;
    - (b) 1 July–31 December 2015;
    - (c) 1 January–30 June 2016.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

I refer the Member to my response to Question on Notice 7061.

In addition, community service organisations that deliver residential care services are required to notify the Department of any incidents involving a child or young person in their care in line with critical incident reporting requirements.

They also have a requirement to support the educational needs of children in their care. This includes ensuring that children and young people not engaged in formal education are actively encouraged to participate in education programs that provide pathways into school, training or employment options.

Schools have an obligation to convene a meeting of the Student Support Group when suspension or expulsion is under consideration for a child or young person in care. The Individual Education Plan aims to support the child or young person's attendance, address any behavioural issues and develop strategies to enhance the child or young person's achievement and engagement.

In 2015, the Andrews Labor Government announced \$13.2 million over four years and \$4.8 million ongoing from 2019-20 to establish the LOOKOUT Education Support Centres.

The LOOKOUT Centres help children and young people in out-of-home care to overcome barriers to complete their education and achieve their potential.

In 2016, an \$8.6 Navigator pilot program was also announced to support disengaged teenagers to return to school.

**Families and children**

**7528. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: In relation to DHHS child protection case management in the North Division:

- (1) how many children under child protection in the North Division did not have a case manager allocated to them between:
  - (a) 1 January 2015–30 June 2015;
  - (b) 1 July–31 December 2015;

- (c) 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (2) in relation to the length of time a child under child protection in the North Division did not have a case manager allocated to them:
  - (a) what was the average length of time in 2015;
  - (b) what was the average length of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
  - (c) what was the longest period of time in 2015;
  - (d) what was the longest period of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (3) in relation to the number of children under child protection in the North Division who did not have a case manager allocated to them, how many children were there as at:
  - (a) 30 June 2015;
  - (b) 31 December 2015;
  - (c) 30 June 2016.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Under the previous Coalition Government, the Victorian Ombudsman released a report in 2011 slamming the then Minister for Community Services' Department of Human Services for "the pursuit of numerical targets overshadowing the interests of children" by closing large numbers of child protection reports, often on a single day, to reduce the number of children on allocation waiting lists.

As the Member has been advised on a number of occasions, data relating to the average rate of unallocated cases by Division is available on the Department's website for the first time, something the previous Coalition Government failed to do. It is also available in the Department's Annual Report.

It is important that the case allocation rate is understood in the context of the increase reports to child protection, fuelled in part by the heightened community awareness of the harms inflicted on children as a result of child abuse and family violence.

This is why the Andrews Labor Government moved quickly on coming to office to increase the child protection workforce.

Since the launch of the Child Protection Recruitment Strategy in May 2015, over 330 child protection practitioners have been recruited across the State. We have achieved this by funding an effective recruitment strategy and addressing the high staff turnover rate that occurred under the previous Coalition Government.

The 2015-16 Victorian Budget allocated \$257 million to boost child protection and family services — the biggest boost in a decade — to enable more children, their families and their carers to get the support they need.

This is in stark contrast to the former Coalition Government who slashed more than 600 jobs from the then Department of Human Services.

All children whose cases are substantiated by child protection are overseen by a senior child protection worker. As such, there is always someone responsible for ensuring the needs of vulnerable children and young people in the system are met.

Our Government is focused on addressing the drivers of increasing child protection reports. The Government's Roadmap for Reform, with its focus on prevention and early intervention together with work underway in response to recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence, are expected to support more families more effectively earlier.

**Families and children**

**7530. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: In relation to DHHS child protection case management in the South Division:

- (1) how many children under child protection in the South Division did not have a case manager allocated to them between:
  - (a) 1 January 2015–30 June 2015;
  - (b) 1 July–31 December 2015;
  - (c) 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (2) in relation to the length of time a child under child protection in the South Division did not have a case manager allocated to them:
  - (a) what was the average length of time in 2015;
  - (b) what was the average length of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
  - (c) what was the longest period of time in 2015;
  - (d) what was the longest period of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (3) in relation to the number of children under child protection in the South Division who did not have a case manager allocated to them, how many children were there as at:
  - (a) 30 June 2015;
  - (b) 31 December 2015;
  - (c) 30 June 2016.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Under the previous Coalition Government, the Victorian Ombudsman released a report in 2011 slamming the then Minister for Community Services' Department of Human Services for "the pursuit of numerical targets overshadowing the interests of children" by closing large numbers of child protection reports, often on a single day, to reduce the number of children on allocation waiting lists.

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### Families and children

**7532. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: In relation to DHHS child protection case management in the East Division:

- (1) how many children under child protection in the East Division did not have a case manager allocated to them between:
  - (a) 1 January 2015–30 June 2015;
  - (b) 1 July–31 December 2015;
  - (c) 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (2) in relation to the length of time a child under child protection in the East Division did not have a case manager allocated to them:
  - (a) what was the average length of time in 2015;
  - (b) what was the average length of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
  - (c) what was the longest period of time in 2015;
  - (d) what was the longest period of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (3) in relation to the number of children under child protection in the East Division who did not have a case manager allocated to them, how many children were there as at:
  - (a) 30 June 2015;
  - (b) 31 December 2015;
  - (c) 30 June 2016.

### ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Under the previous Coalition Government, the Victorian Ombudsman released a report in 2011 slamming the then Minister for Community Services' Department of Human Services for "the pursuit of numerical targets overshadowing the interests of children" by closing large numbers of child protection reports, often on a single day, to reduce the number of children on allocation waiting lists.

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### Families and children

**7534. MS CROZIER** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: In relation to DHHS child protection case management in the West Division:

- (1) how many children under child protection in the West Division did not have a case manager allocated to them between:
  - (a) 1 January 2015–30 June 2015;
  - (b) 1 July–31 December 2015;
  - (c) 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (2) in relation to the length of time a child under child protection in the West Division did not have a case manager allocated to them:
  - (a) what was the average length of time in 2015;
  - (b) what was the average length of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
  - (c) what was the longest period of time in 2015;
  - (d) what was the longest period of time between 1 January–30 June 2016;
- (3) in relation to the number of children under child protection in the West Division who did not have a case manager allocated to them, how many children were there as at:
  - (a) 30 June 2015;
  - (b) 31 December 2015;
  - (c) 30 June 2016.

### ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Under the previous Coalition Government, the Victorian Ombudsman released a report in 2011 slamming the then Minister for Community Services' Department of Human Services for "the pursuit of numerical targets overshadowing the interests of children" by closing large numbers of child protection reports, often on a single day, to reduce the number of children on allocation waiting lists.

As the Member has been advised on a number of occasions, data relating to the average rate of unallocated cases by Division is available on the Department's website for the first time, something the previous Coalition Government failed to do. It is also available in the Department's Annual Report.

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### Families and children

**7612.** **MS SPRINGLE** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: In relation to sexual assault incidents in out-of-home care:

- (1) will all future Critical Incidents of a sexual nature which occur in out-of-home care be classified automatically as Category One incidents; and
- (2) does this include incidents perpetrated by children and young people in out of home care.

#### ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Health & Human Services is developing a new client incident management system. The new system will focus on the most serious incidents based on the impact on the client and will strengthen processes, systems and workforce capability to prevent, and effectively manage client incidents.

Under the new system, all future incidents of sexual abuse must be reported as a major impact client incident, including incidents that occur in out-of-home-care.

### Families and children

**7614.** **MS SPRINGLE** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: Are all allegations of child-to-child abuse in all forms of out-of-home-care subject to Quality of Care investigations.

#### ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Health and Human Services encourages reporting of concerns to ensure the safety and best interests of the child are paramount at all times, and that children and young people in out of home care reside in safe, stable and high-quality placements.

Quality of care concerns can range from minor quality issues through to possible physical or sexual abuse. All reports are treated seriously at the outset of the process. The quality of care process guides the Department of Health and Human Services' response to allegations about the quality of care a child receives in out-of-home care placements by an adult carer.

Investigations often taken some time to complete as the Quality of Care investigation may run parallel to a police investigation. All cases under investigation are carefully monitored to ensure the safety of children.

Data relating to quality of care concerns is published in the Department's Annual Report.

Allegations of abuse by one child to another are reported to the department through critical incident reporting. Incident reporting data is a snapshot in time of allegations made by clients of the Department of Health and Human Services. They are recorded and remain as incidents regardless of whether further information becomes available to substantiate or disprove an event. Incident reports include disclosures of historic abuse and assault that were alleged to have occurred before a client entered state care.

Category One incidents are the most serious incidents and include incidents such as death of clients; allegations of physical or sexual assault; and serious client behavioural issues that impact on client or staff safety. Where there is an allegation, it is met with a strong response that includes medical attention (should this be required), a report to police if it involves an allegation of physical or sexual abuse or a client is a victim of a crime, and counselling and support being offered to all parties.

Incident reporting enables service providers to take prompt corrective-action to protect the wellbeing and safety of clients where necessary and better understand the underlying causes of incidents to prevent their recurrence.

### **Families and children**

**7624. MS SPRINGLE** — To ask the Minister for Families and Children: What specific actions has the Government taken to progress a National Register of Carers through the COAG process.

**ANSWER:**

I am informed that:

Since the former Federal Abbott Government streamlined the COAG council system in 2013, there has been no formal structure in place to progress issues of national importance in the Families & Children portfolio.

This is why earlier this year, I convened a roundtable of my counterpart Ministers and have urged the Federal Minister to convene regular meetings. In addition, Children and Families Secretaries from all jurisdictions meet on an ad hoc basis.

I understand that the Department of Family and Community Services in New South Wales is leading the development of a National Register of Carers on behalf of all jurisdictions. In April 2016, a business case for the proposed development was endorsed in principle at the Children and Families Secretaries meeting.

Under this proposal, a National Carer Register would give authorised users access to information about whether an individual has a carer history in another jurisdiction. This would require nationally consistent consent and legislative amendments.