

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

**16, 17 and 18 August 2016**

**(Extract from book 11)**

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# HANSARD<sup>150</sup>



1866–2016

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



## **The Governor**

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AM

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

## **The ministry**

(from 20 June 2016)

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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
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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
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Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs . . . . .	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
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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.

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**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, #Ms Hartland, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, Ms Shing, Mr Somyurek, Ms Tierney and Mr Young.

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

# participating members

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**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.

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**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

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

*Parliamentary Services* — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

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

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

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 27 May 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, 16 August 2016**

**Gordon Primary School**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Mr Morris  
**Raised on:** 9 February 2016

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

My letter to Mr Morris in January 2016 advised that the Government is committed to providing a safe environment for school communities. Whilst I understand the School Council concerns, the Department of Education and Training is not required to provide staff and / or visitor car parking.

In order to ensure that safety concerns presented by local car movements are minimised, schools are required to prepare a Traffic Management Plan which identifies traffic related hazards and the way in which these hazards will be managed and mitigated.

I have been advised that in August 2015 the School Council President of Gordon Primary School wrote to the Regional Director of South Western Victoria Region requesting assistance about a number of matters, one of which related to car parking at the school.

In his response the Regional Director advised that where site conditions permit this provision may be met if the school has the funds available. Otherwise traffic management outside of schools grounds is a local government/shire responsibility.

It is important to note that Gordon Primary School is located on a 1.9 hectare site which is very small in relative terms. The first priority for this site would be to provide the student population with adequate accommodation and amenity to fully address their learning, health and wellbeing needs both now and into the future.

However, I have asked the Region to work with the school to identify possible solutions to the traffic management concerns.

**Monash City Council**

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government  
**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Raised on:** 10 February 2016

**REPLY:**

Councillors are elected to represent their communities and make decisions on their behalf and, subject to certain requirements of the Local Government Act 1989, the conduct of council meetings is at the council's discretion.

The Local Government Act 1989 sets out meeting procedures that are designed to ensure proper, open and democratic processes. All councils are required to have in place local laws that govern the conduct of their meetings. When proposing to make or amend local laws, council must firstly invite public submissions and arrange for those submitters who have requested to be heard the opportunity to do so. In making these laws, councils need to strike an appropriate balance between meaningful participation by members of the public and the orderly conduct of council business.

I would also like to note that, the Government is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of the Local Government Act 1989.

The review's terms of reference provide that, with the exception of municipal boundaries, all aspects of the current Local Government Act 1989 will be considered, including the governance and administrative processes of councils.

All persons with an interest in local government, including Members of Parliament, can participate in the review by reading submissions and background papers on issues identified as well as putting forward their own reform ideas on the review website at [www.yourcouncilyourcommunity.vic.gov.au](http://www.yourcouncilyourcommunity.vic.gov.au)

### **School communication systems**

**Raised with: Minister for Education**

**Raised by: Ms Lovell**

**Raised on: 24 February 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

During the period 29 January to 25 February 2016 a number of Victorian educational facilities received a total of 90 threats by telephone, the majority of which declared a bomb threat. All threats were subsequently deemed by Victoria Police to be hoaxes.

All schools impacted followed protocol and implemented their Emergency Management Plan upon receipt of the threat and Victoria Police attended in all instances. Schools have been contacted by central and regional office staff including the Senior Education Improvement Leaders who ensured all principals were offered advice and support.

In September 2015, the Department made available to all schools the CASES21 SMS Module (CASES21 Module). The CASES21 Module is offered to schools with no setup costs and a per-SMS cost at a competitive rate of 7c per SMS.

The CASES21 Module and commercial packages in use by schools were designed for the timely notification of student absences, sick bay attendances and emergencies.

All schools across the state have access to software that enables them to communicate with parents and carers via SMS text message.

Since the events unfolded earlier this year, the government has made the CASES21 SMS Module available for schools to use free of charge in an emergency situation. I have committed that the Andrews Labor Government will cover the cost of text messages sent out to parents during emergency situations at Victorian government schools.

As part of the schools emergency management plan principals are required to identify resources that need to be taken from the school during an evacuation. This may include laptops and Internet capability. We recommend schools contact their local Internet or telecommunications provider if they need to explore options to ensure they have the coverage necessary for a range of situations that may arise. There are various technologies that allow Internet access in remote locations. If the principal of Wilmot Road Primary School would like support exploring technology options, I encourage them to contact their Senior Education Improvement Leader or regional office for assistance.

## Interface Growth Fund

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government  
**Raised by:** Mr Mulino  
**Raised on:** 25 February 2016

### REPLY:

This significant \$50 million investment from the Andrews Government was an initial investment towards meeting the critical infrastructure needs of communities in Melbourne's diverse and fast-growing outer areas. The funding will enable councils to deliver the types of infrastructure growing communities need to deliver economic benefits, provide local jobs and access to services and improve local amenity.

I was delighted to announce funding of \$17.15 million collectively over two rounds for ten projects across Cardinia Shire Council, Casey City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire Council and Yarra Ranges Shire Council.

In the initial round, Cardinia Shire Council received funding for two projects. The Heatherbrae Recreation Reserve Pavilion project received a grant of \$2 million and commenced construction in March to deliver a multi-use pavilion and public art, adding a focal point and gathering place for the community. The IYU Soccer Reserve project received an allocation of \$3.52 million and commenced construction in April to deliver a pavilion and a synthetic grass soccer field.

Casey City Council received funding for two projects in the initial round. The Casey Cycling Precinct within Casey Fields received \$1.122 million for the delivery of infrastructure, including a pavilion and track lighting. In addition \$1.4 million was contributed to the redevelopment of Bridgewater Family and Children's to extend the existing facility by adding an additional kindergarten room and improved waiting room. Construction for both projects commenced in April.

Two projects in Mornington Peninsula Shire received in excess of \$4 million. Destination Rosebud is underway to deliver a place-making project that will improve connectivity and lighting on the Rosebud Foreshore, creating better linkages between the foreshore and business district. Additionally, Somerville Community House received funding of \$270 000 to redevelop an existing centre delivering an integrated and contemporary community house. Construction commenced in April.

Yarra Ranges Shire Council received funding for two projects in the initial round. The Belgrave Community Hub received \$723 000 to deliver a one-stop-shop for whole of life services for Yarra Ranges residents. Work commenced with the demolition of the old community centre in March. The Lillydale Lake Play Space project received \$1 million to deliver an all ages and abilities play space within a regional park, with full construction likely to commence early June.

In the supplementary round, an additional \$2.5 million was provided to the City of Casey for the construction of Selandra Integrated Community Centre in Clyde North, delivering a much needed facility in an area experiencing significant growth. Yarra Ranges Shire Council also received an additional \$809 000 for the Montrose Town Centre Community and Cultural Centre project, with construction expected to commence in August. Finally, work will commence in August to redevelop Kimberley Reserve in Yarra Ranges Shire, to deliver the Chirside Park Active Living Hub. This project received \$500 000.

I will continue to work closely with interface councils to ensure that the Andrews Government continues to deliver on its promises.

**Warrnambool and Port Fairy health services**

**Raised with:** Premier  
**Raised by:** Mr Purcell  
**Raised on:** 10 March 2016

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to modernising and expanding Victoria's hospitals. The 2016-17 State Budget provides \$789.5 million additional funding to upgrade and refurbish existing hospitals and build new health infrastructure to boost hospital capacity and provide the best care to Victorian communities.

The Government is investing in health infrastructure in rural and regional Victoria. The 2016-17 State Budget provided \$200 million for a new Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, including \$2.1 million for an urgent care centre at Moyne Health Service in Port Fairy.

These allocations build on the 2015-16 State Budget \$200 million Hospital Beds Rescue Fund that has opened 101 extra hospital beds and points of care across Victoria to treat almost 20 000 extra patients every year. During my time as the Minister for Health, under the Brumby Labor Government, the 2008-09 State Budget provided \$112 million for major capital works at South West Healthcare.

The Victorian Government is also investing in a range of social infrastructure in South West Victoria. The 2016-17 State Budget delivered \$4 million for modernisation of Brauer Secondary College and \$4.6 million for Warrnambool College. This builds on the \$5 million allocated in the 2015-16 State Budget for the Warrnambool Special Developmental School.

**Wall to Wall street art festival**

**Raised with:** Minister for Creative Industries  
**Raised by:** Ms Symes  
**Raised on:** 24 March 2016

**REPLY:**

Thank you for your invitation to meet with members of the Benalla Street Art Committee, Benalla Art Gallery and Juddy Roller about the second Wall to Wall Street Art Festival.

I am aware of this festival, now in its second year and generating engagement and excitement within Benalla and beyond. It is a great example of how the creative industries can make an important contribution to regional communities, socially, economically and culturally.

I am visiting many locations around the state to explore how the creative industries are performing and how this government can best support them and I was pleased to have met you in Benalla last month.

**Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize**

**Raised with:** Minister for Veterans  
**Raised by:** Mr Elasmr  
**Raised on:** 12 April 2016

**REPLY:**

Dear Mr Elasmr

I am writing in response to the Adjournment Debate matter you raised in the Legislative Council on 12 April 2016.

I am delighted to advise you that six students from Lalor Secondary College in the Northern Metropolitan region were selected to participate in the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize in 2016.

On 3 February, I personally congratulated the 22 recipients and 20 regional finalists at an event held in Melbourne. Nathan Burns, Rasha Fayrooz Ali and Clare Freeman were selected as Prize recipients who would participate in the overseas study tour. Jaylan Chaaban, Sasho Lumakovski and Christine Lam were selected as regional finalists for the Canberra study tour. An article was featured in the Whittlesea Leader on 23 February regarding the recipients from Lalor Secondary School. I have enclosed a copy of the article for your information.

Since then, the 22 Prize recipients have returned from the overseas study tour which took place during the March/April school holidays. While on tour, the students shared their reflections via the Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize Facebook page and on their return, they were encouraged to speak about their experiences with their families, schools and local communities.

In June, the Canberra study tour will visit significant sites such as the Australian War Memorial, where the students will participate in the Last Post ceremony. Students will have the opportunity to contribute to the Prize Facebook page. Again, they will be encouraged to speak about their experiences on their return.

I encourage you to follow and share the Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Facebook page in your electorate and to encourage Year 9 and 10 students to consider applying for the 2016-17 program which is now open.



Teacher Sara Tacey, Christine Lam, Clare Freeman, Nathan Burns, Jaylan Chaaban, teacher Annette Spence and Sasho Lumakovski will be going on Anzac study tours. Picture: CARMELO BAZZANO

## Six set for Anzac tours

SIX Lalor Secondary College students have been chosen for two Anzac study tours.

Clare Freeman, Rasha Fayrooz Ali and Nathan Burns were announced as recipients of the Premier’s Spirit of Anzac Prize.

They will follow in the footsteps of World War I veterans as they visit places of national significance at Lemnos, Gallipoli and the Western Front.

The 2016 tour is a unique chance for the students to reflect on the spirit of the Australians who gave their lives for their country.

Clare said she and her classmates were honoured to be representing the school and Victoria.

“We’re over the moon with excitement of the study tours that we’ll be participating in over the school holidays,” Clare said.

“Sitting down to work on

my application I would have probably laughed if you told me I’d win such an opportunity.”

Meanwhile, Sasho Lumakovski, Jaylan Chaaban and Christine Lam will participate in a three-day study tour of significant sites in Canberra, including the Australian War Memorial.

Students were selected after submitting projects that reflect what the Anzac spirit means today.

### **Elevated rail proposal**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mr Davis  
**Raised on:** 13 April 2016

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Government committed to removing all nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong, Victorians voted for it and that is what we are doing.

The former Liberal Government did not commit to removing all nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong and their opposition to this project is understood by all Victorians.

There are numerous reports and studies available at [www.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au](http://www.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au) that cover the issues the Member for Southern Metropolitan refers to in his adjournment. In particular he will be pleased to know that overall noise and diesel fumes at ground level will be reduced as a result of the elevated solution.

### **VicForests**

**Raised with:** Minister for Agriculture  
**Raised by:** Ms Dunn  
**Raised on:** 13 April 2016

**REPLY:**

As per the Victorian Auditor-General's findings in the 2013 performance audit report "Managing Victoria's Native Forest Timber Resources", VicForests does not receive any government subsidies.

VicForests contributes to the State of Victoria by creating jobs and managing the State's public native timber resources for long-term economic returns. Since being established, VicForests has achieved over \$20 million net profit, generated over \$1.1 billion in timber sales, and returned dividends to the State in excess of \$6 million.

### **Korumburra Secondary College**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Ms Bath  
**Raised on:** 13 April 2016

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Firstly, I wish to commend the school community's commitment in providing quality education to the students at Korumburra Secondary College.

Investment in education and school infrastructure is a priority for the Andrews Labor Government. This has been demonstrated through the Government's 2016-17 State Budget allocation of \$1.1 billion to build, upgrade and maintain school infrastructure across the state, ensuring that every community has access to a great local school, and every child gets the chance to succeed. Our challenge is to responsibly balance and prioritise the needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria, all in varying condition.

I am pleased to hear that Korumburra Secondary College's current capital works project, is progressing well. I am advised that the school has been working closely with the appointed architect to review the proposed design and ensure that the project can be delivered within budget. I have asked the Department to continue to work closely with the college throughout the remainder of construction, and very much look forward to seeing first-hand the newly modernised and upgraded buildings at Korumburra Secondary College.

I can assure you that the needs of all schools, including Korumburra Secondary College, will be considered when determining future priorities for the capital works program. The Government will continue to use all available data, including condition assessments and pre-existing project plans, when allocating funding in future State Budgets.

### **Geelong Hospital**

**Raised with: Minister for Health**

**Raised by: Mr Ramsay**

**Raised on: 14 April 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

The Minister for Housing, Disability & Ageing has portfolio responsibility for these matters. I have referred the question to Minister Foley and requested that he respond to you directly.

### **Goulburn Valley Health**

**Raised with: Minister for Health**

**Raised by: Ms Lovell**

**Raised on: 3 May 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

Last month I was delighted to join the Premier Daniel Andrews and members of the community to announce the \$168.5 million redevelopment of the Shepparton campus of Goulburn Valley Health.

The former Coalition Government took the people of Shepparton for granted and refused to give them the modern hospital that they badly needed.

In response to the needs identified by the health service, the local community and the Community Advisory group, the redevelopment includes a new four-storey tower that will provide three new operating theatres and two new wards, and existing theatres will be refurbished to provide greater efficiency with operations. The existing Emergency Department will be extended to add extra treatment bays, doubling its current capacity, and a new short-stay unit to improve patient wait times. Patients needing dialysis at Goulburn Valley Health will receive their treatment in greater comfort, with the existing chairs to be replaced with a new, expanded 16 chair unit.

After \$1 billion in cuts to health by the former Government hospitals across Victoria are continuing to benefit from the Andrews Labor Government's record investments in health.

Health services like Goulburn Valley Health will share in an extra \$2.45 billion in this year's budget for health. Funding for hospital services will be allocated to health services through the Policy and Funding Guidelines, to be released later in the year.

Last year, as part of the \$200 million Hospital Beds Rescue Fund, Goulburn Valley Health received funding to open eight new beds, which will enable it to treat an extra 635 patients each year and help ease the pressure on its emergency department. I can advise that these beds are fully operational.

I can assure you that the Department of Health and Human Services is working with Goulburn Valley Health to ensure that it continues to provide the highest possible level of services until such time as this exciting project is completed.

I acknowledge the work of the staff at Goulburn Valley Health to manage the growing number of patients in the emergency department and the significant increase in the acuity of these patients.

### Plenty Road upgrade

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Raised by:** Mr Elasmar  
**Raised on:** 3 May 2016

**REPLY:**

Thank you for the invitation to visit Plenty Road. I am pleased to accept your invitation.

The Victorian Government is responding to the significant population growth in Melbourne's north with a range of investments in the transport network, including the Plenty Road upgrade, Yan Yean Road upgrade, O'Herns Road interchange and the Mernda Rail Project.

The 2016-17 Victorian Budget committed up to \$139 million for the Plenty Road upgrade.

This investment will provide an additional lane in each direction between McKimmies Road and Bridge Inn Road.

### Footscray Hospital

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Mr Finn  
**Raised on:** 3 May 2016

**REPLY:**

After years of neglect under the former government, the Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in a healthier future for the western suburbs. In the May 2015 state budget, funding was provided to expand and build more services for the health services in the west, including \$200 million for the Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital and \$85 million for the expansion of acute health services at Werribee Mercy Hospital. Work is progressing well on both projects.

I am pleased to advise that a further \$61.3 million was provided in the 2016 state budget for key infrastructure works and planning at Western Health's Sunshine and Footscray Hospital sites.

Of the \$ 61.3 million, Sunshine Hospital will receive \$44.3 million to provide for an extra 64 new surgical and emergency beds as part of a plan to use extra spaces that will be available once the new Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital is complete. This includes a 32-bed surgical inpatient ward to increase capacity for elective surgery, 12 surgical short stay (recovery) beds and increased emergency department capacity with an expanded 20-bed short stay unit and 12 additional emergency department treatment cubicles.

Footscray Hospital will receive \$17 million: \$15 million to immediately address urgent works to fix key sections of the hospital and \$2 million to undertake important planning works to determine the future of Footscray Hospital. Work is also underway to develop a regional plan for the western growth corridor of Melbourne as part of the statewide services and infrastructure plan. This planning will focus on making sure that we have the right services and infrastructure in place in Melbourne's West so that we can best meet the demands of our rapidly growing community.

### Monash City Council

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government  
**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Raised on:** 3 May 2016

**REPLY:**

This matter has been dealt with in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989.

The Victorian Electoral Commission has publicly advised that following a countback held on 23 May 2016 for the Oakleigh Ward, Nga Hosking was declared elected by the returning officer. Further, the countback to fill the vacancy in the Mulgrave Ward was held on 14 June 2016 resulting in the election of John Sharkey.

### **Greater Geelong City Council**

**Raised with: Minister for Local Government**

**Raised by: Mr Davis**

**Raised on: 4 May 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

The government has appointed a panel of administrators to act as the Greater Geelong City Council until the elections in October 2017. This will provide greater certainty about the future for the people of Geelong.

A panel of administrators was appointed on 24 May 2016. The panel of administrators will replace the interim administrator at the council, Mr Yehudi Blacher, who was appointed from 16 April 2016 until the appointment of a panel of administrators.

The panel of administrators for the council comprises:

- Dr Kathy Alexander (chairperson), an experienced board director, consultant and CEO, including as the former CEO for the City of Melbourne.
- Ms Laurinda Gardner (panel member), a former senior government executive with considerable experience leading large policy and operational teams, change management and organisational governance.
- Mr Peter Dorling (panel member), an experienced board member and director, current business manager at Avalon Airport and member of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre Trust and former executive director of the Committee for Geelong.

The panel of administrators reflects the right skills and experience, local knowledge and leadership needed to return good governance to Geelong.

As the interim administrator for the council, Mr Blacher ensured continuity of the work of the council for the people of Geelong. I thank him for his leadership and work during the period of his appointment.

I look forward to supporting the panel of administrators to restore good governance at the council.

### **Chandler Highway bridge**

**Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety**

**Raised by: Mr Ondarchie**

**Raised on: 4 May 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

Consistent with previous statements, VicRoads has confirmed that the Chandler Highway Upgrade will not require the compulsory acquisition of land from residents of Rex Avenue or the Chandler Highway. The Chandler Highway Upgrade will be built within the existing road reserve on the west side of the existing Chandler Highway Bridge.

VicRoads has indicated that while this land is part of the road reserve, some of this land is zoned residential and consistent with the information available on the VicRoads website. A Planning Scheme Amendment is required to convert this land to road zone.

Refer to <[vicroads.vic.gov.au/planning-and-projects/melbourne-road-projects/chandler-highway-kew](http://vicroads.vic.gov.au/planning-and-projects/melbourne-road-projects/chandler-highway-kew)> for further information.

### Gaming licences

**Raised with:** Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation  
**Raised by:** Ms Hartland  
**Raised on:** 5 May 2016

#### REPLY:

The decision whether to grant approval for additional gaming machines at a gaming venue or for new premises for gaming is a matter for the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation.

In determining whether or not to grant approval the Commission is required to consider whether or not the approval would cause a net social or economic detriment. The Commission considers a number of factors in making its determination.

The government has decision-making guidelines in place which the Commission is required to take into account when assessing an application that includes a proposal for a children's play area.

The decision-making guidelines require the Commission to have regard to a number of harm minimisation measures, including that the children's play area is located as far away as possible from the gaming machine area, does not have a line of sight into the gaming machine area and does not permit sounds from gaming machines to be heard in the children's play area.

### Pathways

**Raised with:** Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing  
**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Raised on:** 24 May 2016

#### REPLY:

Pathways and Neami National recently announced their intention to merge and are currently undergoing a due diligence process. The process will determine the potential for Neami National to acquire Pathways clients and services, including those services for participants funded through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

I met with Pathways to better understand the nature of its concerns and to outline my commitment that people with psychosocial disability will continue to receive the supports they need under the NDIS.

I understand requests from Pathways to meet with Federal Government representatives were not responded to including the Federal Member for Corangamite. I offered the assistance of my department to work with the National Disability Insurance Agency and Pathways to ensure service continuity for existing clients and stability going forward.

NDIS pricing is set by the NDIA, and Victoria continues to discuss pricing with the NDIA and Commonwealth Government to ensure ongoing quality service delivery and an effective market.

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring a smooth transition for service providers to the NDIS. Victoria has also allocated funding through its NDIS Transition Support Package to community mental health services, to support service providers in transitioning to the NDIS. This package is assisting service providers adapt to the NDIS operating model.

My department has actively engaged with the NDIA and community mental health service providers over the course of the Bannon trial to enable a smooth transition.

Victoria also continues to support consumers and carers with funding retained from community mental health services by delivering some services that will not be covered by the NDIS.

**TAFE funding**

**Raised with:** Minister for Training and Skills  
**Raised by:** Mr Melhem  
**Raised on:** 24 May 2016

**REPLY:**

I commend Mr Melhem on his passion for education in Melbourne's western suburbs and his commitment to restoring Victoria's TAFE system and making Victoria the Education State.

I am pleased to confirm that your electorate will benefit from Victoria University's success in obtaining \$2.4 million from the TAFE Rescue Fund Community Service funding round for the 2016 academic year.

The funding allocation allows vulnerable and disadvantaged young people in the Western Metropolitan Region to participate in training that they might have not had access to, often providing targeted support both while undertaking study and in transitioning from training to employment.

As a result, this improves young people's job prospects, industry's access to educated potential employees and positive outcomes for the western metropolitan region as a whole.

Victoria University's funding is directed to seven separate community service activities:

- Student Outreach Services;
- Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Support;
- Transition to Work;
- Campus Facilities;
- Diploma of Paramedical Science (Ambulance);
- Advanced Engineering Courses; and
- Transport, Supply Chain and Logistics.

All of the above activities have positive benefits in some respect to vulnerable and disadvantaged students in the Western Metropolitan Region. For example, Student Outreach Services provides a range of supports to assist students (predominantly from low socio-economic backgrounds in the Western Metropolitan Region) in completing their courses. Services include counselling, welfare and enhanced student support services, and range from providing legal and financial advice to accommodation and disability services to ensure that students are supported to participate in all areas of TAFE life.

The above activities are a good example of the diversity within the Institute. Without this funding, some of these programs might have otherwise been defunded or discontinued.

TAFEs play an important role in supporting local communities and advancing Victoria as the Education State. Victoria University is part of this valuable contribution that TAFEs make to vulnerable and disadvantaged students.

### Level crossings

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mr Davis  
**Raised on:** 24 May 2016

#### REPLY:

Works are now well underway for the removal of the nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong along the Cranbourne—Pakenham line. The Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) has begun working at a number of locations, including some after-hours works. These works are required outside of live rail operating hours for the safety of workers and train users, and to minimise the disruption to road and rail networks during peak travel times. Where possible, however, the most disruptive works are being carried out during the day.

Where night works are required, LXRA is mindful of keeping noise from construction activities to a minimum and respecting the local community environment in which they are working. While works are underway, the project will comply with the Environmental Protection Authority Victoria requirements.

Residents who live close to night works will be notified well in advance and offered alternative accommodation during any particularly noisy works. A 24 hour hotline is also available during the works to ensure residents can directly contact the project team about any concerns.

I would also point out that the night works to which you refer as having taken place on the night of Monday 23 May 2016 were not undertaken by LXRA. These works are signalling upgrade works being carried out by Metro Trains Melbourne between Caulfield and Oakleigh stations from mid-April 2016 through to the end of June 2016. The works are essential to ensure the ongoing safety and efficiency of the rail network.

### Diggers Rest police resources

**Raised with:** Minister for Police  
**Raised by:** Mr Finn  
**Raised on:** 24 May 2016

#### REPLY:

I refer to the matter raised in the Legislative Assembly on 24 May 2016 regarding police services for Diggers Rest.

As you noted, the decision of how and where resources are deployed is appropriately a matter for the Chief Commissioner. Policing across Victoria is managed in a flexible manner to ensure the best possible use of available police resources.

I am advised that when a Diggers Rest resident calls the '000' emergency number, the nearest police unit will respond. The local police response is provided by police from Melton, Sunbury, or the Highway Patrol.

Victoria Police has advised that the proposal for Diggers Rest to form part of the Sunbury Response Zone is not feasible, as it does not align with the Police Service Area and the Local Government Area (LGA) boundaries.

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

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

Victoria Police will soon have an extra 406 sworn police officers and 52 support personnel bringing the total number of new police personnel funded by the Andrews Government since it came to office to 1156.

The full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget will be fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police has over 200 custody officers.

We are also making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The government will continue to consult with Victoria Police about overall police resourcing across the state. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner 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.

### **University Hospital Geelong**

**Raised with: Minister for Health**  
**Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert**  
**Raised on: 24 May 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

As a result of the 2016–17 Victorian Budget which delivered an extra \$2.45 billion in health funding, Barwon Health will receive a multi-million dollar funding boost. This follows last year's record investment in health, where Barwon Health received an additional \$20.24 million, bringing total funding to \$441 million. This is on top of \$1.4 million boost provided in May to immediately open 10 extra beds.

This record funding, together with demand for service, will mean that University Hospital Geelong will open up beds on Baxter Ward 7.

Initially, Baxter 7 ward will cater for acute patients to meet an expected increase in demand over winter, before being transformed into palliative care beds from November.

After \$1 billion in cuts to health under the former Liberal Government, the Andrews Labor Government is putting patients first and injecting record funding into Victoria's hospitals so more patients can be treated, sooner.

This extra funding for Barwon Health means more patients will be able to access the high quality and safe care they need, especially during the busy winter months.

### **Dairy industry**

**Raised with: Minister for Agriculture**  
**Raised by: Mr Purcell**  
**Raised on: 24 May 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

The price reductions imposed by some dairy processors have created a major challenge for Victorian dairy farmers and their affected communities. The Andrews Labor Government acted swiftly to provide support.

The Dairy Industry Taskforce has developed an Action Plan to support dairy farmers and industry impacted by the price reductions. It is also coordinating an industry response to address the economic and social impacts on farm businesses and communities.

Dairy farmers are providing comments to Murray Goulburn and Fonterra directly about the impact of the clawback.

On 31 May 2016, Murray Goulburn offered an early payment option as part of its Milk Supply Support Package. Dairy farmers can opt to pay Murray Goulburn the difference between the payments they received this financial year and the projected reduced closing price. The payment must be made in full by 24 June 2016.

I have called on processors to provide farmers with early certainty for 2016–17 prices. Early certainty will give farmers the best possible opportunity to plan for financial challenges ahead.

I appreciate that thousands of Victorian families depend on the strength of the dairy sector; their plight is a top priority for our State.

I have not ruled out establishing an inquiry into these issues.

### **Haven Foundation**

**Raised with:** Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing  
**Raised by:** Ms Crozier  
**Raised on:** 24 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to improving housing access for a range of Victorians.

The 2016-17 Budget includes \$12.9 million over four years for improving housing access for people with a severe mental illness.

Some of this funding will go to Prahran Mission for property and tenancy management and on-site support for the residents of the Haven in Prahran.

It is anticipated that residents in the Haven will be eligible for individual packages of psychosocial disability support through the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

We will continue to explore options for further supported accommodation in areas of need throughout Victoria and look forward to the Haven's continued investment in this space.

### **Bayswater level crossings**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mr Leane  
**Raised on:** 25 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

Thank you for raising this matter with me. It's great to have the Knox Council's support for the Bayswater Level Crossing Removal Project.

I will ask the Level Crossing Removal Authority to work with the Council to investigate opportunities for land to be made available at the end of the project, for construction of a library or community centre.

### **Ridesharing regulation**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mr Melhem  
**Raised on:** 25 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

As you are aware, the emergence of ride-sharing is the biggest issue facing the Victorian taxi and hire car industry.

Following the outcomes of the recent Country Court matter, the Government has legislated to remove Section 159 from the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983.

This ensures that existing public safety requirements can be enforced. For example, the requirement for drivers of commercial passenger vehicles to undergo rigorous criminal background checks and medical fitness assessments.

If the Taxis Services Commission was unable to enforce these requirements then there would be a very real and immediate risk that people who have committed serious criminal offences such as murder and rape will start driving taxis and hire cars.

The enforcement of driver accreditation is necessary to protect public safety and maintain public confidence in the commercial passenger industry. For these reasons ride sharing service providers should have a strong interest in ensuring compliance.

Uber agrees that drivers should be accredited and is recommending to its drivers that they apply and obtain accreditation. However, to date, Uber has not taken on accountability for ensuring compliance.

Responding to the emergence of ride sharing is an extremely complex matter, and Victoria's response needs to reflect the unique starting point of our regulatory framework and industry.

The Victorian Government will be providing for the regulation of ride sharing but will do so in a way that ensures public safety, a competitive market and is fair to existing industry.

Commercial passenger vehicles, such as taxis and hire cars, are an essential part of our transport system, and provide important access and mobility across Victoria.

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring we implement a solution that is going to work for the industry as a whole in the longer term.

I expect to soon be in a position to make announcements about how the Government will respond to ride-share services in the future.

### **Level crossings**

**Raised with: Minister for Public Transport**

**Raised by: Mr Davis**

**Raised on: 25 May 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

On 22 June 2016, the Legislative Council in the Victorian Parliament overwhelming voted in support of the Government's proposed solution to remove the nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong.

While this endorsement is appreciated, the Government has repeatedly made it clear that the design solution between Caulfield and Dandenong will not necessarily be the most appropriate solution at other sites. This includes on the Frankston line where the previous Liberal Government decided to not remove a single level crossing but the Andrews Government is removing eleven, with three sets of boom gates already gone.

There are rail bridges on every train line in Melbourne and as the Liberal member for Southern Metropolitan region Inga Peulich has pointed out, "a bridge is not a sky rail". The level crossing at Toorak Road in Kooyong is a congested death trap that clogs up entry and exit from the Monash freeway. The Liberal Party went to the last election with a promise to keep it in place while in contrast the Andrews Government promised to remove it. Initial planning works are occurring and at this point there is no design solution.

The level crossing at Grange Road in Alphington is also a congested death trap that the Liberal Party committed to keeping in place. Along with the Andrews Government's new Chandler Road bridge, the removal of this crossing will help alleviate congestion in one of Melbourne's most notorious traffic bottlenecks.

### **Elevated rail proposal**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Raised on:** 25 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Government acknowledges that the Caulfield to Dandenong Level Crossing Removal Project represents a major change and I can assure you that the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) is committed to engaging closely with local residents at every stage of the project.

I understand that the LXRA has had ongoing meetings and discussions with Mr Papapavlou, and that he has been assigned a case manager to keep him up to date as the project progresses.

You can assure Mr Papapavlou that the design of the rail corridor precludes the possibility of a train falling off.

### **Waste management**

**Raised with:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Raised by:** Ms Springle  
**Raised on:** 26 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government takes community concerns relating to hazardous waste seriously. Volumes of hazardous wastes have reduced over the past 10 years but it is not possible to eliminate it entirely. There are limited or no reuse, recycling and/or treatment options for many hazardous waste types.

The SUEZ landfill at Lyndhurst plays a significant statewide role in managing Victoria's highest hazard solid wastes and it meets EPA Victoria's licence requirements for appropriate hazardous waste disposal to protect the surrounding environment and community.

### **Growing Suburbs Fund**

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government  
**Raised by:** Mr Mulino  
**Raised on:** 26 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government recognises that Melbourne's interface councils are diverse and are home to some of the city's most vulnerable communities. They play a critical role in supporting Victoria's population growth and economy, contain productive rural land and are responsible for 90 per cent of Melbourne's Green Wedge areas.

As a group, the interface councils on Melbourne's urban fringe have been experiencing significant population growth over the last two decades, with growth consistently doubling the state's average. Melbourne's outer suburban areas are expected to continue growing, with more than 1 million additional residents by 2031.

The Victorian Government is investing an additional \$50 million through the 2016-17 Growing Suburbs Fund (GSF), formerly known as the Interface Growth Fund, to accelerate the delivery of critical infrastructure in Melbourne's outer suburban areas.

The GSF builds on the initial \$50 million commitment through the 2015-16 Interface Growth Fund and the 34 local infrastructure projects that are currently being delivered.

The GSF is open to Melbourne's ten interface councils, including Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton, Mitchell, Mornington Peninsula, Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Yarra Ranges.

Community, not-for-profit or private sector organisations are encouraged to partner with these councils to put forward proposals for the 2016-17 GSF.

The 2016-17 GSF will fund a mix of projects that have a direct social or economic benefit for communities such as family and community centres, town centres, parks and reserves, playgrounds and amenity facilities.

Applications for eligible projects will be received through a single application round, which opened on 3 June 2016 and will close 29 July 2016.

The assessment process is designed to ensure that fully scoped, eligible and high priority projects can be funded as soon as possible for works to commence. Successful applications will be announced from November 2016.

The GSF will be delivered in coordination with other government infrastructure investments in interface communities.

### **Monash City Council**

**Raised with:** Minister for Finance  
**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Raised on:** 26 May 2016

**REPLY:**

The matter you have raised falls within the portfolio responsibilities of the Hon Natalie Hutchins MP as the Minister for Local Government.

### **Latrobe Valley vocational education and training**

**Raised with:** Minister for Training and Skills  
**Raised by:** Ms Bath  
**Raised on:** 26 May 2016

**REPLY:**

TBM Training entered into voluntary liquidation on 14 April 2016 and Worksafe Training Centre entered into voluntary liquidation on 9 May 2016. The closures of these Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 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 of each RTO and writing to all affected Victorian Training Guarantee (VTG) funded students in relation to continuing their training.

Further, the Department has made arrangements with government TAFE institutes to help students. Specifically, VTG funded students can 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.

In relation to TBM Training, who was registered with the Victorian Registration & Qualification Authority (VRQA), as soon as the VRQA became aware of the RTO closure it secured 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. Students of TBM Training who still require a statement of attainment have been advised to contact the VRQA.

VTG funded students of Worksafe Training Centre, registered with the commonwealth regulator the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) have been advised by the Department by letter that they need to contact ASQA if they have not already obtained a statement of attainment.

In relation to students who were enrolled in the Certificate III in Rigging at Worksafe Training Centre, I am informed that this qualification is offered by Federation Training. Students who need to complete this qualification should contact Federation Training to discuss their training options.

The Government has not cut funding to Worksafe Training Centre. The RTO was unsuccessful in its application for a 2016 Funding Contract as it did not meet the required standards. The RTO held a Funding Contract to deliver government subsidised training in 2014 and 2015 and any students who were enrolled under the terms of those contracts would have continued to be funded at the RTO under the VTG until completion. These students are able to continue to access their entitlement to VTG funding to complete the training they commenced at Worksafe Training Centre at a new training provider of their choice who delivers government subsidised training.

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.

### **Palais Theatre**

**Raised with:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

**Raised by:** Ms Pennicuik

**Raised on:** 26 May 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government appreciates the significant community benefits and enjoyment the Palais Theatre provides to thousands of Victorians every year.

The City of Port Phillip is the Committee of Management for the St Kilda Triangle site, which includes the Palais Theatre, and is responsible for issuing leases over the theatre under relevant legislation.

It is my legislated administrative responsibility to consider the terms and conditions of the lease and, if acceptable, approve the lease. This is not related to the lessee evaluation or selection process.

The Andrews Labor Government has committed \$13.4 million to restoration work for the Palais, which will address interior statutory and legislative compliance issues, and improve the exterior appearance of this iconic live entertainment venue.

### **Power-assisted bicycles**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety

**Raised by:** Mr Morris

**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

In Victoria, powered assisted pedal cycles fitted with an auxiliary motor(s) producing a combined maximum of 200 watts or less, or a pedelec that can have a maximum power of 250 watts, are not required to be registered, nor the rider required to be licensed.

The fundamental characteristic of these vehicles (commonly referred to as electric bicycles) is that they are capable of being powered by the pedals alone and are likely to have similar performance characteristics to an average rider on an unpowered bicycle.

The law makes no reference to require riders to continuously pedal while riding electric bicycles. Further, such bicycles must also be ridden in accordance with the Road Safety Road Rules 2009, in the same way as any non-powered bicycle.

Electric bicycles that do not meet the above definitions are considered to be non-complying motorcycles and can only be used on private property.

### **Rail high-capacity signalling**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Ms Dunn  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to the introduction of high capacity signalling on Melbourne's rail network.

During 2015, Public Transport Victoria (PTV) progressed the design and engineering works for Stage 1 of a High-capacity signalling (HCS) trial. In parallel, the Government was updating the Business Case for the Metro Tunnel, which was publicly released in February this year.

PTV and the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority (MMRA) have worked together to develop an efficient approach to the initial implementation of HCS on Melbourne's rail network — particularly in the context of the Metro Tunnel project.

The Metro Tunnel project includes HCS from Watergardens to Dandenong as part of the scope of the Rail Systems Alliance work package. This will be the first roll out of HCS in an existing rail network in Australia and will result in HCS being used for most of the new Sunshine-Dandenong line that will be created with the new Metro Tunnel.

The Government has decided that delivering both the Metro Tunnel HCS scope and the initial implementation of HCS as a single procurement would deliver better outcomes for the State. As a result, the initial implementation of HCS is now part of the Metro Tunnel Rail Systems work package.

This approach also means that HCS will not be trialled on the Sandringham line. To de-risk the delivery of the Metro Tunnel, the initial implementation will occur on X'Trapolis rolling stock. Consequently a location on the Clifton Hill Group is considered the most appropriate for the initial implementation, and this will be aligned with the Government's long-term plans to improve capacity on the South Morang and Hurstbridge lines. The knowledge gained from the initial implementation will inform the roll out of HCS on the Metro Tunnel and will also inform any future roll out on the network.

With regards to the Sandringham line, the Government is considering upgrades to the conventional signalling system. These upgrades would improve reliability and deliver a better service for Sandringham commuters.

### **Local government reform**

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government  
**Raised by:** Mr Melhem  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

Thank you for the adjournment debate matter you raised on 7 June 2016 seeking an update on the Local Government Act review.

A key milestone in creating a new Local Government Act for Victoria was met on 10 June 2016 following the release of the Directions Paper-Act for the Future.

This contains 157 proposed reform directions for new legislation covering all Victorian councils. These have been developed to achieve three core aims which are to: revitalise local democracy; assist councils to be innovative, collaborative and efficient; and create a clear, 'easy to read' Act.

Submissions from both the sector and the general community in response to the Directions Paper are open until Friday 16 September 2016. In addition, an extensive engagement process will be undertaken around the state to test the reforms with councillors, council staff, residents and peak organisations.

The full Directions Paper, and other explanatory material relating to the review can be found at the 'Your Council Your Community' website.

### **Publication funding guidelines**

**Raised with:** Premier  
**Raised by:** Mr Davis  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

Details of the Government's investment into The Conversation have been on [premier.vic.gov.au](http://premier.vic.gov.au) since 21 September 2015.

### **Pedestrian safety**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Raised by:** Mr Barber  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government has committed \$100 million to target pedestrian and cyclist crashes under the safer cyclists and pedestrians program.

As part of the \$100 million commitment, VicRoads, in association with the Transport Accident Commission and the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources has developed an investment plan for \$25 million to address pedestrian crash issues.

The program will target high fatal and serious pedestrian injury areas. Treatments will be implemented not just in locations where pedestrian injuries are occurring, but also in areas surrounding these locations. The program is expected to be implemented between 2016–17–2017–18, and will focus on 87 areas across Victoria.

It is anticipated that this program will reduce serious pedestrian casualties by almost 20 per cent over a 20 year treatment life, resulting in approximately 400 less serious casualties overall.

The program is not a pedestrian crossing program, although pedestrian crossings may be included as part of the countermeasures implemented. The three crossings mentioned in the Adjournment Debate question are not located in the 87 areas identified for the program.

VicRoads advises me that it is willing to work with the City of Darebin or any other council to assist identifying other programs, under which proposals such as the three mentioned in the Adjournment Debate question, could be considered for funding.

### **Warrnambool rail services**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mr Purcell  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I was pleased to announce an additional service on the Warrnambool line and I thank the Member for Western Victoria for taking part in the consultation on the Regional Network Development Plan. As a first step towards implementing new services on the Warrnambool line, an additional train will be added. In the future, as part of adding additional coach services to the network, consultation will be undertaken to determine demand, and the timing of any new services. Residents can provide feedback at any time by contacting Public Transport Victoria on 1800 800 007.

**Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement**

**Raised with:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Raised by:** Mr Finn  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government greatly appreciates the vital contribution of Country Fire Authority (CFA) Volunteers, including those volunteers in your region who selflessly devote their time in keeping Victorian communities safe.

Over the past 18 months the Government has delivered \$33.5 million for new volunteer trucks, \$46.2 million for new training facilities, and \$11 million for CFA new stations and station upgrades.

We understand the concerns of some CFA volunteers about the proposed enterprise agreement. However, the Fair Work Commission recommendation is explicit: 'nothing in this agreement shall prevent volunteers in the CFA from providing services normally provided by such volunteers as volunteers without remuneration.'

Emergency Management Commissioner Craig Lapsley has been appointed to oversee the implementation of the agreement. He will publish six and twelve month reports to ensure the role of volunteers is protected.

Further, the Victorian Government will establish a Country Fire Authority Performance and Policy Consultative Committee, uniting career firefighters, volunteers and management to improve the CFA's performance and culture.

The CFA Committee will be modelled on the Ambulance Performance and Policy Consultative Committee established in the wake of the ambulance crisis that worked to produce Victoria's Ambulance Action Plan to improve services and save lives.

A new board and new consultative committee will bring together volunteer and career firefighters, management and the Government to build a better culture and ultimately provide safety and certainty for all Victorians.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

**Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre**

**Raised with:** Minister for Tourism and Major Events  
**Raised by:** Mr Elasmarr  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) expansion will add 9000 square metres of flexible exhibition space, including a multi-purpose facility with 900 retractable seats and 200 additional moveable seats, concourse, exhibitor and support areas.

The expansion will enable the MCEC to cater for larger exhibitions, stage multiple exhibitions and conventions concurrently, and greatly improve the efficiency of operations of the combined facility through increased links to the existing Melbourne Exhibition Centre and Melbourne Convention Centre.

Once completed, the additional space is expected to generate an additional 74 000 international visitors annually, who spend an average \$693 each day while in Melbourne, resulting in a \$167 million boost to our economy.

It is anticipated that the construction of the expanded exhibition facilities will generate 400 jobs, while the construction of the car park and hotel will generate a total of 300 jobs.

The MCEC has advised that once operational, the expanded facilities will create an additional 865 ongoing direct and indirect jobs. The hotel will generate approximately 100 ongoing jobs.

Constituents in your region can find out more about the opportunities this project will bring for Melbourne and your community by visiting <http://www.mcec.com.au/expansion>.

### **North Road, Ormond, level crossing**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Ms Crozier  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The previous Liberal Government did not remove any Level Crossings on the Frankston line. The Andrews Labor Government is removing eleven, with three already gone, including the crossing at North Road Ormond, six months ahead of schedule.

The fast-tracked removal of this crossing will ultimately be terrific for Ormond traders as traffic congestion in the area is alleviated and customers have approved access to the precinct via both public transport and road.

The Government acknowledges that during construction there will be impacts on the traders and the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) has been working closely with local businesses on North, McKinnon and Centre roads since the project commenced.

For example, LXRA is running a targeted "Open for Business" campaign in the area and details are available at [www.levelcrossinas.vic.gov.au](http://www.levelcrossinas.vic.gov.au).

Approximately 1000 workers are currently on site and many traders have benefitted from the shopping they are undertaking locally.

Importantly, by August 2016, the bulk of major project work will be complete and the trains will be back up and running. McKinnon Station will be operational in early August, followed by Ormond and Bentleigh stations.

I am advised that the particular power outage to which the member referred refer occurred in Ormond to facilitate works for the project and affected a total of three local businesses. The project team's role in electricity works is to notify United Energy of the works that need to occur and United Energy then determines when the service disruptions will take place. Properties impacted by a power outage then receive a notice directly from United Energy.

The LXRA and project alliances will continue to work closely with local businesses and the broader community to develop ways to minimise any disruptions and impacts on traders.

### **Police numbers**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police  
**Raised by:** Mr O'Donohue  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I can assure you that Melton residents continue to receive a 24-hour policing response from across the Melton Police Service Area. It is very important that if anyone requires urgent police assistance that they contact Victoria Police on the emergency number '000', as calls are recorded and responded to by the closest appropriate police personnel.

I am assured by the Chief Commissioner 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.

I am advised that police from the Melton Police Station and the Caroline Springs Police Station provide police services across the Melton Police Service Area. The local police response includes the Crime Investigation Unit and the Highway Patrol. Further, initiatives currently being undertaken in Melton include a new crime and traffic hotline, a bicycle patrol unit, a liquor licensing accord and an alcohol diversion program Your Choice.

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

We need to see more police out on the front line and the Chief Commissioner is working with the Government on what resources and powers they need to ensure that we see the crime rate start to turn around.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 police and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

This 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 full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget is being fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police now has over 200 custody officers.

Protective Services Officers (PSOs) were deployed to the Melton train station from 7 May 2013 and will be deployed to Caroline Springs train station when it becomes operational. PSOs have undertaken a significant amount of work, issuing more than 57 000 infringement notices for a wide range of offences including antisocial

behaviour, alcohol, drugs and graffiti offences. They have detected people with outstanding warrants and provided assistance, including medical assistance, to commuters.

We are also making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

### City Life

**Raised with:** Premier  
**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Raised on:** 7 June 2016

#### REPLY:

I am advised that this issue has been resolved thanks to the intervention of the Member for Frankston. Upon hearing that City Life would be closing, the Member for Frankston worked tirelessly to ensure that the vital services provided by City Life would continue to be provided for people living in Frankston.

We have contributed \$300 000 to Wintringham Specialist Aged Care who will partner with Wallara to provide affordable housing, outreach services and training opportunities for people with disabilities. These two organisations will also provide the important meal production that is so crucial for many living in Frankston.

I am very pleased that we were able to play an important role to secure the future of these vital services and commend the Member for Frankston for his work on behalf of his constituents.

### Regional Network Development Plan

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Ms Lovell  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

In the short term, the Andrews Labor Government has announced the addition of a fourth Melbourne to Shepparton service to be formed by extending an existing Melbourne to Seymour train to Shepparton.

The government has worked together with local Member for Shepparton Suzanna. Sheed to consult with the local community and understand the need for this service.

Longer term, to reach five return services between Melbourne and Shepparton, additional infrastructure such as passing loops and signalling upgrades will be required and it is likely there will need to be more trains procured to enable a fifth service.

Rolling stock and infrastructure have long lead in times. The procurement of rolling stock especially can take years from design through procurement and into the building stage. Similarly, it takes time to determine the location of passing loops so they can be effective for both passenger and freight trains.

For this reason it is not possible at this stage to put a time on the delivery of five return services to Shepparton.

### Northeast Health Wangaratta

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Ms Symes  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government has established the \$200 million Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, a dedicated new fund to rebuild rural and regional hospitals. This funding will ensure families in regional Victoria have access to the quality health care they deserve and will assist regional and rural health services like Northeast Health Wangaratta to improve:

- safety and quality of services,
- service capacity,
- models of care,
- patient and staff amenity, and
- service efficiency.

The Department will shortly call for applications for the Fund's first round.

Applications will be assessed on the basis of how well the proposed works will meet Government's objectives of better health for people in regional and rural Victoria. Northeast Health Wangaratta is encouraged to apply.

Priority will be given to applications that address:

- Need for major refurbishment I repairs/replacement of ageing buildings and equipment with deferred maintenance
- Safety and quality of services including compliance with regulatory requirements and reduction of clinical risk

- Demand pressures from increasing population and/or changing age profile
- Need for buildings to be fit for purpose-moving from low care to high care residential aged services.

As you recognised in your adjournment debate contribution, the former Coalition Government gutted our hospitals, ripping \$1 billion from our health system and underinvesting in building projects. Through our new Regional Health Infrastructure Fund, we're turning our health system around and rebuilding our hospitals.

It will mean rural and regional health services can treat more patients more quickly, and our hardworking doctors and nurses have the modern and safe working environments they deserve.

### **Assistance dogs**

**Raised with:** Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing  
**Raised by:** Ms Hartland  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to providing people with a disability access to the same opportunities as everyone else, assistance dogs are important in supporting some people with a disability to participate in the community.

The Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 and the Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992 make it unlawful to discriminate against a person who is using an assistance dog to alleviate the effects of their disability. According to the definitions under these Acts, guide dogs are a type of assistance animal.

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 provides a definition that is specific to guide dogs for people who are visually impaired or hearing impaired only, and does not extend the definition to include animals that alleviate other types of impairment.

As you identify, carriage of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 sits outside my portfolio responsibility. Therefore, I suggest you direct your enquiry regarding this particular Act to the Minister for Agriculture, the Hon Jaala Pulford MP.

### **Poowong Consolidated School**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Raised by:** Ms Bath  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I assure you that the safety of all children is critical, and that the Andrews Labor Government is working hard towards implementing its Towards Zero Victoria's Road Safety Strategy and Action Plan to make sure that nobody dies on our roads. It will take time and hard work from the Government, our Road Safety Partners, and road users, to make this vision a reality.

VicRoads advises me that it met with representatives from the school and the community on 18 February 2016, to commence looking at options to address their concerns. At this meeting, a number of immediate actions were identified, including upgrading the existing speed and warning signing, conducting traffic and pedestrian counts, and investigating enforcement options; these actions have since been completed.

In March 2016, these traffic counts were undertaken, with the results revealing that approximately 1200 vehicles travel daily through the school crossing on Drouin-Korumburra Road, with 259 vehicles travelling daily on Gardner Lane. These volumes are well below the threshold adopted for the installation of electronic school speed signs on roads of this nature.

Of particular concern to me, was that on both roads, between 65 to 85 per cent of vehicles counted during school times exceeded the 40km/h speed limit. In response to this, VicRoads advises me that it is working with Victoria Police to investigate strategies to reduce the speed of traffic during school times.

VicRoads, in collaboration with the South Gippsland Shire Council are continuing to explore potential safety improvements at the school crossing to reduce the incidence of speeding through the crossing.

VicRoads also advises me that while it is working with the community to explore options to get better compliance to the speed limit, the current arrangements are appropriate.

### **Child protection**

**Raised with: Minister for Families and Children**

**Raised by: Ms Tierney**

**Raised on: 8 June 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

In June 2016, I was pleased to visit South-West Victoria to continue my engagement with local community sector organisations, stakeholders and the broader community in that part of Victoria.

As you note in your adjournment, the number of child protection notifications across the State has grown in the past decade — considerably so in the last few years. This has been due to a number of factors including an increased focus on family violence.

My visit to Warrnambool gave me the opportunity to hear directly from local community organisations and the local councils in the area, about the measures they are taking to implement programs and reforms introduced by the Andrews Labor Government.

I was particularly pleased to be able to share with them details about my Roadmap for Reform: Strong Families, Safe Children—the Government’s vision for an ambitious overhaul of the systems that support children and young people, and their families.

The Roadmap for Reform is backed by an initial \$168 million investment and outlines improvements to early intervention services, child protection and out of home care.

At a forum with local community leaders, including representatives from the community sector, local councils and Victoria Police, I was pleased to be able to speak about this recent investment and the work that has already begun in implementing it.

Importantly, the Roadmap provides a crucial part to the Government’s response to the Royal Commission into Family Violence, which has a strong focus on responding to children as victims of family violence.

As part of my visit, I was also pleased to open the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria’s new regional office, located at Brophy Family and Youth Services in Warrnambool.

The Andrews Labor Government funded two new YACVic regional offices in last year’s budget, in Warrnambool and Swan Hill, to grow better youth services and strengthen the capacity of existing services in regional Victoria.

Young people in the South-West region will also benefit from our recently announced youth policy and engagement strategy, Building Stronger Youth Engagement in Victoria. This new approach will give young Victorians in the south-west region greater opportunity to have their say and help shape the policies and programs that are important to them.

Lastly, I also visited the new Men’s Shed at Colac. The larger, purpose-built men’s shed was constructed after receiving \$60 000 in funding from the Andrews Labor Government.

I commend your commitment and continued advocacy for improved family-focused and youth-focused services in your electorate and look forward to visiting the region again.

### **Organ harvesting**

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Dr Carling-Jenkins  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

Australians spend about \$300 million each year on a range of cosmetic treatments and surgical procedures abroad.

I share your concern about the unauthorised harvesting and sale of human organs and it would be extremely unfortunate if Victorians placed themselves at risk by travelling overseas to purchase human organs and have them transplanted.

If you have any information or evidence that Victorians have been trading in human organs, please notify the Department of Health and Human Services.

### **VicRoads relocation**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Raised by:** Mr Morris  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

VicRoads has commissioned an investigation into the options to relocate VicRoads' head office from Kew.

The analysis of the aforementioned options will be considered by the Victorian Government.

### **Level Crossing Removal Authority**

**Raised with:** Premier  
**Raised by:** Mr Davis  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

We are removing 50 of Melbourne's most dangerous and congested level crossings. 19 crossing removals are either complete or already under construction, and 35 will be complete or underway by 2018.

On the Cranbourne Pakenham Line, we're removing every level crossing between Caulfield and Dandenong and rebuilding five stations, using modern elevated rail that will create 11 MCGs worth of new community open space.

This innovative and world-class engineering solution will end the divide between communities, create new parks and gardens in neighbourhoods with Melbourne's least open space, and boost the number of commuter car parks along the corridor.

It will also reduce congestion — with the world's most advanced engineering techniques used, so we can keep running trains on Melbourne's busiest train line and keep local roads open.

The alternative would not be removing these congested death traps.

Community consultation has been ongoing since early 2015, and continues — with local communities now having direct input in to the new space created by this project.

**Box Hill transport interchange**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Mr Leane  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) and the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources are developing a suite of development options to address issues regarding cleanliness, security, access and way-finding within and around the Box Hill interchange, particularly on the bus deck. These are among the potential short and longer term issues and options that are being considered by the Box Hill Ministerial Advisory Committee.

In particular, I note that you have raised concerns regarding the after-hours access within the interchange, especially for those with accessibility needs moving between the bus deck and train station. As you have highlighted, PTV is investigating future options with stakeholders to help address this.

The Ministerial Advisory Committee is due to submit its report in late October.

**Western Metropolitan Region soccer**

**Raised with:** Minister for Sport  
**Raised by:** Mr Eideh  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Victorian government proudly hosted the recent international football friendlies at Etihad Stadium, featuring the Socceroos, the Matildas, New Zealand and Greece. This was not only a world-class sporting event but a demonstration of football's diversity and inclusiveness, celebrating our State's strong cultural connection with Greece and highlighting elite female sporting role models and the growing status of women's sport.

Melbourne has a rich history of supporting international football, hosting AFC Asian Cup matches and big games in recent year's involving Liverpool, Real Madrid and AS Roma. This year's International Champions Cup, involving Atletico de Madrid, Juventus and Tottenham Hotspur was yet another opportunity for Victorians and visitors from all over the world to watch the world's best teams go head to head.

This government also recently announced that, despite strong competition from other states, Melbourne will host the 2018 FIFA World Cup Qualifier game between the Socceroos and Japan later this year.

Major sporting events are an integral part of the visitor economy, providing jobs for Victorians and helping businesses to flourish. They also showcase the best of sport and provide the inspiration for fans to emulate their heroes, join a club and get healthy and active through sport and recreation.

With Melbourne recently named the Ultimate Sports City of the decade, Victoria's reputation as the sporting capital of Australia is unrivalled and the Andrews Labor Government will continue to bring the biggest sporting events to Victoria.

This government is committed to working in partnership with Football Federation Victoria, local clubs and local government authorities to support the growth of football and create healthier, happier and more vibrant communities. I am proud to say that over the last 12 months participation in football is growing faster in Victoria than any other State.

Through the Sporting Clubs Grant Program we are investing in growing grassroots participation, supporting volunteers and making sport more accessible and inclusive.

Through our \$100 million Community Sport and Infrastructure Fund we will continue to provide high quality facilities that support both local and elite level involvement in sport. I am proud to say that \$10 million of this fund is specifically targeted to deliver Female Friendly change rooms.

I would encourage you and the clubs in your western metropolitan electorate to visit [www.sport.vic.gov.au/grants](http://www.sport.vic.gov.au/grants) for information on how to obtain funding through these programs.

I thank you for your question and trust this information has been of assistance.

### **Sunbury police numbers**

**Raised with: Minister for Police**

**Raised by: Mr Finn**

**Raised on: 8 June 2016**

#### **REPLY:**

I recently responded to your earlier question about Diggers Rest indicating that the local police response is provided by police from Hume, Melton or the Highway patrol. Victoria Police had advised that the issue of Diggers Rest forming part of the Sunbury Response Zone is not feasible, as it is not in line with the boundaries project that aligned Police Services Areas with Local Government Area boundaries.

I can assure you that Sunbury residents continue to receive a 24-hour policing response. The Sunbury Police Station operates a 24-hour counter service to the public and is supported by the divisional van patrols.

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

As you noted, the decision of how and where resources are deployed is appropriately a matter for the Chief Commissioner. Policing across Victoria is managed in a flexible manner to ensure the best possible use of available police resources.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

Victoria Police will soon have an extra 406 sworn police officers and 52 support personnel bringing the total number of new police personnel funded by the Andrews Government since it came to office to 1156.

The full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget will be fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police has over 200 custody officers.

Protective Services Officers (PSOs) were deployed to the Sunbury train station from 16 May 2013. PSOs have undertaken a significant amount of work, issuing more than 57 000 infringement notices for a wide range of offences including antisocial behaviour, alcohol, drugs and graffiti offences. They have detected people with outstanding warrants and provided assistance, including medical assistance, to commuters.

We are also making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The government will continue to consult with Victoria Police about overall police resourcing across the state. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner 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.

**Whittlesea Community Connections**

**Raised with:** Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence  
**Raised by:** Ms Crozier  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I would like to thank the Member for her question relating to Whittlesea Community Connections. I would also like to acknowledge the valuable work of Whittlesea Community Connections in supporting Victorian families who are impacted by family violence.

The Andrews Labor Government is working to ensure frontline services that provide specialist support to help victims of family violence recover, have the resources that they need. The 1016-17 State Budget provides an initial \$572 million investment over two years to support those impacted by this harm and hold perpetrators to account in a way that leads to behavioural change. This package includes expanded legal services for victims.

I am advised that in 2015-16, Whittlesea Community Legal Service received \$479 855 in general funding from the State Government, administered through Victoria Legal Aid.

Whittlesea Community Legal Service also received two State Government funded grants in 2015-16. Family Violence Duty Lawyer Fund: \$52 174 to employ a Family Violence Support Solicitor at 0.6FTE over 12 months to support Whittlesea clients to be 'court ready'; and Community Legal Centre Assistance Fund: \$50 000 to employ a Specialist Family Lawyer at 0.6FTE over 12 months to undertake urgent or complex family violence legal cases, provide secondary consultation to the legal team, and run community legal education sessions.

On 27 June 2016, the Attorney-General, the Hon Martin Pakula MP formally announced that successful recipients of grant funding through the \$1.2 million Family Violence Duty lawyer Fund in 2015-16 will again receive this funding in 2016-17. The Andrews Labor Government made this decision in recognition of the overburdening of duty lawyer services in family violence matters, as recently highlighted by the Royal Commission into Family Violence, and to ensure continuity of staff who have already been engaged with this grant funding.

As a result of this decision, Whittlesea Community Legal Service and 22 other community legal centres across Victoria can continue to deliver these much-needed services uninterrupted in 2016-17.

The Attorney-General also announced that \$1.3 million has been allocated to a new grant round for Victorian-based community legal centres and Aboriginal legal services, which focuses on family violence services. The Community Legal Centre Family Violence Fund will support community legal centres that currently provide family violence-related services to address unmet demand for these services among vulnerable or disadvantage Victorians.

Applications for the Community Legal Centre Family Violence Fund opened on 27 June 2016, and the Victorian Labor Government encourages eligible community legal centres to apply.

**Ambulance services**

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

Code 1 performance deteriorated under the previous Liberal Government. In 13/14, the final full year of the Liberal Government, just 73.7% of Code 1 cases were responded to within 15 minutes.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to ending the ambulance crisis and improving response times. \$144 million of additional funding was provided to ambulance services in this year's budget to improve ambulance services.

Response times have improved since Labor was elected. Performance data for the most recent quarter, for the period January to March 2016, showed that 75.6% of Code 1 incidents were responded to within 15 minutes.

There is still more work to be done to improve response times, however the long term trend represented in the performance data, show that we have arrested the decline in performance that occurred under the leadership of the previous Liberal Government.

Response times in the vast majority of LGA's, including Darebin, Towong and Mildura are faster today than they were under the previous Government.

The Government's Ambulance Action Plan was released in December 2015. The plan is available on the Department of Health and Human Services website.

### **Dairy industry**

**Raised with:** Minister for Agriculture  
**Raised by:** Ms Lovell  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Dairy Recovery Concessional Loans can now be accessed in Victoria through Rural Finance.

The Victorian Government sought to work constructively with the Commonwealth Government to make improvements to the scheme that would better support Victorian dairy farmers. Improvements ignored by the Commonwealth include ensuring that all dairy farmers are able to access the loans and providing a better concessional interest rate.

The administration costs provided by the Commonwealth for the Drought Concessional Loans will be fully committed. This means the Commonwealth is not covering administration costs for the \$30 million interim Dairy Recovery Concessional Loans.

Despite serious concerns, the Victorian Government has ensured the scheme is available for eligible dairy farmers.

### **End-of-life choices**

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Dr Carling-Jenkins  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I thank Dr Carling-Jenkins for her Adjournment matter.

Government is considering the recommendations of the report and will respond in due course.

### **Technical schools**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Mr Leane  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

Mr Leane, I would like to thank you for your interest and support of the Tech Schools Initiative.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to creating the Education State by ensuring every Victorian has access to an excellent education. The Tech Schools project will invest \$128m in capital and operating funding to ten Tech Schools across Victoria.

I am pleased that one of these high-tech learning centres will be constructed as part of the Greensborough TAFE site renewal project. The Banyule Tech School is planned to be operational in 2018 and will provide STEM opportunities to over 11 000 secondary school students within the Banyule and Nillumbik regions.

I join you in thanking Vicki Ward, the member for Eltham, for her ongoing support and involvement in this important initiative. I would like to assure you that the Department is working collaboratively with each of the local partnerships that have been established to drive the project. In addition, a wide range of stakeholders and experts have been involved in the development, design and implementation of the Tech. Schools initiative. These local groups have been working very hard over the past nine months to design the facility and develop programs that will engage young people and complement the existing Victorian Curriculum.

The Department of Education and Training (DET) is providing strong support system for the project and will develop a 'community of practice' to ensure ideas are shared between projects. Each Tech School is represented by a DET Regional Project Leader who works closely with both the local partnership and the dedicated Tech Schools Central Project Team. On 26 April 2016, more than 300 people from Victoria's TAFEs, schools, universities and industry gathered at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre for the first ever Tech Schools Summit, this was the first major step for the DET in bringing all working groups together as one to share ideas and explore opportunities. As you point out, the ten Tech Schools will open at different points over 2017 and 2018, providing opportunities to benefit from lessons learnt, and as the Tech Schools start to take shape your suggestion of visits by other working groups is an excellent idea and will be facilitated.

This government is committed to providing 10 cutting-edge, high-technology centres of excellence by the end of 2018.

I thank you for this question and his enthusiasm in this project.

### **Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement**

**Raised with:** Minister for Industrial Relations  
**Raised by:** Mr Ondarchie  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

CFA volunteer fire stations will continue operating as they always have and will maintain their own independence, local knowledge and connection to the community.

### **Coal seam gas**

**Raised with:** Minister for Resources  
**Raised by:** Mr Purcell  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I understand there are significant concerns within the Victorian community about unconventional gas exploration and the extraction methods used.

The Environment and Planning Committee's Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria received over 1800 submissions and heard from over 100 individuals at public hearings across the State to develop an understanding of the broad range of economic, environmental and social issues that are of concern to many Victorians.

The Government is carefully considering the Committee's findings and recommendations.

I take these issues seriously as the new Minister for Resources and have decided to take more time to meet with industry, farmers and other community representatives before the Government responds to the Inquiry's recommendations in August 2016.

The following measures remain in place while the Government considers its response:

- a hold on granting new exploration licences for all types of onshore gas (tight, shale, coal seam and conventional gas);
- a hold on approvals for hydraulic fracturing;
- a hold on exploration drilling activities; and
- a ban on the use of BTEX (benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene) chemicals, which has been enshrined in legislation.

### **Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement**

**Raised with:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

As you will be aware, the government has taken action to find a fair and balanced solution to a dispute that has gone on for over 1000 days.

The role of volunteer firefighters in this state is sacrosanct. At no stage has the government questioned it or jeopardised it. That is why the government has invested tens of millions in new trucks, stations, and training facilities for volunteer brigades across the state.

Throughout the process of finalising the enterprise bargaining agreement, the government has focused on ensuring that the Country Fire Authority (CFA) fire stations will continue to operate as they always have — with their own independence, their own special connections to the community, and their own unique knowledge of their local area.

The government has appointed the Emergency Management Commissioner, Mr Craig Lapsley — someone with many years of experience with the CFA and working with volunteers — to oversee the implementation of the agreement.

As we move forward, I will be visiting CFA brigades across Victoria, working to ensure brigades get the required support to keep their local communities safe.

Further information on enterprise bargaining agreement is available at [www.yourcfa.info.vic.gov.au](http://www.yourcfa.info.vic.gov.au)

### **Youth employment**

**Raised with:** Minister for Training and Skills  
**Raised by:** Mr Eideh  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I thank Mr Eideh for his question and for his commitment to further education opportunities in Victoria.

Early school leavers in Melbourne's south-western suburbs will be supported by five Reconnect programs, designed to address disadvantage by undertaking outreach, and providing support services to help them start and stay in training.

Five Reconnect providers will deliver services in Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Melton, Hobsons Bay, and Wyndham to an estimated 370 young people. The providers have developed a range of models for working with young eligible people who are not in education, training or full time employment and who left school without Year 12 (aged 15-24), or who are long-term unemployed (aged 20-24).

The AMES Australia Reconnect program will work with young people to achieve culturally sensitive goals, and the development of tailored pathway plans into further training. Djerriwarh Community and Education Services will take a flexible outreach approach with a triage intake model based on the “no wrong door approach”, and motivational coaching. Wyndham Community & Education Centre will work with a wide range of community service partners to support young people to successfully transition to accredited training. Young people participating in the Melbourne City Mission’s Reconnect program will work closely with a vocational youth worker to help determine their training and support needs.

Reconnect providers will work in partnership with community service organisations, Learn Local Organisations and LLENS, to develop a learning plan with each young person, as well as enrol them in accredited vocational training programs and provide them with opportunities for workplace experience.

### **Larmenier school**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Mr Finn  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

As part of the Education State, the Andrews Labor Government has made a commitment to inclusive education through the Special Needs Plan for Victorian Schools. The plan outlines nine initiatives to give every child and young person a safe, positive and supportive environment in which to learn that is suited to their individual needs. The initiatives will improve students’ achievement, engagement and wellbeing by creating fairer, safer and more inclusive schools for students with special needs.

The first initiative of the Special Needs Plan was a review of the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD). The PSD Review investigated how schools can best maximise the learning of children and young people with disabilities. The Victorian Government’s response to the PSD Review, Inclusive education for all students with disabilities and additional needs, will provide support to ensure fairer, safer, more inclusive schools to improve educational outcomes for students with special needs.

To support immediate implementation, the Government has announced \$22 million in funding. This includes:

- an extra \$17 million funding to better support the needs of students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia or with autism who are not eligible under the PSD
- a \$3 million funding boost to provide support for students transitioning to Year 7 who no longer meet the eligibility criteria for the PSD
- a \$2 million dyslexia and learning difficulties strategy to deliver professional learning, advice and resources for teachers and families.

While decisions about the Larmenier School are the responsibility of the Catholic Education Office, the Victorian Government has invested \$68.5 million in the 2016-17 Budget to upgrade 20 specialist schools, and to make mainstream schools inclusive by doubling the Inclusive Schools Fund.

### Local government reform

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government  
**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### REPLY:

I note the Member's concern about meeting procedures adopted by Monash City Council. As this Parliament is aware, councils across Victoria must adopt local laws governing their meeting procedures. Subject to those local laws, the conduct of council meetings is at each council's discretion.

The legislative framework allows councils, as a separate responsible tier of government, to make their own rules in relation to meetings as they see fit to suit their local circumstances. I expect that all councils will implement appropriate procedures in line with the authority given to them.

The current review of the Local Government Act will consider all aspects of council roles and responsibilities, including their decision making arrangements. The review 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 and members of the community, including all Members of Parliament with an interest in the sector, to make a submission by 16 September 2016.

### Registered training organisations

**Raised with:** Minister for Training and Skills  
**Raised by:** Ms Bath  
**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

#### REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The immediate concern for the Department of Education and Training (the Department) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) as a result of TBM Training choosing to close, without prior notice, has been to minimise the disruption to affected students.

The Department has written to all government funded students who have been affected by the closure of TBM. Arrangements have been made with Federation Training and Chisholm Institute, based in the south eastern region, for government funded students to continue their training without having to pay any additional fees.

I am advised that the Department has spoken to Federation Training and has contacted Ms Wells and that suitable arrangements have been made for Ms Wells to continue her training. I am informed that Ms Wells is satisfied with the outcome.

### Shepparton rail services

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Ms Lovell  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### REPLY:

I am advised that V/Line is conducting a condition assessment of its classic fleet rolling stock. This will inform the classic fleet maintenance program to sustain fleet operations until the classic fleet is retired or replaced.

As part of the Andrews Labor Government's significant investment in regional public transport, more than 170 extra off-peak services will be added across the network including an extra service to Shepparton every day.

27 extra V/Locity carriages will be added to the 21 ordered by the Labor Government last year and V/Line's classic fleet will receive a revamp to fix air-conditioning, and clean seats.

V/Line has a schedule for preventative maintenance for each train. Works are prioritised to ensure safety first and then the greatest availability and reliability across the fleet. Any breakdown works are carried out as needed.

Unlike the former Government who neglected regional Victorians for too long, the Andrews Labor Government has recently launched a Regional Network Development Plan (RNDP) — the first ever plan that will set priorities and guide investment to improve public transport in regional Victoria, including on the Shepparton line.

I thank the Member for Shepparton, Suzanna Sheed for her advocacy on behalf of the local Shepparton community to improve rail services and her involvement in the RNDP consultation.

### **LaunchVic**

**Raised with:** Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade  
**Raised by:** Mr Melhem  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

Thank you for the matter you raised in the Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 21 June 2016 about LaunchVic and its inaugural funding program, and specifically your request for consideration of applications coming from the Western Metropolitan Region.

The Andrews Labor Government through our \$60 million Startup initiative, LaunchVic, is providing the right environment for entrepreneurs to develop, incubate and grow early-stage innovative businesses.

We have worked closely with Victoria's start-up community on the formation of LaunchVic to ensure it can best support the ecosystem.

The board of LaunchVic draws together some of the industry's best minds. The board not only meets the Government's target of 50:50 gender representation, it exceeds it, with 54 per cent women — the first board in the innovation space to have more women than men.

LaunchVic is investing in core infrastructure, improving access to capital for local start-ups, advocating on Commonwealth legislation and regulation, as well as engaging in start-up events, campaigns, competitions and mentoring programs.

We want Victoria to be the number one location for start-ups worldwide, and LaunchVic can help us make it happen. The recent moves to Victoria from leading tech companies Zendesk, Square, GoPro and Slack show that it's within our grasp.

The first LaunchVic funding round closed 6 May 2016, with around 400 applications received. Applicants were asked to submit ideas that are ambitious, creative and globally orientated and that strengthen collaboration and diversity (including gender, cultural and economic diversity).

All applications were reviewed under a formal assessment process, including any applications from the Western Metropolitan Region, and I look forward to announcing LaunchVic projects that will have real impact in our local communities and will build the economic infrastructure of our State.

Further funding rounds will be undertaken by LaunchVic at later dates and I encourage you to promote the rounds and other LaunchVic activities to your electorate.

**Reid Oval, Warrnambool**

**Raised with:** Minister for Sport  
**Raised by:** Mr Purcell  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I refer to your adjournment debate matter in relation to Reid Oval, Warrnambool, raised in the Legislative Assembly on 21 June 2016.

I acknowledge the contribution that Western Victoria has made to the national sporting landscape.

Providing high quality sport and recreation facilities is a key aim of the Victorian Government, and is integral to the health and well-being of all Victorians. These facilities support both elite and grass roots sport.

The Victorian Government has previously provided funding to Warrnambool City Council with \$200 000 to upgrade the netball courts, provide female change facilities and an electronic scoreboard for the ground at Reid Oval.

The Victorian Government has two funding programs that may provide funding to Councils who apply for funding to redevelop facilities.

In 2015, I launched the Government's \$100 million Community Sports Infrastructure Fund that will facilitate the upgrade and development of community sports facilities over four years. Applications for the 2017-18 Community Sports Infrastructure Fund have now closed. I anticipate opening the 2018-19 round early next year.

In addition, I was also pleased to recently announce the four-year extension of the Country Football and Netball Program through the 2016-17 State Budget. I anticipate opening this program in the coming months. Warrnambool City Council are eligible to apply for funding from this program.

Warrnambool City Council should continue to liaise with staff from Sport and Recreation Victoria regarding future facility developments at Reid Oval.

**Knox planning scheme amendment**

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning  
**Raised by:** Ms Dunn  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

**REPLY:**

Knox City Council requested my approval of Amendment C146 to the Knox Planning Scheme to extend the interim height controls for Alchester Village, The Basin and Upper Ferntree Gully Activity Centres. These planning controls are intended to provide clarity and certainty for landowners, developers and the community in guiding built form in the precinct while Council proceeds with a planning scheme amendment to introduce permanent controls.

I am pleased to advise that Amendment C146 was approved on 21 June 2016. The approved amendment extends the interim controls until 30 October 2017 to enable Council time to resolve the permanent controls for these centres.

### Planning buffer zones

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning  
**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### REPLY:

Thank you for your question about buffer zones for industry and their impact on neighbouring properties.

As we continue to plan for people and growth across Victoria, we need a system that is responsive and meets the challenges of protecting residents' safety and amenity while providing certainty to industries so they can continue to operate and grow.

Councils, as responsible authorities, often face the challenges of balancing competing and sometimes conflicting uses while attempting to achieve good land use outcomes.

While desirable, it will not always be possible for an existing industry to contain the minimum buffer requirements within the property boundary. In deciding on proposals to be sited near existing industries, Councils may consider whether proposed developments will be adversely affected by the existing industry and vice versa. This may result in restrictions on these future developments to minimise future adverse impacts, such as siting the new development on another part of the property.

Fulfilling an election commitment, I have appointed an Advisory Committee to provide advice about how to improve planning for areas surrounding major hazard facilities and the issues and challenges for Victoria's changing land use. I have also requested that the Advisory Committee report on principles for how land use buffers could apply more broadly to other uses with adverse amenity potential, such as landfills and quarries.

The Advisory Committee held public hearings over 5 days in March 2016 to hear submissions from the community, industry, local councils and relevant state agencies, in response to its discussion paper released, in December 2015. The Committee will submit its final report to me shortly.

### Waverley Park powerlines

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning  
**Raised by:** Mr Davis  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### REPLY:

The former Minister for Planning 'called in' the application by Mirvac, to retain the transmission lines above ground, from the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal and referred the application to an Advisory Committee for consideration. The Advisory Committee conducted public hearings and submitted its report and recommendations to me on 17 February 2015.

Having carefully considered the conclusions of the expert Advisory Committee I wrote to all submitters on 17 December 2015 informing them that I intended to follow the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and recommend to the Governor in Council that the permit should be amended to release Mirvac from its obligation to underground the transmission lines. However, I also informed the submitters that I would not make any recommendations to the Governor in Council to amend the permit until I had further considered the community benefits package proposed by Mirvac and explored ways of ensuring it adequately addresses the amenity impacts of retaining the power lines overhead.

On 25 February 2016 I again wrote to inform the Waverley Park residents and land owners that I had appointed an independent facilitator who residents and owners could contact to provide their views or nominate themselves to be part of the discussions so that I could better understand the community's perspective.

I subsequently met with members of the Waverley Park Residents Action Group to hear their views on various aspects of this issue. I confirmed my decision to accept the findings of the Advisory Committee and urged the residents to be part of the consultation on the community benefits package.

In June, the facilitator convened a meeting with residents to discuss the process for improving the community benefits package as part of the ongoing consultation. Through this process of genuine engagement with the community I am confident we will provide the best outcome for most people considering the advice of the expert Advisory Committee.

### **Walhalla Vinter Ljusfest**

**Raised with:** Minister for Tourism and Major Events

**Raised by:** Ms Bath

**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I encourage Walhalla & Mountain Rivers Tourism to consider applying for funding through the Government's new \$20m Regional Events Fund announced in the 2016–17 budget.

Guidelines are available through Visit Victoria and applications will be accepted throughout the year. The Guidelines for this fund take a more flexible approach to matched funding.

### **Multicultural events**

**Raised with:** Minister for Multicultural Affairs

**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich

**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is steadfastly committed to maintaining bipartisan support for multiculturalism. This commitment is reflected by the Parliamentary Mar Dinner, jointly attended and co-hosted by the Government and the Opposition. It is also reflected in the range of events that the Government extends invitations to the Opposition to attend in the spirit of bipartisanship and support for Victoria's vibrant multicultural diversity, including the Premier's Gala Dinner, the Multicultural Awards for Excellence and community receptions.

### **Police resources**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police

**Raised by:** Ms Fitzherbert

**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I refer to the matter you raised regarding a burglary that occurred at your constituent's property and I'm sorry to learn of their experience.

While all calls for police assistance are treated seriously, police response times will vary depending on the urgency of the matter, available police in the area, and the distance the attending unit is required to travel. Therefore, attendance at matters such as a burglary where offenders have left the scene, may be delayed.

I am advised by Victoria Police that on the night of the incident on 9 June 2016, three police units and a Crime Scene Services Unit were on duty in the Glen Eira/Bayside Police Service Area. At the time the '000' call was received at 9.13 pm, all three of the police units were busy at other higher priority tasks and the Bayside divisional van crew determined attendance at a family violence incident was a priority.

It has since been acknowledged by Victoria Police that the task could have been referred to the Crime Scene Services Unit, when it was first received by the Bayside Police Station. In the light of the incident, there has now been a change in procedure to minimise a similar oversight occurring in the future.

We need to see more police out on the front line and the Chief Commissioner is working with the government on what resources and powers they need to ensure that we see the crime rate start to turn around.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 police and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

This 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.

### **Melton police resources**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police  
**Raised by:** Mr Morris  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I can assure you that Melton residents continue to receive a 24-hour policing response from across the Melton Police Service Area. It is very important that if anyone requires urgent police assistance that they contact Victoria Police on the emergency number '000', as calls are recorded and responded to by the closest appropriate police personnel.

I am assured by the Chief Commissioner 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.

I am advised that police from the Melton Police Station and the Caroline Springs Police Station provide police services across the Melton Police Service Area. The local police response includes the Crime Investigation Unit and the Highway Patrol. Further, initiatives currently being undertaken in Melton include a new crime and traffic hotline, a bicycle patrol unit, a liquor licensing accord and an alcohol diversion program Your Choice.

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

We need to see more police out on the front line and the Chief Commissioner is working with the Government on what resources and powers they need to ensure that we see the crime rate start to turn around.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 police and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

This 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 full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget will be fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police now has over 200 custody officers.

Protective Services Officers (PSOs) were deployed to the Melton train station from 7 May 2013 and will be deployed to Caroline Springs train station when it becomes operational. PSOs have undertaken a significant amount of work, issuing more than 57 000 infringement notices for a wide range of offences including antisocial behaviour, alcohol, drugs and graffiti offences. They have detected people with outstanding warrants and provided assistance, including medical assistance, to commuters.

We are also making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

### **Elevated rail proposal**

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport

**Raised by:** Ms Crozier

**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is removing all nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong. These are the most congested and dangerous level crossings in Victoria and the Liberal Party went to the last election with a commitment to keep five of them in place.

Victorians voted to remove all nine of them and that is what we are doing.

The project did not trigger the requirement to prepare an Environment Effects Statement (EES).

Diesel emissions from freight trains running on an elevated rail line are less likely to impact nearby residents, community centres and businesses than they do with the railway line at the existing ground level.

### **Point Cook police resources**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

I note your comments about policing across the western suburbs, in particular Point Cook. I can assure you that all local communities receive a 24 hour police response and I encourage any community member who has immediate concerns about the safety of themselves or others to report the matter to Victoria Police through the emergency number '000'.

Alternatively, less urgent matters can be reported anonymously to Crime Stoppers by calling 1800 333 000 or visiting [www.crimestoppersvic.com.au](http://www.crimestoppersvic.com.au). The mobile device Application (APP) can be downloaded from the Crime Stoppers website allowing SMS and MMS data to be transmitted directly to Crime Stoppers, providing police with valuable intelligence to target their enforcement operations.

Community safety is a top priority for the Andrews Government and Victoria Police, as everyone needs to feel safe in their communities. One of the government's key priorities is the recruitment, training and deployment of more police out on the front line.

We need to see more police out on the front line and the Chief Commissioner is working with the Government on what resources and powers they need to ensure that we see the crime rate start to turn around.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 police and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the

government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

This 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 full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget is being fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police now has over 200 custody officers.

Additionally, the government has also invested an additional \$19.4 million over the next two years in the Community Crime Prevention Program to help tackle the underlying causes of crime.

Victoria Police has established a range of taskforces to tackle property crime, including Operation Cosmas, which is focusing on aggravated burglary and other gang-related activity. Operation Cosmas alone has been responsible for over 100 arrests since May this year.

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.

The government will continue working with the Chief Commissioner to tackle the complex law and order challenges we see today, to give Victoria Police the people, technology and infrastructure they need to keep our community safe, now and well into the future.

### **NewCold**

**Raised with:** Minister for Industry and Employment  
**Raised by:** Mr Ondarchie  
**Raised on:** 21 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Victorian Government is committed to attracting the investment our state needs to create jobs, enable productivity and build sustainable industries for the future.

NewCold is the latest addition to Victoria's cold chain logistics sector, bringing new technology and headquarter activity to the Asia region.

The company's new Truganina facility and Asia-Pacific Headquarters is expected to create more than 127 new jobs in logistics, IT, engineering, software development and management.

The investment is a vote of confidence in the continued growth of Victoria's food and beverage sector, the broader economy and its workforce.

The Victorian Government helped secure the investment in Victoria by providing facilitation on planning and infrastructure issues. This included advice on the development approvals process and coordination of a range of state and local government statutory approvals.

The Victorian Government does not disclose commercial in confidence information regarding details of financial assistance provided to a company to support investment projects.

### Red Cross patient transport service

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Ms Wooldridge  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

#### REPLY:

Red Cross patient transport is well known and regarded across Victoria with both communities and agencies alike.

The service is designed to assist those who require transport to essential medical appointments and who have no other transport options.

The Andrews Labor Government will continue funding to the Red Cross for its Victorian Patient Transport Service and this funding has increased in 2016–17.

I am advised that Red Cross will continue to operate a patient transport service in Mornington, Ringwood East and Geelong.

As you are aware, the Department of Health and Human Services and Castlemaine Health are currently working together with local volunteers to establish a new patient transport service for the local community, which will be operated by Castlemaine Health.

### Self-defence laws

**Raised with:** Minister for Police  
**Raised by:** Mr Bourman  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

#### REPLY:

In Victoria, a person may act in defence of themselves or others. Under the Crimes Act 1958 a person carries out conduct in self-defence if the person believes that the conduct is necessary in self-defence and the conduct is a reasonable response in the circumstances as the person perceives them.

Self-defence applies to:

- the defence of the person or another person
- the prevention or termination of the unlawful deprivation of the liberty of the person or another person
- the protection of property.

For self-defence to apply in the case of murder, a person must believe their conduct necessary to defend themselves or someone else from death or really serious injury.

The Crimes Act also provides that a person may use force if they believe on reasonable grounds that it is necessary to:

- prevent the commission, continuance or completion of an indictable offence, or
- arrest a person committing or suspected of committing either a summary or an indictable offence.

It is important that the force used by a person is proportionate to their objective. For example, a person can lawfully use an amount of force to make an arrest that is reasonably necessary to effect the arrest. Use of force that is disproportionate or not necessary is not lawful.

The government considers that the laws relating to self-defence and use of force are appropriate and sufficient. Carrying weapons for the purpose of self-defence is not lawful in Victoria, and legislating for non-lethal

self-defence would run the same risk as carrying weapons for self-defence — it potentially places people at greater risk of an escalation of violence.

Victoria faces a number of complex law and order challenges including family violence, gang-related crime and gun crime. The government is determined to ensure Victoria Police has the resources it needs to fight violent crime and deliver the best possible policing service to the Victorian community. The Victorian Budget 2016–17 delivered a substantial boost to police resources, with funding for an extra 406 sworn police and 52 support personnel as part of a \$596 million Public Safety Package. Since November 2014, the government has funded more than 1150 police personal, including 300 general duties police.

The government is committed to continuing to deliver a modern and responsive police force to keep the community safe.

### **Solar energy**

**Raised with:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

**Raised by:** Mr Melhem

**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Government is committed to ensuring that distributed generation customers are receiving a fair value for the electricity they produce and export to the grid. In September 2015, the Government requested the independent regulator of Victoria's retail energy sector, the Essential Services Commission (ESC), to undertake a review into the true value of distributed generation to Victorian consumers.

The ESC has divided the inquiry into two stages. Stage One will address the energy value of distributed generation looking at the wholesale market, environmental and social value. Stage Two will address the network value of distributed generation which is looking at the extent to which investment in local distributed generation can assist in avoiding costs of investment in the poles and wires network. The ESC released a Draft Report to Stage One in April 2016, which recommends a number of changes to the current Victorian feed-in tariff scheme.

There are currently four feed-in tariff schemes in place in Victoria, three of which are closed to new customers. The current scheme has been in place since 1 January 2013 and requires the ESC to set a minimum feed-in-tariff in each year based on the wholesale energy value of exported electricity. The minimum rate for 2016 is 5.0 cents/kWh.

Of the three that are closed, the Premium Feed-In Tariff scheme will operate until 2024 and will not be affected by the current ESC review. The other two, the Transitional Feed-In Tariff scheme and Standard Feed-In Tariff scheme will both end on 31 December 2016. Customers currently on these schemes will be transferred onto the existing feed-in-tariff scheme from 1 January 2017.

The ESC's draft report recommends moving away from paying solar system owners a flat daily rate for the power they generate. Instead, the ESC recommends introducing flexible feed-in tariffs that reflect the time of day when electricity is generated and fed into the grid, including peak, shoulder and off-peak times. The draft report also recommends paying Victorian's with solar systems to recognise the environmental benefit of installing solar and other renewable technologies.

The Government will consider the recommendations of the final report, which is due in August 2016.

### Major event bicycle parking

**Raised with:** Minister for Tourism and Major Events  
**Raised by:** Ms Dunn  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

#### REPLY:

During most major events in Melbourne, access plans, including bicycle parking facilities, are the responsibility of the venue/s hosting the event. This includes the construction of secure temporary bicycle cages, should the venue responsible deem them to be a valuable addition.

In the case of the AFL Grand Final, responsibility for bicycle parking falls with the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), which is the managing authority for the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG). The MCC has advised that there are currently 40 bicycle spaces available at the MCG precinct, and another 50 are under construction. Those under construction will be ready in time for this year's AFL Grand Final, bringing the total bicycle spaces available to 90.

In the case of White Night, bicycle parking is offered from 7pm — 7am at two dedicated locations. An assessment of whether there has been an appropriate amount of bicycle parking spaces available will be a matter for the event organisers, in consultation with the City of Melbourne.

The Government will continue to work with major event venues to ensure that there are a range of transport and access options available, which includes the provision of bicycle parking facilities.

### Melbourne Regional Landfill

**Raised with:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Raised by:** Mr Finn  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

#### REPLY:

The Statewide Waste and Resource Recovery Infrastructure Plan and the draft Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Implementation Plan identify the Melbourne Regional Landfill site as a hub of state importance.

The Andrews Labor Government made an election commitment to call in any expansion application for the landfill under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. The Minister for Planning has called in the application and has appointed an independent advisory committee consistent with this commitment.

Cleanaway makes a provision for rehabilitation of the current landfill within its independently audited aggregated financial reports. In addition to the provision that Cleanaway is required to make in its financial reports, the Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) holds a financial assurance for the Melbourne Regional Landfill.

EPA requires landfill operators to implement measures that minimise the cost of landfill rehabilitation at the end of the life of the landfill, such as progressive rehabilitation of filled cells and regular assessments of the landfill by independent EPA-appointed environmental auditors. EPA also has statutory powers to require the occupier of the site to conduct any clean up that may be required in the future, should ownership of the site change.

With regards to the odour issues that you have raised, EPA has conducted a number of investigations and surveillance operations in response to reports of odour. EPA has identified the Melbourne Regional Landfill as the source of odour on six occasions, with other industries in the area also identified as sources of odour.

Both the EPA and I as Minister are aware of the community's concerns regarding the proposed landfill expansion and are actively engaging with the community as part of the assessment of the works approval application process.

Minister Kairouz has also been actively involved in advocacy for her local community.

### Level crossings

**Raised with:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Raised by:** Ms Crozier  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The previous Liberal Government did not remove a single Level Crossing on the Frankston Line. The Andrews Government is removing eleven, with three already gone.

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.

During construction over 1000 workers are being encouraged to shop locally to help local traders.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) acknowledges that a project of this scale can be disruptive and has been working closely with local traders to reduce the impacts as much as possible.

Detailed information on the targeted "Open for Business" initiative can be found at [www.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au](http://www.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au)

In relation to soil, the majority of it has already been removed. Prior to removal a comprehensive analysis of the chemical composition of the soil at each site was undertaken and all soil removed was classified under EPA guidelines and removed in accordance with all relevant legislation.

### Palace Theatre

**Raised with:** Minister for Planning  
**Raised by:** Mr Davis  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Palace Theatre, Bourke Street Melbourne, has been considered three times for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR), which recognises places of State significant under the Heritage Act 1995. The independent Heritage Council of Victoria refused registration in 1977, 2010 and last in 2014, the latter being the subject of a Heritage Council hearing under the Act. On 3 July 2014, the Heritage Council made a determination not to include the Palace Theatre in the VHR. It found that this place did not meet the threshold for state level heritage significance in relation to any of the Heritage Council's criteria

In its determination, the Heritage Council affirmed the Palace Theatre as a place of cultural heritage significance at a local level for its social and historical values, and noted its inclusion in the Bourke Hill Precinct Heritage Overlay (HO500) of the City of Melbourne Planning Scheme. The Heritage Council endorsed the recommendation of the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, that the Palace Theatre be considered by the City of Melbourne for an individual Heritage Overlay to acknowledge its particular cultural heritage values.

On 15 April 2016, Heritage Victoria accepted a fourth VHR nomination for the Palace Theatre. It was accepted on the basis that it was administratively complete, not on the basis of any assessment or judgement around the level of cultural heritage significance. The nomination stated that significant new evidence had become available since the Heritage Council's determination of 3 July 2014. However, it is the view of the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, that this material constitutes no new perspectives, interpretations or opinions about information that had been widely available for some time about the Palace Theatre. Further, the Executive Director notes that the historic material regarding the original and subsequent uses of the place had been included in his public recommendation to the Heritage Council in 2014.

The Palace Theatre is currently located within Heritage Overlay (HO500), which applies to the Bourke Hill Heritage Precinct. The site does not currently have an individual Heritage Overlay. The City of Melbourne is

progressing Melbourne Planning Scheme Amendment C241, which seeks to apply permanent heritage controls for the Palace Theatre, to recognise its individual significance. This amendment does not propose the application of internal controls.

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) hearing on Melbourne City Council's failure to determine a permit application for the future use and development of the site was held on 23-26 February 2016. VCAT determined to grant a planning permit to allow for the part demolition of existing buildings and development of a multi-level residential hotel. VCAT's decision is final and binding on all parties unless it is set aside on appeal by a party to the Supreme Court on a point of law.

### **Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre**

**Raised with:** Minister for Health  
**Raised by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Raised on:** 22 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The assertions made by the member for Southern Metropolitan region are simply untrue. No contract variation or change to design has been considered or instructed since December 2011 to any of the 22 lifts within the new Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre facility.

Media reports quoted from January 2016 are correct. This botched plan would have led to bed-based patients being transported to and from Level 13 of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre in lifts shared with animals, animal waste, lab supplies and medical waste.

Only the Andrews Labor Government will ensure that every metre of the VCCC is safely and appropriately utilised to benefit all Victorians touched by cancer. This government will ensure the space is dedicated to advancing cancer care, research and treatment for all.

### **Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre**

**Raised with:** Minister for Tourism and Major Events  
**Raised by:** Mr Eideh  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) expansion will add 9000 square metres of flexible exhibition space, including a multi-purpose facility with 900 retractable seats and 200 additional moveable seats, concourse, exhibitor and support areas.

The expansion will enable the MCEC to cater for larger exhibitions, stage multiple exhibitions and conventions concurrently, and greatly improve the efficiency of operations of the combined facility through increased links to the existing Melbourne Exhibition Centre and Melbourne Convention Centre.

Once completed, the additional space is expected to generate an additional 74 000 international visitors annually, who spend an average \$693 each day while in Melbourne, resulting in a \$167 million boost to our economy.

It is anticipated that the construction of the expanded exhibition facilities will generate 400 jobs, while the construction of the car park and hotel will generate a total of 300 jobs.

The MCEC has advised that once operational, the expanded facilities will create an additional 865 ongoing direct and indirect jobs. The hotel will generate approximately 100 ongoing jobs.

Constituents in your region can find out more about the opportunities this project will bring to Melbourne and the Western Metropolitan region by visiting [www.mcec.com.au/expansion](http://www.mcec.com.au/expansion).

**North-east link**

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Raised by:** Ms Wooldridge  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government welcomes the Federal Coalition's commitment to provide funding to transport projects in Victoria. The Victorian Government is considering all funding offers made during the 2016 Federal Election.

**Non-government schools capital funding program**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Mr Mulino  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

I commend your strong and continued advocacy for schools in your electorate, including St Francis Xavier College and St Clare's Early Learning Centre.

Non-government schools are an important part of Victoria's education system, with over one-third of Victorian students studying at a Catholic or independent school. As you know, the 2015-16 State Budget delivered on an election commitment by providing \$120 million over four years to build and upgrade these schools, matching dollar-for-dollar the non-government sector's contribution.

I am delighted to confirm that, as part of this funding, the Andrews Labor Government has allocated \$2 000 000 to St Francis Xavier College for the construction of eighteen general learning areas and associated areas. Moreover, the Andrews Government has allocated \$3 420 000 to St Clare's for the construction of eight general learning areas and associated areas. These projects will enable the schools to increase capacity in response to significant enrolment demand.

The Department of Education and Training is working closely with the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria to deliver the grants and ensure the best outcome for the school community.

Thank you for raising this matter with me. I trust this information is of assistance.

**Point Cook police resources**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police  
**Raised by:** Mr O'Donohue  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I note your concerns regarding police resources in Point Cook. The Point Cook residents receive a 24-hour police response.

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

Victoria Police will continue to monitor service delivery demand, crime, traffic and public order issues in the area of Point Cook. The operational need for new and upgraded police stations is established through the Victoria Police Strategic Facilities Development Plan, where projects are considered in the context of other priorities across the state.

I am advised that Point Cook and Werribee are serviced by the 16 hour Wyndham North Police Station and the 24 hour Werribee Police Station. The local police response for this area includes the Wyndham Crime Investigation Unit, Transit Safety Division, Highway Patrol and Operations Response Unit.

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

We need to see more police out on the front line and the Chief Commissioner is working with the Government on what resources and powers they need to ensure that we see the crime rate start to turn around.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 police and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

This 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 full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget is being fast tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police now has over 200 custody officers.

We are also making a major investment in police equipment and technology to put Victoria Police at the forefront of providing smarter more responsive policing. For the first time, police will have mobile technology, including mobile tablets, enabling police to access and exchange up to date information while in the field. Combined with new body worn cameras, this investment will significantly enhance Victoria Police's frontline operations.

The government will continue to consult with Victoria Police about overall police resourcing across the state. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner 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.

The government has also provided a significant investment in the 2016-17 State Budget to continue and expand the Community Crime Prevention Program. A \$19.4 million funding injection will continue to support local councils and community groups to deliver critical crime prevention projects and help tackle the root causes of crime.

I am advised that Community Crime Prevention grants totalling \$329 084 have been awarded in the Wyndham Local Government Area (LGA) since 2011. Eleven grants have been awarded to Wyndham City Council and community groups to support practical crime prevention initiatives, including security upgrades at community facilities, crime prevention education and awareness programs, graffiti prevention initiatives and upgrades to public spaces to improve community safety and confidence.

I am further advised that police in the Wyndham (LGA) are currently engaged in a number of community engagement forums, including the Sub Committee for the Prevention of Family Violence, the Community Safety Round Table, the Pacific Werribee Working Group, and the Walton Sheet Traders and liquor licensing forums.

### Music teachers

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Dr Carling-Jenkins  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The VIT has undertaken an extensive review of the Permission to Teach (PTT) Policy, consulting broadly with many stakeholders, including music and instrumental music teachers.

I have been presented with the revised Policy for my consideration and am aware of the concerns of instrumental music teachers in relation to the policy.

PTT is a category of teacher registration which may be granted by the VIT as per the Education and Training Reform Act (2006).

It is a limited authority to teach granted in circumstances where there is a workforce shortage and a qualified registered teacher cannot fill a position in a school. Because of its limited authority, PTT is also recognised as a pathway to (full) teacher registration.

There is no intention to demote the subject of music. I concur the importance of music to the wellbeing and learning of students of all ages.

There is also no intention to de-regulate the teaching of instrumental music in schools. The Education and Training Reform Act (2006) requires anyone who is undertaking the duties of a teacher in a school to hold registration or PTT.

It is my understanding that the VIT have and wish to continue to work with music teachers to clearly describe the duties of a teacher with respect to the teaching of instrumental music to support the implementation of the revised Policy.

The VIT are also continue their monitoring role working with employers to ensure that anyone who is undertaking the duties of a teacher in a schools holds registration or PTT.

I will consider all views in my deliberation of the revised PTT Policy.

### Calder Highway

**Raised with:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Raised by:** Ms Lovell  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government acknowledges that the Calder Highway plays a vital role in supporting the movement of freight and people between Melbourne and north-western Victoria.

I also recognise the important role of the Calder Highway Improvement Committee in advocating for improvements along the Calder Highway corridor. I congratulate the committee on its contribution to enhancing the lives of many communities over a number of decades.

I am pleased to advise that we have allocated funding to a number of current projects along the Calder Highway, in particular, the committee's previous highest priority to construct an \$86 million grade separation of the Calder Highway/Calder Alternative Highway in Ravenswood.

In February 2015, I announced almost \$3 million under the Transport Accident Commission's Safe System Road Infrastructure Program, for construction of a roundabout at the Calder Alternative Highway/Bendigo-Maryborough Road intersection, which was another of the committee's previous priorities.

The Victorian Government has also contributed funding to three projects along the Calder corridor under a Regional Freight Road Program. These projects, with a combined total estimated cost of \$15.1 million, include the construction of roundabouts where the Calder Freeway access ramps intersect with Station Road in Gisborne, a truck rest stop at the Jock Comini Reserve in Ravenswood, and overtaking lanes on the Calder Highway, north of Hattah.

I note your advice that the Calder Park Drive interchange is currently listed as the Calder Highway Improvement Committee's number one priority. VicRoads is currently investigating potential improvements along the Calder Freeway corridor, near Calder Park Drive, to improve safety and traffic flow. Some of the options being investigated include treatments at the existing median openings and improvements to the Calder Park Drive entry and exit ramps.

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

### **Country Fire Authority enterprise bargaining agreement**

**Raised with:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Raised by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

#### **REPLY:**

As you will be aware, the government has taken action to find a fair and balanced solution to a dispute that has gone on for over 1000 days.

The role of volunteer firefighters in this state is sacrosanct. At no stage has the government questioned it or jeopardised it. That is why the government has invested tens of millions in new trucks, stations, and training facilities for volunteer brigades across the state.

Throughout the process of finalising the enterprise bargaining agreement, the government has focused on ensuring that the Country Fire Authority (CFA) fire stations will continue to operate as they always have — with their own independence, their own special connections to the community, and their own unique knowledge of their local area.

The government has appointed the Emergency Management Commissioner, Mr Craig Lapsley — someone with many years of experience with the CFA and working with volunteers — to oversee the implementation of the agreement.

As we move forward, I will be visiting CFA brigades across Victoria, working to ensure brigades get the required support to keep their local communities safe.

Further information on enterprise bargaining agreement is available at [www.yourcfa.info.vic.gov.au](http://www.yourcfa.info.vic.gov.au)

**VicForests**

**Raised with:** Minister for Agriculture  
**Raised by:** Ms Bath  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government supports a strong and viable timber industry. Victoria's forests are managed for multiple purposes including maintaining biodiversity, providing recreation and tourism opportunities, cultural connection and a sustainable, renewable resource to provide certainty to the timber industry.

Victoria's state forests are also a vital contributor to many rural and regional centres across Victoria, providing valuable jobs and economic activity. Victoria's timber industry generates more than \$1.5 billion of expenditure annually and supports more than 21 000 jobs across Victoria.

The Andrews Labor Government has established a Forest Industry Taskforce to reach common ground on a durable, long-term set of recommendations and proposals to government. The government will consider the recommendations and proposals reached by consensus of the Taskforce.

I encourage you to view the Forest Industry Taskforce website <http://forestindustrytaskforce.com.au/>. The website includes information about the Forest Industry Taskforce, its aim, members and progress to date.

**Bendigo Special Development School**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education  
**Raised by:** Mr Finn  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The Department of Education is addressing concerns raised in relation to Bendigo Special Development School arising from allegations and the Justitia investigation referred to in the matter raised. The Department is working to put in place solutions that are in the best interests of the children at the school. The school community can look forward to the Government taking action to improve the wellbeing of children at the school rather than expending resources on a further inquiry.

**Acland Street, St Kilda, pedestrian mall**

**Raised with:** Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade  
**Raised by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Acland Street tram terminus upgrade does not fall under my portfolio responsibilities. I encourage the member to redirect this question to the responsible Minister.

I regularly meet with traders in my electorate in my capacity as the local member, and will continue to do so.

**St Kilda police resources**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police  
**Raised by:** Ms Crozier  
**Raised on:** 23 June 2016

**REPLY:**

I note your comments about policing in St Kilda. St Kilda residents receive a 24 hour police response and it is very important that if anyone requires urgent police assistance that they contact Victoria Police on the emergency number '000' as calls are recorded and responded to by the closest appropriate police personnel.

Alternatively, less urgent matters can be reported anonymously to Crime Stoppers by calling 1800 333 000 or visiting [www.crimestoppersvic.com.au](http://www.crimestoppersvic.com.au). The mobile device Application (APP) can be downloaded from the Crime Stoppers website allowing SMS and MMS data to be transmitted directly to Crime Stoppers, providing police with valuable intelligence to target their enforcement operations.

St Kilda is serviced by the 24 hour St Kilda Police Station and the police response for this area includes the Crime Investigation Unit, Transit Safety Division, Highway Patrol and Operations Response Unit.

We need to see more police out on the front line and the Chief Commissioner is working with the Government on what resources and powers they need to ensure that we see the crime rate start to turn around.

The Andrews Labor Government recently 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 police and specialist police to respond to gang-related crime, gun crime, terrorist threats and family violence. This reflects the government's commitment to work with the Chief Commissioner to ensure we provide the resources to police that will keep our community safe.

This 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 full deployment of 400 Police Custody Officers, funded in last year's budget is being fast-tracked by six months to the end of 2017, further freeing up police officers to return to the frontline. I am advised that Victoria Police now has over 200 custody officers.

Additionally, the government has also invested an additional \$19.4 million over the next two years in the Community Crime Prevention Program to help tackle the underlying causes of crime.

Victoria Police has established a range of taskforces to tackle property crime, including Operation Cosmas, which is focusing on aggravated burglary and other gang-related activity. Operation Cosmas alone has been responsible for over 100 arrests since May this year.

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. The government will continue working with the Chief Commissioner to tackle the complex law and order challenges we see today, to give Victoria Police the people, technology and infrastructure they need to keep our community safe, now and well into the future.



**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Wednesday, 17 August 2016**

**Parkville College**

**Raised with: Minister for Families and Children**

**Raised by: Ms Patten**

**Raised on: 8 June 2016**

**REPLY:**

Since June 2015, Parkville College has operated the Early Years Intervention Strategy (EYIS) for young people in youth justice who are parents.

The program is not only an intervention strategy, but also a primary prevention approach to strengthening and maintaining strong family connections through teaching young people how to be parents. It focuses on supporting positive parent-child relationships, assisting parents to differentiate between parent needs and parenting needs and improving their understanding of the early years of life.

It recognises the clear evidence that enhancing the wellbeing of young children prevents the development of future problems.

The strategy involves a partnership between Parkville College School, Early Childhood Management Services and the Department of Health & Human Services.

As part of their study at the College, young people who are parents can participate in Parenting Sessions that are aligned with the National Early Years Learning Framework (NEYLF).

The strategy will also:

- create an ‘early years’ curriculum that can be used throughout the school, with a focus on supporting the growth of nurturing and empathic parent-child relationships which in turn contributes to strong families
- promote the notion that children are unique and have the right to a healthy and happy childhood, free from abuse and neglect
- clearly differentiate between parents’ needs and parenting needs
- promote an enhanced understanding of the importance of the early years of life
- consider the use of child care centres as alternative learning environments for the young people and their own children.

An Early Years Reference Committee and a working party have also been established with key representatives from both the youth justice and early years sectors, along with adolescent and early childhood academics.



**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Thursday, 18 August 2016**

**Local government reform**

**Raised with:** Minister for Local Government

**Raised by:** Mrs Peulich

**Raised on:** 8 June 2016

**REPLY:**

Local government staff play a vital role in working with local communities in the provision of council services and the implementation of council decisions. Both constituents and councillors expect that staff act with the highest level of professionalism and integrity in carrying out their duties. The Local Government Act recognises this in setting out a number of principles relating to council staff. In the course of their employment staff must act impartially and with integrity and avoid conflicts of interest. They must also accept accountability for results and provide responsive service.

Council staff are employed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO is responsible for the management of all issues relating to staff and must develop and implement a staff code of conduct. CEOs are best placed to enact their own codes within the Act's framework and which suit the circumstances of their organisations. I encourage CEOs to also ensure that codes sufficiently address staff relationships and dealings with councillors.

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 and members of the community, including all Members of Parliament with an interest in the sector, to make a submission by 16 September 2016.

I will take your suggestion as a submission and encourage you to add to it if you wish by visiting the Act review website: Your Council You Community, where you will find more information about all aspects of the review.

**Palliative care**

**Raised with:** Minister for Health

**Raised by:** Ms Fitzherbert

**Raised on:** 9 June 2016

**REPLY:**

The Andrews Labor Government released a new End-of-Life and Palliative Care Framework last month that will allow more people with a terminal illness will be supported to die at home.

We have developed a Framework that recognises the current system of palliative care is out-dated, is not line in with community expectations and will not meet future demand.

Currently, only 14 per cent of Australians who want to die at home are able to, and this new Framework is part of the Labor Government's plan to change that.

We have provided \$7.2 million to put in place the right infrastructure to allow more Victorians with a terminal illness to die at home, in line with their wishes.

Greater access to home-based palliative care was a recurring theme during the community consultation we conducted to inform development of the new Victorian end of life and palliative care framework.

This was also confirmed in the final report of the Legal and Social Issues Standing Committee Inquiry into end of life choices, tabled on 9 June 2016.

I am proud that Barwon Health, like all public health services, has received an increase in funding from the \$21.062 billion that Labor invested in health in the 16/17 budget.

I am advised that Barwon Health opened 10 beds in the University Hospital Geelong Baxter Wing 7 from 1 July 2016.

These beds will be used for medical and palliative care patients. Barwon Health supports 16 palliative care beds at the McKellar Centre together with an extensive community palliative care program and a regional consultancy program.

### **Geelong Authority**

**Raised with: Minister for Planning**

**Raised by: Mr Ramsay**

**Raised on: 22 June 2016**

**REPLY:**

The State Government is committed to revitalising central Geelong and has allocated \$5.5 million in the 2016-17 State Budget to kick start projects that will complement the work of the Greater Geelong City Council.

The appointment of the council's new Panel of Administrators provides a unique opportunity for the state and council to work even more closely on the projects and initiatives to bring more jobs, living and economic activity to central Geelong.

On Friday 29 July 2016, the Government released the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan. This Plan is the result of strong partnerships between the Victorian Government, the City of Greater Geelong and the Geelong Authority, who will continue to work together to implement it.

The Geelong Authority has been in operation for almost 12 months and provided key input to the Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan and its priority projects. I have appointed Professor Roz Hansen as the new Chair of the Authority following Peter Dorling's recent appointment as an administrator with the City of Greater Geelong.