

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

11, 12 and 13 October 2016

(Extract from book 14)

Internet: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

HANSARD¹⁵⁰



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

(from 20 June 2016)

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, and Minister for Emergency Services (from 10 June 2016) [Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation 10 June to 20 June 2016]	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

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

Legislative Council select committees

Port of Melbourne Select Committee — Mr Barber, 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 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

President:

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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 Greens:

Mr G. BARBER

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	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	O'Sullivan, Luke Bartholomew ⁴	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 ³	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	VILJ
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
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaclyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
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

² Appointed 15 April 2015

³ Resigned 27 May 2016

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁴ 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; VILJ — 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, 11 October 2016

Level crossings

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 24 May 2016

REPLY:

WorkSafe has made enquiries regarding lead contamination and subsequent risk to workers and members of the public, arising from level crossing removal works in the Caulfield to Dandenong rail corridor.

On the basis of its enquiries to date, WorkSafe is satisfied that plans and risk mitigation activities are currently in place to manage the minor lead levels detected to date at the worksite, in line with Victorian occupational health and safety legislation. WorkSafe is closely monitoring the matter to ensure appropriate health and safety standards are being maintained.

WorkSafe has been advised by the Level Crossing Removal Authority's Safety Manager that all construction work associated with the project is being carried out in accordance with the project requirements and environmental approvals, which stipulate measures to control potential exposures to workers and the migration of potentially contaminated soil via the generation of dust.

WorkSafe has advised that the following activities have been undertaken in relation to potential lead contamination:

- Soil sampling across the corridor has been conducted by the Level Crossing Removal Authority in accordance with EPA Industrial Waste Resource Guidelines.
- To date, the maximum lead concentration reported at the site is below the Australian Health Investigation Level which has been set at a level that protects the health of adults in a commercial or industrial land use setting.
- Lead leachability concentrations from current project investigations are below the laboratory limit of detection which indicates the lead in the soil is strongly bound or contained and is not able to be readily released to the environment.
- Where material is removed from the work site, it has been accompanied by documentation which has been provided to the relevant waste transporter and the disposal site (Melbourne Regional Landfill) including laboratory analytical certificates.

Mandalay community centre

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Ms Symes
Raised on: 24 May 2016

REPLY:

Thank you for your question regarding funding for the proposed community centre at Mandalay. I have received a request from the Minister for Families and Children to provide funds from the Growth Areas Infrastructure Contributions (GAIC) Building New Communities Fund for the Mandalay Community Centre as part of her planning for children's services across Melbourne's growth corridors.

My department has been working with the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) and the Department of Treasury and Finance to develop a new funding allocation process and assessment criteria to ensure efficient and strategic expenditure from the two GAIC funds.

The Mandalay Community Centre is a high priority for growth area infrastructure funding, and would be a significant asset to the local community.

I have submitted a revised project list and assessment process to the Hon Tim Pallas MP, Treasurer, for his approval where required by section 201VB of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Once Treasurer Pallas has provided the necessary approval, I will write to the respective Ministers to advise them of the decision and the next steps in the process.

With a clear framework now in place to shortlist and evaluate projects, the VPA and my department will soon commence engagement with delivery agencies across government to scope the next round of projects for 2017 to ensure growth areas receive key infrastructure in a timely manner.

Wangaratta Rural City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government

Raised by: Ms Symes

Raised on: 26 May 2016

REPLY:

Thank you for the adjournment debate matter you raised on 26 May 2016 regarding the freeze in federal government grants to local government, specifically relating to the freeze in financial assistance grants for Wangaratta Rural City Council.

In May 2014, the Commonwealth Government announced that it would be freezing the application of indexation to the national pool of financial assistance grants to local government for three years. The Victoria Grants Commission, which allocates these grants to Victorian councils, has estimated that this decision will cost Victorian councils \$200 million in funding over four years, compared to what they would have normally received if indexation was not paused. The loss to Wangaratta Rural City Council alone is estimated to be \$2.2 million over the four years to 2017-18.

In responding to my request for the reintroduction of indexation to financial assistance grants, the new Federal Minister for Local Government and Territories, the Hon Senator Fiona Nash MP, confirmed that the Commonwealth Government will reinstate indexation to financial assistance grants in 2017-18.

These grants are a vital source of funding for councils, particularly for rural councils such as Wangaratta Rural City Council. This is well recognised by the Victoria Grants Commission in allocating the available funds to councils. Under the current formula, rural councils, which comprise 13% of Victoria's population, receive 44.3% of the financial assistance grants pool.

Thank you for highlighting this important issue and I look forward to your support in ensuring that the Federal Minister's commitment to reinstate indexation of this essential funding source to Victorian councils is maintained.

Glenaladale mineral sands mine

Raised with: Minister for Resources

Raised by: Mr Bourman

Raised on: 8 June 2016

REPLY:

I understand there are concerns within the East Gippsland community regarding the proposed mineral sands mine near Glenadale.

Kalbar Resources holds an exploration licence and a retention licence near Glenaladale.

Representatives from the Earth Resources Regulation branch of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources met with community members on 12 May 2016 and 2 June 2016 to discuss their concerns.

On 9 August 2016, Kalbar Resources was granted Retention Licence RL2026, which included a condition that any proposed project be referred to the Minister for Planning to determine if an Environment Effects Statement is required. An Environment Effects Statement would investigate potential effects on local industry, including food production, and any potential effects concerning dust and groundwater.

Earth Resources Regulation will continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure community engagement requirements are met and to assist with effective communication between all parties.

Local government reform

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 9 June 2016

REPLY:

The cases recently identified by the Ombudsman are deeply troubling and this Government takes any suggestion of wrongdoing or corruption within local government very seriously.

The Local Government Act provides clear principles in relation to staff conduct, requiring employees to act impartially and with integrity, to avoid conflicts of interest, accept accountability for results and provide responsive service.

It is the responsibility of all Chief Executive Officers to develop and implement a code of conduct for council staff taking account of these principles. It is of particular concern if such codes are not being adhered to because of entrenched cultures of poor behaviour.

I expect council Chief Executive Officers to take action to ensure their codes are followed by all employees and that proper checks and balances are in place to remove the potential for corrupt or fraudulent behaviour.

Further enshrining probity and integrity standards of councillors and staff is being actively considered as part of the Government's comprehensive review of the Local Government Act 1989, the first overhaul of the legislation governing councils in Victoria in 26 years.

The current review of the Local Government Act has reached an important stage with the release in early June of a directions paper outlining options for potential reform for the local government sector. I strongly encourage councils, councillors, Members of Parliament and members of the community with an interest in the sector to make a submission by 16 September 2016.

Gender equality

Raised with: Minister for Women
Raised by: Ms Tierney
Raised on: 22 June 2016

REPLY:

I was delighted to join the Member for Western Victoria in Warrnambool on 5 August 2016 for a public consultation as part of the Gender Equality Roadshow. I would particularly like to acknowledge the Member's advocacy on empowering women and girls in her community, and working to end the harm of family violence. The Member's commitment to engage her community on these issues was evident, as this consultation had the highest number of participants throughout the regional segment of the roadshow.

It was incredibly valuable to meet with representatives from the Women in Community Life Advisory Committee and the Women in Local Democracy, as well as representatives from specialist services, Victoria Police and local council. This meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the challenges and enablers in relation to gender equality. A key consideration of this meeting was innovative initiatives to improve opportunities for women's leadership.

I would also like to thank the Member for arranging a visit to Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West, to learn about the work they are currently leading to enhance the lives of women in Western Victoria.

Social enterprise sector

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

I would first like to thank the Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure for his great work in the area of social enterprises.

As part of its 'Training for the Future' initiative, the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) is driving social procurement and the use of social benefit suppliers, including social enterprises and Indigenous suppliers, for all of its projects. In particular, LXRA contracts now require projects to develop and implement Social Procurement Plans. This initiative is led by LXRA with input from Melbourne Metro Rail Authority (MMRA), Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM), Public Transport Victoria (PTV) and industry.

As you mentioned, two examples of this initiative in action come from the Bayswater Level Crossing Removal Project, that is being delivered by an alliance consisting of Laing O'Rourke, Fulton Hogan and AECOM, together with the LXRA, PTV, VicRoads and MTM. The Bayswater Alliance is currently engaged with several social enterprises, including:

- Nadrasca Industry, a not-for-profit disability enterprise that provides a range of services and employment for over 350 people with a disability, across 24 locations in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. Nadrasca Industry has been engaged for the majority of printing and distribution of community engagement materials on the project, including the bi-monthly newsletter, which is sent to over 12 000 residents.
- Yarra View Nursery, a social enterprise in Melbourne's east that employs in excess of 100 staff with a high proportion having a disability. Yarra View Nursery has been engaged to supply the plants for the Bayswater Level Crossing Removal Project.

I look forward to visiting social enterprises involved with the Level Crossing Removal Project in the near future.

Tourism and major events strategy

Raised with: Minister for Tourism and Major Events

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

My Parliamentary Colleague, the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, the Hon John Eren MP released the Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy in Bendigo on 26 July 2016.

The Strategy follows a comprehensive review in 2015 which found a number of gaps in the previous approach of the former Coalition Government to the visitor economy. These gaps included a lack of a shared vision and coordinated effort across government, a need to better leverage non-leisure tourists, a better approach to public and private investment, and a stronger focus on achieving regional Victoria's potential.

I am pleased to note that the Andrews Labor Government has made substantial reforms to address these gaps and support the future growth of this important sector. Importantly, the Strategy aims to have the visitor economy generate 320 700 jobs in Victoria by 2024-25.

Last year, the Andrews Labor Government announced the establishment of a new entity to bring together marketing, major events and business events attraction. The new entity, Visit Victoria, commenced operations on 1 July 2016. As part of the 2016-17 State Budget, the Government has provided a substantial new investment in Visit Victoria's marketing ability, with an additional \$38 million over two years.

In addition, a Visitor Economy Ministerial Advisory Committee has been appointed to provide direction for implementation of the strategy.

The 2015-16 State Budget provided \$205 million for a significant extension of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, which will add nearly 20 000 square metres of flexible, multi-purpose event space including new exhibition halls, additional meeting and banquet rooms. Industry has been seeking this expansion for many years and it is pleasing to see it is finally underway.

The Andrews Labor Government has substantially bolstered Victoria's position as an events destination, providing an additional \$80 million for the Major Events Fund over four years as part of the 2015-16 State Budget, and \$20 million for a Regional Events Fund and \$9 million for business events as part of the 2016-17 State Budget. The government has also successfully secured the Australian Formula One Grand Prix to 2023, the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix to 2026 and the AM Superbike World Championship to 2027.

Substantial investments are also being made in regional Victoria. The 2016-17 State Budget provides \$103 million for a new Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund, which includes \$48.2 million for the redevelopment of the Phillip Island Nature Park.

This is in addition to securing Jetstar services to Avalon Airport for 10 years, increased funding for Parks Victoria, funding for Budj Bim to strengthen its bid for UNESCO listing, cultural investment in Bendigo and Geelong arts precincts, and sporting infrastructure improvements in Geelong and Ballarat.

Taken together, these reforms and initiatives represent the most significant investment in the visitor economy in Victoria for many years.

Warrenheip Street, Buninyong, pedestrian crossing

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

Geoff Howard MP, member for Buninyong, and VicRoads are aware of the concerns being raised by the Buninyong and District Community Association with respect to the proposed pedestrian crossing and have met regularly to discuss this and other issues within Buninyong.

VicRoads has discussed this proposal with many stakeholders including City of Ballarat, Vision Australia and the Buninyong and District Community Association when determining an appropriate crossing facility and has recently, along with Geoff Howard MP, undertaken wider consultation within the township to ensure the most appropriate outcome for the community is realised.

Battle of Long Tan commemoration

Raised with: Minister for Veterans
Raised by: Mr Elasmar
Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

I am delighted to advise that thousands of Victorians gathered at the Shrine of Remembrance for Vietnam Veterans Day on 18 August to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. The Victorian Government assisted over 3000 Victorian primary and secondary students to attend the event through a travel subsidy to schools. They joined with others to support around 2000 veterans of the Vietnam War, as they marched from the Police Memorial to the Shrine of Remembrance. This was the single largest commemoration in Victoria that acknowledged the milestone anniversary and was successfully delivered by the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Victorian Branch (VVAA — Vic).

The Andrews Labor Government committed \$1 million over two years to support the VVAA-Vic in delivering a range of commemorative and educational activities to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and to recognise Victoria's Vietnam veterans. Initiatives include:

- \$250 000 to help fund upgrades to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island;
- 98 gravesite vigils held in February to honour those killed in action;
- a Vietnam War History Competition for 10 students and 2 teachers to travel to Vietnam in September 2016;
- a Civic Reception held in June 2016 to honour Victoria's Vietnam veterans;
- a Church Service of Thanksgiving in October 2016; and
- a National Vietnam Veterans Museum Open Day in November 2016.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to honouring the service and sacrifice of those who served during the Vietnam War and ensuring these stories are safeguarded and shared with future generations.

If you're interested in attending one of these roadshows in your region, please do not hesitate to contact the Adviser to the Minister for Veterans, Anthony.cianflone@minstaff.vic.gov.au

Western Victoria Region roads

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

Information relating to the budget allocation for Network Maintenance is available in the 2016–2017 Victorian Budget.

VicRoads also informs me that three projects to repair and resurface several kilometres of the road between Hamilton and Portland are programmed for delivery during 2016–17.

The funding of road projects are determined based on the greatest need.

The State Government is in negotiation with the Federal Government to ensure that regional Victoria receives the roads funding it deserves.

Fish Creek school crossing

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

Dear Ms Bath

Thank you for your adjournment debate matter in relation to the Fish Creek school crossing.

The Transport Accident Commission (TAC) provides funding to Local Government Areas (LGAs) for small-scale infrastructure treatments to address pedestrian and cyclist safety under the Local Government Grants (LGG) program. Funding of up to \$100 000 can be awarded for infrastructure projects on a 1:1 basis with the LGAs.

Full details of this program can be found at the following website:

<http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/about-the-tac/grants-and-partnerships/local-government-grants/lgg-application>

The TAC has confirmed it received an application from the South Gippsland Shire Council on 26 August 2016. The application was for \$60 000 matched funding for the construction of a supervised school crossing and pathways linking Fish Creek and District Primary School and the mobile library.

The TAC informs me that the assessment process will take approximately a month, at which point South Gippsland Shire Council will be notified of the TAC's assessment of its application.

I wish the council all the best in its application to the TAC.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Wyndham City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 16 August 2016

REPLY:

This October's council general elections are an important occasion for local democracy in Victoria, with candidates to contest 637 positions across 78 councils. The elections will see a return to elected representation at Brimbank City and Wangaratta Rural City Councils.

I expect all those directly involved in campaigning in the lead up to election day, including candidates and their helpers, to treat one another with due respect and conduct themselves within the spirit and letter of the law.

If however anyone has evidence of impropriety at the elections they should contact the Victorian Electoral Commission in the first instance. Allegations of a breach of the electoral provisions of the Local Government Act 1989 will be referred to the Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate.

Commemorative services

Raised with: Minister for Veterans
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

Minister for Veterans, John Eren MP, wrote to the Hon. Gavin Jennings MP, Special Minister of State and the Hon. Jacinta Allan MP, Leader of the House, Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects, requesting they consider the suspension of Parliament until 2pm on 18 August 2016, to allow all Members of Parliament the opportunity to attend Vietnam Veterans Day for the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan Commemorations.

A decision to suspend Parliament must be voted on by all Members. I thank you and all parliamentarians for their support in suspending parliament for this important occasion.

I am delighted to advise that thousands of Victorians gathered at the Shrine of Remembrance for Vietnam Veterans Day on 18 August to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. The Victorian Government assisted over 3000 Victorian primary and secondary students to attend the event through a travel subsidy to schools. They joined with others to support around 2000 veterans of the Vietnam War, as they marched from the Police Memorial to the Shrine of Remembrance. This was the single largest commemoration in Victoria that acknowledged the milestone anniversary and was successfully delivered by the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, Victorian Branch (VVAA — Vic).

The Andrews Labor Government committed \$1 million over two years to support the VVAA-Vic in delivering a range of commemorative and educational activities to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and to recognise Victoria's Vietnam veterans. Initiatives include:

- \$250 000 to help fund upgrades to the National Vietnam Veterans Museum on Phillip Island;
- 98 gravesite vigils held in February to honour those killed in action;
- a Vietnam War History Competition for 10 students and 2 teachers to travel to Vietnam in September 2016;
- a Civic Reception held in June 2016 to honour Victoria's Vietnam veterans;
- a Church Service of Thanksgiving in October 2016; and
- a National Vietnam Veterans Museum Open Day in November 2016.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to honouring the service and sacrifice of those who served during the Vietnam War and ensuring these stories are safeguarded and shared with future generations.

African Family Services

Raised with: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

The Royal Commission into Family Violence considered the complexities, different manifestations, and specific forms of family violence experienced by culturally diverse communities. As a result, the Royal Commission made a variety of recommendations to ensure that initiatives and services are both more accessible for, and responsive to, the particular needs of culturally diverse communities, and that new initiatives are tailored to the unique experiences and complexities faced by these communities.

In preparing the final report, the Royal Commission held 25 public hearing days, 44 consultation sessions with around 850 participants, and received nearly 1000 submissions. Throughout this process, they engaged widely with

people from diverse communities, which include holding a diversity-focused hearing day. The Royal Commission found that people from CALD backgrounds and those living in rural, regional, or remote areas, often face particular barriers in seeking and obtaining help. Thus, it is imperative that new initiatives and policies are tailored to reflect these particular barriers. Furthermore, the effects of family violence experienced by those from CALD communities, including recent migrants, are compounded by a range of factors associated with the experience of migration and resettlement. The impact of family violence on CALD victims who do not have permanent residency is particularly dire, given they may have limited or no access to support services and may be at greater risk of coercion and control by sponsoring spouses and other family members.

In responding to the Royal Commission, the Victorian Government held a series of face-to-face consultations across the state from July to September 2016. This was to allow Victorians in all their diversity to have input in the Victorian Government's first ever Gender Equality Strategy and acknowledge the need to tailor solutions for different cohorts. A total of 19 consultations were held across the State, with regional and metropolitan communities, and engaging with specific groups including Aboriginal Victorians, young Victorians, LGBTIQ communities, and Victorians with disabilities.

I was delighted that African Family Services attended the consultation specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse Victorians was held on 25 August 2016. Feedback from these consultations will now be consolidated and used to draft the Victorian Government's first ever Gender Equality Strategy. This document is due to be released in late 2016.

Following the consultation, my office met with African Family Services on 13 September 2016 to discuss their work to prevent family. As the whole-of-government family violence reforms are being led by the Special Minister of State, I would encourage African Family Services to contact his office to arrange an opportunity to further discuss the work of their organisation.

Education complaints commissioner

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Thank you for your question about the Government's commitment under the Special Needs Plan for Victorian Schools to investigate the establishment of a Schools Commissioner who could receive complaints from parents or students. Thank you also for raising the important issue of inclusive education for students with autism.

The Andrews Labor Government outlined its vision for inclusive school education in the Education State, with the publication of the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) Review and the Government's Response, Inclusive education for all students with disabilities and additional needs. The PSD Review was the most comprehensive review of the PSD ever undertaken. The PO Review was informed by research, expert input, stakeholder engagement, and a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of the program.

To support immediate work on the implementation of the recommendations, the Government announced a \$22 million funding boost in the 2016–17 State Budget. This includes an extra \$17 million funding to better support the needs of students with autism, dyslexia and learning disabilities, \$3 million to support students who are transitioning to Year 7 who are no longer eligible for the PSD, and \$2 million for a dyslexia and learning difficulties strategy to enable a more consistent and best practice approach to teaching students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia in government schools.

I have recently announced the establishment of the Independent Panel for School Dispute Resolution (the Independent Panel), the ninth and final initiative under the Special Needs Plan for Victorian Schools.

The Independent Panel model has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders.

The Independent Panel will bring an alternative dispute resolution approach to complex complaints about Victorian Government schools. The Independent Panel will add capacity, expertise and independence to allow people to be heard through a simple, fair and timely process focused on resolution.

The Panel will be overseen by an independent Chair appointed by the Minister for Education, and who will therefore be separate from the Department of Education and Training.

Firearms

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to a consistent national approach to firearms regulation in accordance with resolutions agreed to by the Commonwealth, the States and Territories in the 1996 National Firearms Agreement (NFA). The legislative requirements underpinning firearm regulation in Victoria strike an appropriate balance, ensuring the safety and protection of all Victorians, against the interests of licensed firearm holders, such recreational hunters, primary producers and sporting shooters.

The Government is working with Victoria Police to make sure that firearms are kept out of the hands of criminals and unlicensed persons. This has included the introduction of new laws, which commenced in December 2015, giving Victoria Police new powers to tackle illegal guns in the community, with additional penalties for firearm theft and the illegal possession, trafficking and manufacturing of firearms.

In accordance with the NFA, the Firearms Act 1996 provides that lawful sales of firearms can only be conducted through licensed firearms dealers. It is important to recognise that the rationale for restricting and controlling the sale of firearms in this way is to enable Victoria Police, as the regulator of firearms in Victoria, to effectively and appropriately monitor all firearms sales through licensed dealerships in Victoria. This restriction ensures that public safety is maintained in the community.

I note the comments regarding the prohibitions on advertising the sale of legal firearms under section 101 of the Firearms Act. Victoria Police has publicly stated in their Licensed Firearms Dealer Reference Guide, that licensed firearm dealers can advertise on the internet.

The prohibitions on advertising under section 101 restrict licensed firearm holders from placing an advertisement, in print or online, offering a firearm for sale. The only exception to this under the Firearms Act is that licensed firearm holders can advertise the sale of their registered firearms, in print or online, if the advertisement is placed in an online publication by an approved club or in a commercially published firearms or shooting sports magazine, either in print or online. The transaction must always be facilitated by a licensed dealer.

One such example is the www.ssaagunsales.com website, operated by the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia. Advertisements that are published on this specific website are placed by either licensed firearm dealers or by licensed firearm holders, who have nominated a transferring licensed firearms dealer to facilitate the sale of their firearm.

The Government, however, will explore common sense improvements to the Firearms Act. Any amendments to the Firearms Act will be considered and developed in consultation with industry stakeholders, in determining whether clarification of the relevant provision, regarding the use of online channels to advertise firearms for sale, is required.

Local learning and employment networks

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills
Raised by: Ms Tierney
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

I thank Ms Tierney for her question.

The Education State is about giving every Victorian the opportunity to succeed in life, regardless of background, place or circumstance. Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) play a crucial role in achieving this vision, by helping young people who are dropping out of education to gain knowledge and skills. That is why the Victorian Government has committed \$32 million over four years (2016-2019) to LLENs to support young people who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education and training.

LLENs are made up of a range of groups and organisations including education and training providers, business and industry, community agencies, and parent and family organisations. The 31 LLENs broker sustainable partnerships that support schools and the broader community to identify young people that are at risk of disengaging from education prior to completing Year 12 or a vocational equivalent and provide support, educational options and pathways to enable those young people to re-engage and remain in education.

The Victorian Government fully recognises the enormous value provided by the many individuals and organisations that are part of LLENs across Victoria, which is why we have delivered on our commitment to invest significant funding in the future of LLENs.

The Victorian Government will also continue to support and celebrate the work of LLENs across Victoria, including highlighting best practice activities and initiatives as the benefits of the Government's renewed investment flows through to Victorian communities.

I would also like to recognise the support and advocacy that you have for many LLENs in the Western Victoria Region; and I would thank you for this. This Government and I will continue to assist Local Learning and Employment Networks that are absolutely vital for communities in this state.

As I am sure you have further questions; please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Doctors in Secondary Schools

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Melhem
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Thank you Mr Melhem for your question on the Doctors in Secondary Schools program.

As you may be aware, on 1 September 2016 the Premier and I visited Mount Alexander College in Flemington, one of the Victorian secondary schools selected to participate in the program, to announce the full list of 100 participating schools. I am pleased to advise that seven schools in the Western Metropolitan Region — Bayside P-12 College, Braybrook College, Footscray City College, Laverton P-12 College, Manor Lakes P-12 College, The Grange P-12 College, and our host school Mount Alexander College — have been selected to participate in the program. The Department of Education and Training will be contacting all participating schools with information on the program shortly.

Through the program, more than 70 000 Victorian students will have access to a doctor at their school. Half of the schools participating in the program are located in regional Victoria, where families often face barriers to accessing

healthcare. A further 25 schools taking part in the program are located in Melbourne's growth areas and urban fringe to help meet demand for services created by Victoria's unprecedented population growth.

The full list of schools selected to participate in the program is available at:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/doctors-secondary-schools.aspx>.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Whitfield police station

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

The Whitfield community continues to receive a 24 hour police response. The Chief Commissioner has advised that while the Whitfield police officer is on extended leave the area will continue to be policed in a flexible manner by police from the Moyhu, Glenrowan and Wangaratta Police stations. This flexible approach provides greater operational coverage. The Chief Commissioner recognises the benefits to the community when police are out in the divisional van patrolling the streets and responding to crime.

Victoria Police continues to work with the local community about public safety issues, for example, the Local Area Commander has been addressing the concerns of local community groups about illegal deer hunters. Police from the Wangaratta Police Station cover these matters in conjunction with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The safety and security of the Victorian community is the highest priority of the Andrews Labor Government. The Government continues to work closely with the Chief Commissioner about what resources and powers Victoria Police need to address crime, particularly emerging crime trends.

We need to see more police out on the front line. This is why the Andrews Labor Government announced a \$596 million Public Safety Package as part of the 2016-17 State Budget, delivering on our promise to give police the necessary resources to increase frontline and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence.

This package includes an additional 406 police officers. The Government is working closely with Victoria Police to recruit and train these additional officers. The recruitment and deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers also means we can free up more police to work in their communities and keep Victorians safe.

The Chief Commissioner assures me that the allocation of police resources across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective command officers to ensure the best possible policing service is delivered to the Victorian community.

It is very important that if anyone requires urgent police assistance that they contact Victoria Police on the emergency '000' number, as calls are recorded and responded to by the closest available police personnel.

North Road, Ormond, level crossing

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 17 August 2016

REPLY:

The former Liberal Government did not remove a single level crossing on the Frankston line. In contrast, the Andrews Labor Government is removing eleven, with three already gone.

The level crossing removal project at North McKinnon and Centre roads has now delivered three level crossing removals and opened three new stations, six months ahead of schedule. Local traders will benefit from improved traffic flow and integrated shopping strips as a result of the level crossing removals, as well as increased patronage on the Frankston line due to improved station facilities and transport services.

The project has been working closely with local traders to assist them throughout the works, including pedestrian access at the level crossings at all times and using electronic signs to advertise the local businesses, distributing around 600 000 flyers to local residents, working with trader representatives on an integrated marketing plan which includes the popular 'Open for Business' campaign and dedicated trader advertising in the press and on radio.

The Open for Business campaign was designed to raise awareness in the community that local businesses continued to trade throughout the project works. The campaign included distribution of over 85 000 brochures, print and radio advertising, street signage, a dedicated trader website, stickers for shop windows, a social media campaign and Open for Business advocates located at train replacement bus stops specifically to promote local trader specials.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority and the project alliance have been conducting an ongoing assessment of the success of the campaign. This has included 448 phone and face to face interviews conducted in March 2016, which found that 80 per cent of community and stakeholder participants reported awareness of the campaign. The Open for Business advocates conducted 83 face to face surveys at the train replacement bus stops and shopping strips over the major works period (from 24 June to 1 August 2016), and found that participants reported they continued to shop locally during the major works.

Further evaluation of the Open for Business campaign will now be conducted. This will include a follow up survey focused on community and stakeholder perceptions, similar to the survey conducted in March, as well as a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the Open for Business campaign, including trader specific feedback.

It is worth noting that during the major works period, many local businesses extended their hours of operation to cater for the 1000 strong workforce and crowds of onlookers that came down to the three shopping strips to view the works and shop locally.

The generators referred to in the question by Ms Crozier were provided by the project as a good will gesture to the three businesses affected by the power outage near Ormond Station on 8 June 2016, at no cost, even though the outage was due to United Energy works.

Aurora estate, Epping

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 18 August 2016

REPLY:

Thank you for your query regarding the public transport infrastructure in the Aurora Estate, Epping. The matters you have raised are primarily the responsibility of the Minister for Transport, however, I am able to provide the following advice.

I have been advised by Public Transport Victoria (PTV) that its Network Development Plan for metropolitan rail services is based on a detailed examination of how Melbourne's train system needs to evolve to meet the needs of city and train passengers in the short, medium and long term. It outlines a long term plan for a rail connection to Epping North and the Aurora area. Prior to delivery of this rail connection, other public transport initiatives have been implemented in response to growing demand for travel in this region. A new bus network was introduced on 24 January 2016 for the suburbs of Epping and Wollert. It is my understanding that these new bus routes have direct connections with train services at Epping Station with 20 minute weekday peak services and 40 minute services at other times.

The new bus network provides better local coverage and more direct and frequent services to key destinations from the Aurora Estate, including Epping Plaza Shopping Centre and North Hospital. There are no further plans that I am aware of at this stage for the introduction of additional bus services.

Further, PTV has advised that residents in Melbourne's north/north-east will also benefit from funding in the 2016-17 State Budget for extension of the South Morang rail line to Mernda and the duplication of a section of the Hurstbridge Line to enable faster, more frequent and more reliable services.

Further queries on this matter should be directed to the Minister for Transport.

Doctors in Secondary Schools

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Ms Symes

Raised on: 18 August 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Thank you Ms Symes for your question on the Doctors in Secondary Schools program.

As you may be aware, on 1 September 2016 the Premier and I visited Mount Alexander College in Flemington, one of the Victorian secondary schools selected to participate in the program, to announce the full list of 100 participating schools. I am pleased to advise that Benalla P-12 College was selected to participate in the program. The Department of Education and Training will be contacting all participating schools with information on the program shortly.

Through the program, more than 70 000 Victorian students will have access to a doctor at their school. Half of the schools participating in the program are located in regional Victoria, where families often face barriers to accessing healthcare. A further 25 schools taking part in the program are located in Melbourne's growth areas and urban fringe to help meet demand for services created by Victoria's unprecedented population growth.

The full list of schools selected to participate in the program is available at:
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/doctors-secondary-schools.aspx>.

I trust this information is of assistance.

You Yangs sand quarry

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Mr Davis

Raised on: 18 August 2016

REPLY:

The City of Greater Geelong Council recently considered planning permit application 692/2015 for a sand quarry at 405 Sandy Creek Road, Little River.

The planning permit application was advertised and 237 objections were received raising concerns including impacts on the rural landscape, impacts on the recreational and tourism industries associated with the nearby You Yangs Regional Park, impacts on ground and surface water and impacts on native vegetation and wildlife.

Council appointed an independent committee under Section 191 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to provide advice on the proposal and the objections.

The committee concluded that the sand quarry was not important to the local or wider community, the proposal would cause an unreasonable and enduring impact on the landscape and the proposal would work against achieving the diversified economy sought by Clause 11.07-2 and Clause 21.02 of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

Council resolved to refuse planning permit application 692/2015 at its meeting on 26 July 2016.

The community can have confidence that there has been a thorough and comprehensive consideration of the planning merits of this proposal by the council in this matter.

A Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal review is available to the applicant in this matter and the objectors will have the opportunity to be parties to any review.

I am confident that this matter is being determined through an independent and comprehensive assessment of its planning merits and there is no need for my intervention at this time.

Watergardens railway station

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 18 August 2016

REPLY:

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) is working to transform the public transport network into one that is accessible to more Victorians than ever before.

Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) continues to provide support and alternative transport arrangements for passengers with accessibility needs on occasions where lifts are out of order at Watergardens Station.

I have directed PTV to investigate options to address issues of reliability and redundancy to mitigate against risk of lift failure. This will include feasibility of adding ramps or a second lift.

Street burnouts

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government supports a range of motorsports, including the Grand Prix, where the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) places a significant emphasis on promoting safe driving messages.

Drivers wishing to undertake motorsport activities can join a motorsport club and participate in safely organised events. Casual track days are also available, many of which also offer supervision and coaching to drivers.

Should Mr Muir wish to discuss these matters, he is welcome to contact my office to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Rossbridge bridge

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

I am advised by VicRoads that the bridge is being routinely inspected in the interim with the last inspection taking place on 23 August 2016 and deemed fit for use. The bridge will continue to be monitored until the contract is awarded.

Drug harm reduction

Raised with: Minister for Mental Health
Raised by: Ms Hartland
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

The government is committed to reducing harm to people who currently use alcohol and other drugs, including the harm caused by fatal overdoses.

Each year, the Andrews Labor Government invests more than \$17 million in evidence-based harm reduction initiatives.

This includes annual funding provided to Harm Reduction Victoria for the 'Dancewize' program. 'Dancewize' aims to reduce drug and alcohol related harm at Victorian dance parties, festivals and nightclubs, with peer workers attending up to 15 events per year to host chill-out spaces, discuss safer drug use and disseminate health resources.

This year alone, the government has invested more than \$192 million to reduce alcohol and other drug related harm, including through expanding access to treatment in Victoria.

Mount Hotham and Falls Creek police numbers

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

Community safety on the mountains over winter is a key priority for Victoria Police. I raised community and stakeholder concerns regarding police resourcing in the Victorian Alpine Resorts with the Chief Commissioner of Police in early June.

As you are aware, there was a 24-hour police presence at Mount Buller, Falls Creek and Hotham Creek over this snow season. Police were stationed at all times of the day and night to respond to any incidents. Specialised units, including the Search and Rescue, were also accessible in emergencies.

Victoria Police has advised that a 24-hour police service will also be available to visitors at the ski fields for the 2017 snow season.

Western distributor

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Melhem
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

The Western Distributor Project is a high-quality infrastructure project that will have an enduring legacy through boosting local businesses and giving opportunities to local workers and apprentices.

The Western Distributor Project's construction will feature a minimum 89 per cent local content and maximise the use of local steel. The project will also require 10 per cent of hours to be worked by trainees, apprentices and engineering cadets, as well as 82 per cent local content in the supply and installation of the electronic lane use management system.

The local content requirements will benefit the range of construction and support industries in the Western Metropolitan Region and throughout Victoria, with opportunities for firms specialising in manufacturing, freight, building, design, catering, logistics and utilities services.

I encourage Victorian businesses big and small to register their interest to benefit from this significant urban infrastructure project. Suppliers can register their interest on the Industry Capability Network's website, at westerndistributor.icn.org.au.

The Western Distributor Project is vital to Melbourne's liveability and competitiveness. The project will provide a much-needed alternative to the West Gate Bridge, reduce travel times from the west, get approximately 6000 trucks off local streets and create in the order of 5600 jobs.

A final design for the Western Distributor will be identified through the competitive tender process and a comprehensive Environmental Effects Statement. We anticipate the contract will be signed by late 2017 with the project to commence construction soon after and be completed by 2022.

Gladstone Park Senior Citizens Centre

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

I asked PTV to look at ways to improve access to and from the Gladstone Park Senior Citizens Centre.

PTV advised that there is currently a bus stop located about 500 metres from the centre for bus route 477 Moonee Ponds to Broadmeadows Station via Essendon, Airport West, and Gladstone Park. This service operates every 20 minutes from 6:00am to 6:30pm on weekdays, and every 40-60 minutes on weekends.

PTV is continually reviewing existing routes and the need for potential new routes to adjust them according to changing transport demands. No review of Gladstone Park is currently underway, but this advice will be considered during the next review.

Any proposed changes to existing bus routes will be taken to the community for consultation.

TBM Training

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 30 August 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

TBM Training decided to enter into voluntary liquidation on 14 April 2016. The closure of this Registered Training Organisation (RTO) occurred without prior notice to the Department of Education and Training (the Department). As always, the immediate concern as a result of these providers choosing to close has been to minimise disruption to affected students.

The Department has been working hard to assist students affected by the closures. This work includes communications with the liquidators for TBM and writing to all affected Victorian Training Guarantee (VTG) funded students in relation to continuing their training. The Department also worked with the Victorian Registration & Qualification Authority (VRQA). As soon as the VRQA became aware of the RTO closure it secured any available copies of student records, and has ensured that where possible students have been issued with statements of attainment to enable them to transition to another training provider and have the competencies achieved at TBM Training recognised.

Further, the Department has made arrangements with TAFE institutes to help students. Specifically, VTG funded students are able to transition to Federation Training or Chisholm Institute, based in the south eastern region, without needing to be reassessed for VTG eligibility, or pay any further Tuition Fees. If students are unsure about what options are available to them, or are seeking fee waivers, they are encouraged to write to the Department in order to have their individual circumstances assessed and advice provided to them.

TBM Training was operating under a three-year funding contract that was offered by the Department in November 2013, under the former State Government.

It is unfortunate that TBM Training was not delivering quality training to students, and that it was not keeping accurate records. It is for this reason that providers such as Federation Training are required to ensure that students have the proper competencies and skills prior to awarding any units of competency and or qualifications. The awarding of qualifications where there is inadequate supporting evidence contravenes the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), a national policy for regulated qualifications in the Australian education and training system. This national policy provides safeguards regarding quality assurance of qualifications and authorised issuing organisations, which also protects the integrity of the Victorian training system. This is particularly important when students are being assessed in high risk qualifications such as aged care and childcare qualifications, where the risk to the community is great. It is imperative that these students receive high quality training and it is for these reasons that I am committed to cracking down on rogue providers.

The Victorian Government is working very hard to ensure training providers with VTG Funding Contracts are thoroughly vetted and comply with all entry requirements to ensure that Victorian students receive the highest quality training.

Government procurement policy

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Raised on: 31 August 2016

REPLY:

The Labor Government is committed to ensuring procurement decisions are based on ethical, as well as value-for-money, decisions. Ethical procurement requirements are covered under applicable legislation and

addressed in the Victorian Government Purchasing Board's (VGPB) guidance material and standard form contract templates.

VGPB's guidance material requires procurers to understand the supply market, risks impacting that market and to undertake appropriate due diligence when engaging suppliers.

VGPB's standard form contracts include:

- a clause that states 'the supplier must, in performing its obligations under these conditions, comply with the Laws affecting or applicable to the provision of the goods or services by the supplier under this Agreement and the Victorian Industry Participation Policy, if applicable.'
- an employment policy clause states that:
 - a. the supplier and any person engaged in the supply of goods must not:
 - i. engage in unethical work practices; or
 - ii. engage employees or sub-contracted workers upon terms and conditions which do not meet industry standards generally applicable in Victoria.
 - b. where a federal industrial award may apply to the capacity in which an employee is engaged by the supplier, or by a sub-contractor, in the provision of the goods, the supplier must:
 - iii. where applicable, comply with the better off overall test under section 193 of the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth); or
 - iv. otherwise ensure the conditions on which that employee is engaged are no less beneficial to the employee than the rates and conditions under that award.
- Sub-contracting suppliers must also meet the above requirements.
- The standard form contracts also allow the State to terminate for breach of employment policy and sub-contracting requirements.

The Government is also progressing further work in relation to its ethical procurement agenda.

Mirboo North swimming pool

Raised with: Minister for Sport
Raised by: Ms Shing
Raised on: 31 August 2016

REPLY:

I refer to your adjournment debate matter regarding the Mirboo North swimming pool project, raised in the Legislative Assembly on 31 August 2016.

I understand that a master plan for the Mirboo North pool is currently in progress. Once completed the council can apply under the Small Aquatic Project category of the State Government's \$100 million Community Sports Infrastructure Fund that facilitates the upgrade and development of community sport and recreation facilities across Victoria. It is anticipated that the next round will open in early 2017.

In the meantime I would encourage you, the local community and South Gippsland Shire Council to view the guidelines for the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund at www.sport.vic.gov.au/community-sports-infrastructure-fund.

I would also encourage the South Gippsland Shire Council to liaise with staff from Sport and Recreation Victoria regarding any potential application.

Northern Victoria Region road safety

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Symes
Raised on: 31 August 2016

REPLY:

Everybody shares the responsibility to make our road system safer.

The Andrews Labor Government recognises that road trauma on Victoria's road network has been steadily reducing since the early 1970's; and as Victoria's first Minister for Road Safety, I am determined to drive this trend down further.

My immediate goal is to reduce Victoria's road toll to fewer than 200 deaths by 2020 and reduce serious injuries by 15 per cent. The Labor Government is investing over \$1.1 billion to implement Victoria's Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan-Towards Zero 2016-2020 with the aim of achieving these targets-not just in Northern Victoria, but across the whole of Victoria.

Towards Zero involves the biggest effort ever to make rural roads safer by embracing new technology that will make our cars, roads, and our own driving safer. Nothing short of a culture change will get us Towards Zero. We have talked face to face with Victorians about possible solutions, and local and global road safety experts about what they know works.

Whether it's buying the safest car we can afford, being less aggressive behind the wheel, making sure we separate drinking from driving, or considering the safest cycling route to work, we need Victorians to help one another to get home safely.

My government's strategy and action plan begins with \$340 million of road safety improvements that will address sections of twenty of the State's highest risk road segments — and seven of these twenty segments are located within the electorate of Northern Victoria. These projects include:

- Calder Freeway: M80 Ring Road/Keilor Park to Bendigo
- Hume Freeway/Highway: M80 Ring Road/Thomastown to Wodonga
- Goulburn Valley Highway: Yea to Molesworth
- Geelong–Bacchus Marsh Road: Geelong to Bacchus Marsh
- Beechworth–Wodonga Road: Beechworth to Yackandandah Road
- Melbourne–Lancefield Road: Sunbury to Lancefield
- Midland Highway: Shepparton to Byrneside

The Victorian Government has also been in discussion with the Commonwealth Government in relation to the reallocation of \$1.5 billion in Federal funding previously allocated to the East West Link project to fund new projects across the state, which includes providing matching funding for recent Federal Election commitments.

The Victorian Government is seeking to conclude these negotiations with the Commonwealth Government as a matter of priority in order for important transport projects to be delivered across the state, including Ms Symes electorate of Northern Victoria.

Gender equality

Raised with: Minister for Women
Raised by: Mr Melhem
Raised on: 31 August 2016

REPLY:

I would like to thank the Member for Western Metropolitan for his question.

As of 3 May 2016, submissions have been received from 44 individuals and 162 organisations across the community, government and private sectors. I have also recently concluded an eight-week Gender Equality roadshow.

Seventeen forums were held as part this roadshow that focused on developing Victoria's first Gender Equality Strategy. These consultations allowed our government to hear ideas on how to improve the lives of Victorian women, right from the women who this Strategy will belong to.

Consultations were held in Bendigo, Ararat, Warrnambool, Sale, Shepparton, Mildura, Wangaratta and metropolitan Melbourne. I also held a series of targeted consultations with young and elderly Victorians, those with a disability, members of the LGBTI community and those working in specific industries.

The session focusing on CALD Victorians was held in Footscray in partnership with the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and paid particular focus to how people can experience gender equality differently. An understanding that a solution that may work for one group of people might not work for another will be embedded in the Strategy, that is due for release later this year.

Members of your community can still have their say on the Gender Equality Strategy by submitting their thoughts to genderequality@dpc.vic.gov.au.

Eumemmerring scout hall security

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 31 August 2016

REPLY:

I am sorry to learn of the damage to property and theft of equipment from the Eumemmerring Scout Hall in Doveton.

As part of the Government's Community Crime Prevention Program, the Community Safety Fund grants provide funding of up to \$10 000 for community organisations and Victorian councils to improve the safety and security of community facilities. A number of local scout groups, under the auspices of Scouts Victoria, have successfully obtained funding for security equipment and infrastructure such as security alarms (without video surveillance), vandal proof security lighting, security screens, locks, fencing and gates at scout halls across Victoria.

Grant funding for CCTV systems is available for Victorian councils under the Public Safety Infrastructure Fund. Applications must be made by the relevant council, and include a letter of support from the Victoria Police local area commander.

The 2016-17 round of both of these grants programs are now closed, however a new round of grants will be available next year.

I suggest the Eumemmerring Scout Group liaise with Scouts Victoria, local police and the local council to arrange a safety audit for the scout hall, to identify and prioritise the security improvements required.

Other State Government grant program opportunities are regularly updated on the Grants Victoria website at www.vic.gov.au/grants.html

Level Crossing Removal Authority

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

The member's adjournment matter makes a variety of unsubstantiated claims, none of which are true. If the member has any evidence to support any of his claims, he can provide it and they will be addressed as appropriate. I am aware of media reports that Victoria Police are investigating claims a car was deliberately driven at a Level Crossing Removal employee. However, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on this matter while it is under police investigation.

Work is proceeding rapidly on the removal of nine of the most dangerous and congested level crossings in Victoria. The removal of these crossings has received widespread support from the Victorian community who understand the Liberal Party's continued opposition to the project.

Deer hunting

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

The Government is considering changes to allow the processing of game species. There are a number of regulations and pieces of legislation that would require amendment to allow this. These include the Wildlife Act 1975, the Wildlife Regulations 2013, the Meat Industry Act 1993, and the Meat Industry Regulations 2015.

Social cohesion projects

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I refer to your request raised during the Adjournment Debate on 1 September 2016 regarding the role of the school education system in fostering social cohesion in Victoria. Thank you for referring me to the two programs that Margaret Hepworth has made available to schools and youth services.

I agree with you that one of Victoria's greatest assets is its high level of respect for diversity and multiculturalism. We need to continue to work with our communities to develop local projects and initiatives that help us maintain these values that we take such pride in. This is why the Andrews Labor Government has committed \$25 million over four years to develop a whole-of-community evidence-based approach to enhancing social cohesion and community resilience and to counter all forms of violent extremism.

As part of this commitment, a Ministerial Taskforce has been established, which I chair and which includes ministers from youth, multicultural affairs and police portfolios. The Ministerial Taskforce has funded the Department of Education and Training to implement two pilot programs to enhance social cohesion in school communities. This initiative will be managed in partnership with schools, parents and other community leaders to provide safe and respectful school environments and support at-risk young people.

The Department is also working across government, including through our Education State reforms, to ensure students are engaged with their communities, their education, and their employment. These are the most effective and sustainable strategies for building social cohesion and reducing the risk of young people engaging in violent extremist behaviours. Schools are encouraged to work with their students, families and broader communities to determine their local needs and engage with professional development or training accordingly.

Corrections system

Raised with: Minister for Corrections
Raised by: Ms Pennicuik
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

The safe reintegration of prisoners into the community is a key priority for the Victorian Government. Corrections Victoria provides a range of programs and services to prisoners throughout their sentence to support their wellbeing during their time in custody through to post release.

In January 2015, Corrections Victoria commenced the new Corrections Victoria Reintegration Pathway (CVRP) which provides three stages of support for prisoners commencing on entry into prison. On entry to prison, prisoners are provided with:

- Immediate crisis supports regarding tenancy and debt management.
- Adjustment programs to support prisoners on entry and aid in settling them in a prison environment.
- Skills based programs to support the skill development in areas of building relationships, communication skills and problem solving among others.

Throughout their sentence prisoners also have access to a range of interventions aimed at supporting their rehabilitation across several areas:

- Education and training
- Employment
- Offending Behaviour Programs
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment
- Health and mental health services
- Release and reintegration planning. Release and reintegration planning commences 18 months from their prisoner's discharge date and services are provided in accordance with the prisoner's level of transitional needs. As such prisoners with more complex transitional needs are afforded more intensive pre release support. Corrections Victoria offers a range of permit programs to support purposeful engagement in the community pre-release.

Post release, prisoners with complex needs are supported through the ReConnect program which provides support through assertive outreach in seven key domains of housing, employment, education and training, mental health, drug and alcohol, family and community connectedness and living skills. Housing supports in particular include supporting participants to move from transitional housing to more stable long term accommodation.

These services are facilitated by a combination of internal staff and community based providers. In many cases, community based providers employ staff with lived experience of being in prison to inform their service delivery and expertise in working with prisoners.

The CVRP and broader supports within the system represent a significant new and innovative approach supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners. The CVRP will be informed by an independent evaluation. The outcome of this evaluation will inform the further enhancement of reintegration supports.

Macedon Ranges equine centre

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

As noted by the Member, the Macedon Ranges Shire Council was the recipient of a grant (\$60 000) to support the completion of a feasibility study to determine the viability of establishing an international standard equestrian centre in the Macedon Ranges Shire.

The study benchmarked and identified possible approaches and strategies to develop and manage such a facility.

Completion of the study delivered on a commitment by the Council to investigate the feasibility of an international standard equine facility within the Macedon Ranges Shire.

Regional Development Victoria officers are discussing with the Macedon Ranges Shire Council its priorities for potential funding, which includes the next stage of the Macedon Ranges equine centre.

Mixed martial arts

Raised with: Minister for Sport
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

Mixed martial arts contests have always been legal in Victoria.

In March 2015 the Minister for Sport, the Hon John Eren MP, directed the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Board to require mixed martial arts contests to be held in a safety enclosure as a condition of the promotion permit.

In the four years prior to March 2015, mixed martial arts contests were an element of 91 out of the 281 promotions issued a permit by the Professional Boxing and Combat Sports Board. These contests had to be held in a boxing ring. Both the Board and the combat sports industry advised that holding mixed martial arts contests in a purpose built safety enclosure, commonly known as the Octagon, would increase the safety of contestants.

We all want sports to be as safe as possible. With this in mind, Victoria is leading national work to establish consistent safety standards for contestants across the jurisdictions that regulate professional boxing and combat sports contests. Work to date has focused on ensuring consistent standards for medical checks for contestant registration, medical checks before and after contests, and sharing of information between jurisdictions.

Autism services

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

This government does not tolerate the abuse of any person with a disability.

Our commitment to preventing abuse, including the inappropriate use of restraint and seclusion in schools, is demonstrated by the fulfilment of the commitments we publically announced before the 2014 election.

We established the Parliamentary Inquiry into abuse into Disability Services (which also included those in schools) whose report was tabled in parliament on 26 May 2016. We are currently considering the recommendations in the report.

The functions of the Disability Senior Practitioner have been extended to oversee the use of restraint and seclusions in schools.

The issue of the Merriang Special Development School is more appropriately a matter for the Minister for Education, the Hon James Merlino MP. Nonetheless, I am advised that he has publically expressed his concerns about the allegations regarding the Merriang Special Development School and has asked his department to commission an independent review of the matter.

Stawell Gold Mines

Raised with: Minister for Resources
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

The Andrews Government recognises the contribution that Newmarket Gold Inc. has made to the Victorian economy, as well as the economy of Stawell through its subsidiary, Stawell Gold Mines.

The proposed Big Hill Enhanced Modified Project, a proposal for an open cut mine near to Stawell township, has been disallowed under two failed Environment Effects Statements pursuant to the Environmental Effects Act 1978. The first was conducted in 2000, and the most recent was in 2014.

Newmarket Gold, then Stawell Gold Mines, amended its proposal following the refusal of the project under the first EES in 2000. It was then put to a further EES in 2014.

The concerns raised in the 2014 EES related to potential effects on air quality, concerns about noise levels, and potential impacts on the health of the Stawell community. This was largely due to the proximity of the open cut mine to residential properties. If approved, the mine would be located on the eastern edge of Stawell.

Despite real concerns about the health and safety of Stawell residents, the then Minister for Planning, Hon Matthew Guy MP, left the door open for the project as long as some changes were made.

The nature of the response meant that it was unclear what changes Stawell Gold Mines needed to make, or what the process was for determining whether those changes were sufficient.

This showed a complete disregard for health and safety of Stawell residents.

This has caused a huge amount of uncertainty for the residents Stawell, as well as Stawell Gold Mines.

We are now working to end this uncertainty.

Newmarket Gold is expected to submit a revised proposal, that addresses the environmental and safety concerns raised by the Stawell community.

DEDJTR is currently working with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, as well as the Environmental Protection Authority and the Department of Health and Human Services, to finalise an assessment process for the proposal for my consideration.

Kingston early learning facility

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Mr Rich-Phillips
Raised on: 1 September 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Education is the Andrews Labor Government's number one priority.

This is why we have committed \$60 million over two successive budgets to support local governments and other service providers to invest in early childhood infrastructure.

This investment will support the provision of high quality early years programs for children and their families by increasing infrastructure capacity to deliver kindergarten programs for children in the year before school.

By establishing early childhood infrastructure on or near school sites, it also promotes integrated service delivery in the one location. In this way, families can access early childhood education and care, as well as health, development and family services. It will further improve access to local and responsive early childhood services for children from vulnerable and/or disadvantaged families.

I understand that Kingston City Council submitted an application for the Mentone Park Primary School Kindergarten Development as part of the current round of applications for New Early Learning Facilities to be delivered under the Children's Facilities Capital Program.

Applications closed on 12 August 2016 and are currently being assessed.

I look forward to announcing the successful applicants of these grants in the near future.

Road toll

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Elasmarr
Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

During 2016 the Andrews Labor Government has announced an unprecedented \$1.1 billion in initiatives to reduce lives lost on Victoria's roads.

Launched in May 2016, Victoria's new road safety strategy and action plan Towards Zero 2015-2020 set out \$1 billion in road safety projects and initiatives to reduce the road toll to less than 200 by 2020 and to reduce serious injuries by 15 per cent over the same period.

The strategy targets the biggest contributors to road trauma. Victorians are four times more likely to be killed on country roads, and the strategy allocates \$340 million to address black spots on more than 2500 kilometres of rural roads.

Young drivers, who continue to be overrepresented in the road toll, are a major focus under Towards Zero 2016-2020 with a \$146 million suite of young driver safety initiatives.

Tougher enforcement of drink and drug driving, safer travel speeds, and promoting vehicle safety technology are also among the areas of focus for the Towards Zero strategy.

The benefits of many road safety initiatives however, can take some time to be realised.

In response to the worst start of a year for road trauma since 2008, on 1 September 2016 the Andrews Labor Government announced the fast tracking of the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) funded \$12 million Enhanced Enforcement Program. This will provide funding for an additional 1000 Victoria Police shifts between now and Christmas, on ongoing enhanced road policing.

Victoria Police will target speed and drink driving, especially on rural roads where the majority of the deaths have occurred this year. Speed accounts for a third of all road fatalities and about one in five drivers killed have an illegal blood alcohol content.

Portland economic development

Raised with: Minister for Regional Development

Raised by: Mr Purcell

Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

The Victorian Government understands the importance of major employers in regional communities. In Portland, this is particularly the case with Alcoa and the operation of its joint venture aluminium smelter. The smelter directly employs over 500 people and provides many more indirect jobs in the Portland region.

The Government is in regular discussion with Alcoa in relation to the Portland smelter and the company's endeavours to increase its international competitiveness in a climate of low global aluminium prices and market rate electricity pricing.

We are committed to working with existing and new businesses in relation to attracting investment and creating new jobs in Portland. Portland is well placed to attract investment in export related industries and exploit its competitive advantage in tourism, food and fibre (including timber), transport and logistics, and the renewable energy sector.

The Victorian Government is focussed on achieving the best possible outcome for investment and jobs in the Portland community. We are working with the Glenelg Shire Council and the Committee for Portland on economic development and investment attraction activities to help make Portland's economy as diverse and resilient as possible, whilst also continuing to work closely with Alcoa.

Remembrance Day

Raised with: Minister for Veterans

Raised by: Mr Eideh

Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

I thank the Member for his question. This year Remembrance Day falls on a Friday. As Parliament is not sitting, I encourage all Members of Parliament (MPs) to either attend a Service in their own electorates and with their own communities, or to attend the Service at the Shrine of Remembrance. As for previous Services at the Shrine in recent years, there will be designated seating for MPs.

Each year a veteran is asked to recite The Ode as part of the Service. This year the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (Vic) will be asked to nominate a veteran for that duty in honour of the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan and commencement of major Australian combat operations in Vietnam.

The Royal New Zealand Artillery (RNZA) Band will provide musical accompaniment for the Remembrance Day 2016 Service. They are in Victoria for a tour in November, also appearing at various RSL and commemorative events.

As in previous years, one of the students who participated in the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize will read 'In Flanders Field', now a much loved tradition which gives young Victorians an opportunity to honour the service of

our veterans. The Remembrance Day Schools Poster Competition is currently underway and each year the Premier or his delegate awards the prizes for the competition, chosen from a selection of entries by primary school students across the state. I also look forward to the attendance of hundreds of school age students as in previous years. If you have any local schools in your region who may be interested in attending, I encourage them to make contact with the Shrine of Remembrance.

The Veterans Sector Study was commissioned by the Victorian Veterans Council in 2015 to refresh our understanding of the veterans sector and the needs and priorities of our veterans. Consultation sessions were held around the State with veterans and ex-service organisations in Mildura, Geelong West, Ballarat, Wodonga, Frankston, Sale and Melbourne during August 2015, alongside an on-line survey promoted through social media.

The Sector Study Report made 14 recommendations to help better assist veterans and commemorate their sacrifice. A key issue was the importance of supporting our Victorian Ex Service Organisations to ensure that they can continue to meet the needs of veterans and their families, now and into the future.

Subsequent to the release of the Report, the Victorian Veterans Council invited feedback on the report and has now finalised its recommendations. The Government is currently considering these recommendations and will be responding later in the year.

While the welfare of our returned service people is first and foremost the responsibility of the Federal Government, the Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that we do everything our resources permit to support veterans living in Victoria.

There are a number of ways the Victorian Government provides welfare support to veterans. The first is through welfare grants from the ANZAC Day Proceeds Fund, funded from proceeds of sporting events held in Victoria on ANZAC Day. These grants are available for ex-service organisations to provide direct welfare assistance, social activities to combat social isolation, transport, advocacy and information services to veterans.

In September last year, the Minister for Veterans officially opened the Veterans Accommodation Project in Richmond, five units which were built to provide short to medium term accommodation for veterans in need. All five of the units are currently occupied by young veterans who are in need of short term accommodation.

This is a great example of partnership and services working together: Housing Choices Australia is the provider of the units and the RSL Victorian Branch is the lead ex-service organisation, responsible for identifying veterans in need of short term accommodation and providing the veterans with welfare support to get back on their feet.

The Victorian Government has also committed \$400 000 over four years to the RSL to address social isolation as experienced by veterans, this was launched at the Geelong RSL on 4 October by Ms Christina Couzens MP, representing the Minister for Veterans.

Melbourne Metro rail project

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert

Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

The safety of the community during the construction of the Metro Tunnel project is paramount.

Measures to safeguard emergency access to nearby properties during the construction of the Metro Tunnel are currently being assessed as part of the project's Environment Effects Statement (EES) process.

Metro Tunnel's appointed construction contractor will be required to comply with Environmental Performance Requirements set through the EES process, including a requirement to develop suitable measures, in consultation with emergency services, to ensure emergency service access is not inhibited as a result of Metro Tunnel construction worksites.

Further information about the Environmental Performance Requirements to be implemented will be available at the conclusion of the EES process later this year.

The Melbourne Metro Rail Authority is continuing to engage with emergency services and residents and businesses in the Domain precinct to understand individual circumstances and access requirements as planning for this important infrastructure in the heart of Melbourne progresses.

Sunbury rail crossings

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

The growth of Sunbury is acknowledged by the Victorian Government, which is one of the main reasons we are getting on with delivering the Metro Tunnel project which will create a dramatic increase in passenger capacity on the Sunbury line.

Public Transport Victoria, in conjunction with VicRoads constantly monitor traffic and passenger volumes in growth areas and opportunities for additional grade separated level crossings will be assessed as part of future budget processes.

The support from the Member for Western Metropolitan for the consideration of elevated grade separation solutions is acknowledged, notwithstanding that it is contrary to the position of his Party.

Frankston rail line level crossings

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

The former Liberal Government did not remove any level crossings on the Frankston line. In contrast the Andrews Labor Government is removing eleven, with three already gone.

The member's suspicions that a "skyrail" was the pre-determined position of the Government for the removal of level crossings on the Frankston line have already been proven incorrect. The Government has ruled out a continuous elevated solution and as the member herself has previously pointed out "a bridge is not a Skyrail".

All members of the public have been invited to Community Information Sessions and details, including venues and dates, for each crossing are available at www.levelcrossing.vic.gov.au.

The Liberal Party went to the last election with a commitment to keep these congested level crossings in place and the community remains very aware of the Liberal Party's continued opposition to their removal. The Government will continue to get on with delivering on our election commitment to get rid of these congested death traps.

Level Crossing Removal Authority

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 14 September 2016

REPLY:

The member is correct, the community supports the Government's removal of 50 of Victoria's most congested and dangerous level crossings. The community is also very aware that the former Government did not remove level

crossings and remains opposed to the Government's project. Work is already occurring to remove the nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong and the Government will not consider the member's request to pause this project which would delay the removal of the most congested and dangerous level crossings in Victoria. Members of the public are currently being invited to consultation sessions for the removal of 8 level crossings on the Frankston line. A continuous elevated rail, or Skyrail, is not being considered. The member's suggestion that "an up and down model" should be considered is exactly what is occurring. Full details are available at www.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au.

Footscray Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 15 September 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I refer to your request raised during the Adjournment Debate on 15 September 2016 regarding Footscray Primary School.

Victoria has a long tradition of bilingual education, and the most extensive bilingual program of all jurisdictions.

I understand that Footscray Primary School has decided to review the decision about their Vietnamese bilingual program. There will be further consultation about a range of options. Those families that are interested will be able to continue the program in 2017.

Suicide prevention

Raised with: Minister for Mental Health
Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Raised on: 15 September 2016

REPLY:

Every suicide is a tragic event, and the pain and loss associated with each suicide affects many people.

The Victorian Suicide Prevention Framework includes new investment of \$27 million over four years to trial assertive outreach programs at six hospitals that support people of all ages and their families following a suicide attempt, and six place-based trials, where local communities will develop and implement proactive suicide prevention strategies.

One of the objectives of the Framework is to improve identification and support to vulnerable groups at risk of suicide. We know that social isolation and loneliness are risk factors for older people. In early 2015 I requested the Commissioner for Senior Victorians investigate this issue. In his report of that investigation, 'Ageing is everyone's business: a report on isolation and loneliness among senior Victorians', the Commissioner identified that at least ten percent of Victoria's older population experiences loneliness at any one time.

A number of initiatives have been put in place to respond to these findings including new investment of \$2.2 million over four years for Age-Friendly Community grants targeting rural councils and innovative age-friendly projects to improve quality of life for older people.

The government will continue to develop targeted strategies that respond to the changing needs of vulnerable groups as we work towards delivering a state-wide approach to suicide prevention that will have the greatest impact.

Youth justice system

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 15 September 2016

REPLY:

The safety and security of the Victorian community is the Andrews Government's highest priority.

Every Victorian, whether in their home or business, has a right to feel safe. These are disturbing crimes and the community shouldn't have to put up with cases of burglary and theft and more serious crime. That's why the Andrews Labor Government is delivering what we promised we would; hundreds more police, crime fighting technology and the powers police need to target the perpetrators.

I can confirm that the residents of Geelong continue to receive a 24-hour police response from across the Greater Geelong Police Service Area. Police now have additional resources to increase patrols in the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong CBD, and around transport hubs.

In terms of some of the high-risk, high profile crime being committed by a small cohort of young offenders across Melbourne, Victoria Police has established a range of taskforces to tackle property crime, including Operation Cosmas, a city-wide operation, which is focusing on aggravated burglary and other gang-related activity. Operation Cosmas alone has been responsible for over 180 arrests since May this year. Significant resources are being used to respond to and deal with the causes of this type of offending.

Furthermore, the Andrews Labor Government has introduced into Parliament specific and targeted stand-alone offences for carjacking and home invasions after consultation with Victoria Police. The laws reflect the seriousness of these crimes, and, as the community would expect, the penalties are significant.

If this legislation is passed, a statutory minimum non-parole period of three years will apply to aggravated carjacking. This means that a court will have to impose a non-parole period of three years unless special reasons apply. Home invasion will have a maximum penalty of 25 years and aggravated home invasion will attract a statutory minimum non-parole period of three years.

Policing across the Geelong Police Service Area is managed in a flexible manner to ensure the best possible use of available police resources for community safety. I meet with local police in Geelong and across the state frequently and welcome opportunities to discuss how innovative ideas can build on the work we as a government already do.

First and foremost — I want communities to feel safe. The Government continues to work closely with the Chief Commissioner about what resources and powers Victoria Police need to address crime, particularly emerging crime trends.

We need to see more police out on the front line. This is why the Andrews Labor Government announced a \$596 million Public Safety Package as part of the 2016-17 State Budget, delivering on our promise to give police the necessary resources to increase frontline and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence.

This package includes an additional 406 police officers. The Government is working closely with Victoria Police to recruit and train these additional officers. The recruitment and deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers also means we can free up more police to work in their communities and keep Victorians safe. Since January custody officers have worked over 10 500 shifts performing custody management tasks in police cells and supervising police prisoners in court. There are now 17 Police Custody officers at the Geelong Police Station.

The decision of how and where resources are deployed is appropriately a matter for the Chief Commissioner of Police. The Chief Commissioner assures me that the allocation of police resources across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective command officers to ensure the best possible policing service is delivered to the Victorian community.

Western Victoria floods

Raised with: Premier
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 15 September 2016

REPLY:

I thank the member for his question on this very serious issue.

On the 16th of September, I visited Charlton with the Minister for Emergency Services to meet with residents who have been impacted by the floods. I announced that Emergency Re-establishment grants were available for eligible individuals whose homes have been unfortunately destroyed or damaged. This is in addition to the Emergency Relief Assistance grants, which are available to all flood affected communities.

A range of assistance is available to eligible individuals including relief assistance for immediate food, shelter and clothing as well as personal counselling. Financial help is also available to local councils to help with the cost of cleaning up and restoring damaged essential public assets, such as roads and bridges.

Further to this, our government announced a range of additional disaster assistance that is being provided through the jointly-funded Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA). There are 22 local government areas receiving NDRRA assistance include Glenelg, Southern Grampians and Buloke, which encompass the communities of Casterton, Coleraine and Charlton.

On the 12th of September, Minister for Emergency Services visited Coleraine and Casterton, with the VICSES Chief Officer, to thank emergency services staff and volunteers for their tireless work. When disaster struck our emergency services staff and volunteers banded together to keep their communities safe and I commend them for the outstanding support they've given the residents of Western Victoria over the last few weeks.

Anyone who has been affected by the flooding should call the Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line on 1300 799 232 for assistance. Information regarding disaster assistance available can be found on the Vic Emergency website at www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief or the Australian Government's Disaster Assist website at www.disasterassist.gov.au.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 12 October 2016

Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 31 August 2016

REPLY:

This Government recognises the vital role volunteers play and that is why it is building a better Country Fire Authority (CFA) with new trucks, facilities, equipment, and training for volunteer CFA Brigades.

The CFA Board has consulted with key stakeholders, including Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV), on the proposed Operational Staff Enterprise Agreement and determined to put the proposed Agreement to its operational staff for a vote.

The CFA has agreed to defer that vote until the Supreme Court has ruled on an application from the VFBV.

As this matter is before the Court, I do not propose to comment further.

The Senate has referred the Fair Work Amendment (Respect for Emergency Services Volunteers) Bill introduced into the federal Parliament on 30 August 2016 to its Committee on Education and Employment for inquiry. The Victorian Government has made a submission to that Inquiry outlining how this Bill is unnecessary, flawed and politically motivated.

Domain railway station

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 14 September 2016

REPLY:

As you've noted in your adjournment matter, I have appointed a joint Inquiry/Advisory Committee (IAC) under the Environment Effects Act 1978 and Planning and Environment Act 1987 to review the Melbourne Metro Rail Project Environment Effects Statement (EES) and draft planning scheme amendment.

The IAC are currently conducting public hearings in order to investigate and consider the environmental effects of the Project, including those at Domain station which concluded on 7 October 2016. As per the approved Terms of Reference, the IAC must submit its report to me within 30 business day of the last hearing day. This is expected to occur around 21 November 2016.

Following consideration of the IAC report and recommendations, the EES documents and public submissions I will make an assessment about the environmental effects of the Project. The Minister's Assessment represents authoritative statutory advice to decision-makers about the environmental effects of the project and is expected to be available in late December 2016.

The question regarding project time-lines for Domain station should be directed to the Minister of Public Transport. However, it should be noted that an approval is yet to be granted for the project.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 13 October 2016

Immunisation

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 18 August 2016

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The No Jab No Play changes to the Public Health and Wellbeing Act established a requirement that the "person in charge" of an "early childhood service" must not confirm the enrolment of a child in the service unless they have received the required immunisation documentation in relation to the child.

The terms 'early childhood service' and 'person in charge' are defined in Section 3(1) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act. For services registered under the Education and Care Services National Law the 'person in charge' is the 'approved provider' within the meaning of section 5(1) of the National Law. For services licensed under Part 3 of the Children's Services Act it is the 'proprietor' within the meaning of section 3(1) of that Act.

An approved provider of an education and care service is the person or legal entity responsible for operating an approved service. The proprietor of a children's service includes the owner of the service, the primary nominee for the service; and any person who manages or controls the service. This means that the responsibility for assessing the child's immunisation status and for keeping the immunisation certificate or details of the child's exemption is the responsibility of the approved provider of an education and care service or the proprietor of the children's service.

At the time the legislation came into effect, the Department of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Department of Education and Training and the Municipal Association of Victoria developed a comprehensive enrolment toolkit that was provided to all early childhood education and care services covered by the new law. This toolkit provides detailed and comprehensive information and a range of resources to assist services to understand the requirement to obtain evidence of up to date immunisation prior to confirming the enrolment of a child after 1 January 2016, and contact details to obtain additional assistance and advice.

The Department of Education and Training is aware that central enrolment processes involve various interactions with parents about their enrolment throughout the enrolment process, by the central enrolment agency and then by the individual service that the child will be attending.

It is also understood that central enrolment processes vary in relation to who is responsible for what in the process of allocating places and confirming enrolments, with some preferring to manage the whole process centrally and others only managing the allocation process.

In recognition of the complexity of the different management systems, additional communications were issued in June this year to local government to note that central enrolment systems and services should provide consistent information to parents throughout the registration and enrolment process about the requirement for immunisation documentation to be provided and processed before an enrolment can be confirmed. The Early Learning Association of Australia has provided similar information to their members.

The Department of Education and Training and the Department of Health and Human Services will continue to collaborate with the Municipal Association of Victoria regarding what additional information and communication can be provided to central enrolment providers and services regarding their obligations under the legislation.

Family violence

Raised with: Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 13 September 2016

REPLY:

I thank the Member for raising the Echuca Kyabram Family Violence Action Group with me.

Preventing the harm of family violence before it occurs is a key priority of the Andrews Labor Government. That is why a record investment of \$61.6 million over two years was made to fund prevention initiatives, as part of this year's \$572 million budget investment.

A critically important part of this work is the development of Victoria's first Primary Prevention Strategy, as recommended by the Royal Commission into Family Violence. This work is being done in partnership with our new Ministerial Taskforce on the Prevention of Family Violence.

In relation to the Echuca Kyabram Family Violence Action Group, the delivery of programs and support services for those experiencing family violence falls outside of my portfolio area. The Member may wish to raise this matter with the Hon Jenny Mikakos and the Hon Martin Foley, who hold the portfolio responsibilities for these matters.