

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

12 May to 8 June 2017

(Extract from book 11)

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

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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(from 10 November 2016)

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Privileges Committee — Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O’Sullivan, Ms Pulford, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips and Ms Wooldridge.

Procedure Committee — The President, Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Davis, Mr Jennings, Ms Pennicuik, Ms Pulford, Ms Tierney and Ms Wooldridge.

Legislative Council standing committees

Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure — #Mr Barber, Mr Bourman, #Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Leane, #Mr Melhem, Mr Ondarchie, Mr O’Sullivan and #Mr Rich-Phillips.

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

Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues — #Mr Barber, #Ms Crozier, #Mr Elasmr, Ms Fitzherbert, #Ms Hartland, Mr Morris, Mr Mulino, Ms Patten, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Rich-Phillips, Mr Somyurek, Ms Springle and Ms Symes.

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

Port of Melbourne Select Committee — Mr Barber, Mr Mulino, Mr Ondarchie, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Shing and Ms Tierney.

Joint committees

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

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

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmr and Mr Melhem. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Garrett and Ms Ryall.

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

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Ramsay and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Halfpenny, Mr Richardson and Mr Riordan.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn. (*Assembly*): Ms Britnell, Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards 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 Patten, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing. (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith, Ms Staley and Ms Ward.

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

Heads of parliamentary departments

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

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

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Deputy President:

Mr K. EIDEH

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Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ¹	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel	Western Metropolitan	DLP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Dalidakis, Mr Philip	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	O'Sullivan, Luke Bartholomew ⁴	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin ³	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	V1LJ
Elasmarr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Gepp, Mr Mark ⁶	Northern Victoria	ALP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph ⁵	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

² Appointed 15 April 2015

³ Resigned 27 May 2016

⁵ Resigned 6 April 2017

⁶ Appointed 7 June 2017

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁴ Appointed 12 October 2016

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

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

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ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers and received by Hansard in the period shown.

26 May to 8 June 2017**Southern Metropolitan Region**

Question asked by: Ms Pennicuik
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 2 May 2017

ANSWER:

On the 4 May 2017, I refused council's requests to introduce interim and permanent heritage controls over the Greyhound Hotel at 1 Brighton Street, St Kilda for the following reasons:

1. Consent for demolition of the building under the Building Act 1993 had already been issued.
2. The Greyhound Hotel Cultural Heritage Values Assessment did not establish the building's significance beyond reasonable doubt. The report identified several other examples of hotels and buildings with a similar history and level of social significance. The Greyhound Hotel appears to be no more or less significant than these.
3. There may be other non-statutory means of recognising the hotels historic (cultural) and social significance as outlined in the report by Context Pty Ltd.

Unfortunately, the City of Port Phillip did not identify the significance of the hotel in its past heritage reviews and did not take the opportunity to seek interim protection when the request for a demolition permit was submitted. I am unable to revoke the demolition permit.

I understand that the owner of the building has commenced demolition of the site.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Finn
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 2 May 2017

ANSWER:

The Buckley Street, Essendon level crossing is one of Melbourne's worst and it remains a delivery commitment of the Andrews Labor Government as part of 50 level crossing removals across the network

Today, boom gates are down for more than half the morning peak and removing this dangerous and congested level crossing will return 78 minutes of traffic flow during peak times to road users, getting Victorians home safer and faster.

Once again, this is another example of the Liberals desperately campaigning against the removal of level crossings.

We took the removal of this dangerous and congested level crossing to the 2014 election. The people of Essendon want it removed and the Andrews Labor Government will remove it.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 2 May 2017

ANSWER:

VicRoads advises me that it has carried out a detailed investigation of possible treatment options along Ballarat Road between Adelaide Street (Albion) and the Western Ring Road. The scope of the investigation includes the intersection of Ballarat Road and Perth Avenue.

VicRoads' assessment has identified Hulett Street (just west of Perth Avenue), as a priority for the installation of traffic signals within this section of Ballarat Road, due to its historical safety record and the relative risks to pedestrians and motorists using this intersection. However, this will provide an option for motorists wishing to turn right from Perth Avenue to turn left into Ballarat Road and undertake a safe u-turn movement at the signalised intersection.

While VicRoads advises me that it currently has no proposal to install traffic signals at the intersection of Ballarat Road and Perth Avenue, it will continue to monitor the safety and operatic of this intersection to determine the need for any future improvements.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Davis
Directed to: Treasurer
Asked on: 9 May 2017

ANSWER:

The changes in a taxpayer's land tax liability are dependent on changes in the value of their aggregate landholdings, and the change in land tax bracket(s) that the taxpayer is subject to. The 2017 land tax year incorporates the most recent land valuations approved by the Valuer General, as part of the State's two-yearly cycle of land revaluations. Given that land values have generally grown throughout the State over the past two years, some taxpayers will see an increase in their land tax bill.

Some taxpayers may also experience an increase in their land tax bill that is greater than the rate of increase in the value of their landholdings. This is due to the progressive nature of the land tax rates scale. Victoria's progressive land tax scale is designed to ensure that smaller property investors pay proportionally less than those with larger landholdings and that a taxpayer's ability to pay is partly reflected in their tax liability.

More broadly, I would like to highlight that land value increases are partially the result of Government investments in infrastructure and improvements in service delivery, making Victoria a more liveable state. Land tax is one way to recover the costs of such investments and services from those who directly benefit from them.

Finally, land tax applies to aggregate taxable landholdings in Victoria. Therefore it is not possible to give an accurate estimate of the land tax collected in Glen Eira as the tax rate applying to properties in Glen Eira will depend on each taxpayer's aggregate landholdings across Victoria.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Eideh
Directed to: Minister for Industry and Employment
Asked on: 9 May 2017

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government came to office with a commitment to create more jobs and help disadvantaged jobseekers into work. To that end we are increasing job opportunities in Victoria, by investing in infrastructure and supporting businesses to grow.

The 2017-18 Budget provided an additional \$6.1 billion in infrastructure investment, building on the capital investment in the previous budget. This investment in infrastructure projects across public transport, roads, schools and hospitals will not only underpin increased productivity and provide the facilities that Victorians need, but is creating thousands of new jobs.

Through initiatives such as the Future Industries Fund, the Regional Jobs Fund and the Premier's Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, we are also supporting Victorian businesses with real potential to expand into new markets, develop new products, and most importantly to employ more people.

These efforts are seeing positive results for Victoria's economy, with ABS data showing that employment has increased by 152 000 people in Victoria in the year to April 2017. This represents almost 80 per cent of Australia's total job growth over that period. However, we know that some Victorians struggle to gain a foothold in the job market. These difficulties may relate to the need for better or different skills, a lack of work experience or a lack of knowledge of how to find jobs. Some people also face personal barriers such as poor health, unstable housing arrangements and lack of transport. That is why the government allocated \$53 million in the 2016-17 State Budget to establish Jobs Victoria, and provided a further \$10.2 million in the 2017-18 Budget. Jobs Victoria is providing targeted support services for people looking for work and for employers looking for workers.

While the average unemployment rate in Victoria is around 6 per cent, I am aware that there are locations with much higher unemployment, including in Brimbank. Funding for additional employment support services under Jobs Victoria has been directed to locations of high need. To date, \$39.2 million has been allocated for 38 employment services under the Jobs Victoria Employment Network, and 18 per cent of that funding has been directed to services in the Western suburbs of Melbourne. This includes funding to Australian Multicultural Community Services in Maidstone and the West@Work in Sunshine.

To date, more than 3450 Victorians looking for work have registered with Jobs Victoria services, and more than 1000 jobseekers have found jobs through the program. Of these, almost 650 jobseekers from the Western suburbs of Melbourne have registered with Jobs Victoria services, and more than 200 have found jobs through the program.

More information about Jobs Victoria, including details of Jobs Victoria service partners and case studies about jobseekers and employers, can be found at www.jobs.vic.gov.au

As we invest in jobs growth across the state, with more and more opportunities for work, the government is determined that disadvantaged Victorians are not left behind and are able to share in the social and economic benefits that come from employment.

Western Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Finn
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 9 May 2017

ANSWER:

I once again thank the Member for Western Metropolitan for his continued interest in the Andrews Labor Government's plan to remove the dangerous and congested level crossing at Buckley Street, Essendon.

The Liberal Party's continued opposition to the removal of level crossings across Melbourne, including at Buckley Street, Essendon, is well understood by the community.

The Andrews Labor Government's plan to safely separate Buckley Street and the network's second busiest train line will return 78 minutes of traffic flow during peak travel times to road users, improve reliability for rail users, make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists in the area.

The solution to lower Buckley Street under the rail line is the only option that is fully funded, avoids private land acquisition, has a shorter construction time that minimises road and rail shutdowns, and maintains the heritage listed Essendon station.

Work will get underway at Buckley Street later this year, with the boom gates expected to go by the end of 2018.

A preliminary assessment of Moonee Valley Council's concept of a tunnel running underneath the suburb was conducted at the Council's request and paid for by the Level Crossing Removal Authority. It estimates the idea would cost around \$1.2 billion, see the Craigieburn line remain closed for up to 12 months during construction, and see the compulsory acquisition of 35 to 40 homes and businesses.

The Government has a responsibility to govern for all Victorians and will continue to refuse the requests from the Liberal/National Opposition to stop the removal of these congested death traps.

Eastern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Bath
Directed to: Treasurer
Asked on: 9 May 2017

ANSWER:

I thank the member for this question.

From July 1 this year, new passenger vehicles will start being charged the same duty rates as used passenger vehicles. This change is equivalent to an increase of 1 per cent in the purchase price of a new car.

The duty that will apply to purchases of cars will depend upon the date on which the contract is entered into. For contracts of sale that are entered into after 1 July, the additional duty will be applied.

Given the competitive nature of the new car market it will be up to dealers to determine how they adjust their drive-away prices following an increase in the rate of duty from 1 July.

The Andrews Labor Government will stand with Hazelwood workers and their families — we will put them and the Latrobe Valley first.

We have committed \$266 million to a transition package which will support businesses and build infrastructure in the Latrobe Valley. We have also committed to locating 150 public sector jobs at the Latrobe GovHub. The Latrobe Valley Authority is continuing to oversee a series of initiatives and programs to support workers and help facilitate new businesses.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Ms Fitzherbert
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 10 May 2017

ANSWER:

After four wasted years under the previous Government, the Andrews Labor Government is getting on with delivering the Metro Tunnel project with work currently underway at several locations across the city.

The Member for Southern Metropolitan is correct that all required heritage approvals have been granted to ensure that St Kilda road and the precinct is protected as much as possible during construction. While the impacts will be minimised as much as possible, a project of this scale will involve disruption for several years.

The Member for Southern Metropolitan raises a very important point about the need to inform communities of the disruptions in their neighbourhood. The Melbourne Metro Rail Authority will undertake a comprehensive awareness campaign to ensure people can make the necessary alternative arrangements.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Emergency Services
Asked on: 10 May 2017

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government greatly appreciates the work of our Life Saving Victoria (LSV) volunteers, including those of the Point Lonsdale Surf Lifesaving Club, who dedicate their time and skills to keep the community safe in and around the water.

The Government is helping to keep Victoria safe with extra support for the men and women who serve our State during an emergency.

The 2017-18 Victorian Budget provides \$112.6 million to upgrade facilities and invest in new equipment and training for emergency services across the State.

The Budget provides additional support to LSV with \$6 million in funding to redevelop three surf lifesaving facilities including \$1.5 million to rebuild the Point Lonsdale Surf Lifesaving Club. This much needed funding will give the club's volunteers the modern facility they need to keep our community safe. Other benefits include improved health and safety for volunteers and the community and better attraction and retention of volunteers, all of which will help reduce Victoria's drowning toll.

Thank you for raising this matter with me.

Northern Victoria Region

Question asked by: Ms Lovell
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

Commencing in 2017-18, the Andrews Labor Government has committed \$10.2 million towards Stage 1 of the Shepparton Bypass to finalise planning and continue land acquisition. This funding will also upgrade the intersection on the Goulburn Valley Highway, Ford Road and Wanganui Road, providing early benefits for the local community.

Northern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Elasmar
Directed to: Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

The Victorian Government is committed to preserving and promoting Victoria's multicultural heritage, celebrating cultural diversity, leveraging economic benefits and promoting socially inclusive communities. The Community Infrastructure and Cultural Precincts (CICP) Program offers grants to help maintain existing community infrastructure, build new community infrastructure, or enhance cultural precincts for culturally diverse communities.

In relation to the Northern Metropolitan Region 13 groups were funded a total value of \$1 759 850.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Purcell
Directed to: Minister for Water
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

Wannon Water supplies water to the towns of Portland, Port Fairy, Macarthur and Heywood. The water in these towns complies with the Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2015. However, because the water for these towns is sourced from groundwater it has a higher mineral content that affects the taste of the water.

In the past Wannon Water, through consultation with its customers, understood that there was no willingness to pay for improvements to the taste of the water. This is because many customers have alternative drinking water arrangements, such as rainwater tanks or under bench filtration units.

More recently, through its Pricing Submission Engagement 2018-23, Wannon Water identified that customers would now value improvements to the taste, smell and hardness of their water.

As a result of this, Wannon Water has commenced an investigation into improving the taste of water for Portland, Port Fairy and Heywood. This investigation will consider the broad range of community benefits that would occur from improving the taste of the local groundwater supply. The findings from this investigation will be used to inform any initiatives to improve the taste of the water supplied to the towns.

The investigation is expected to be completed by the end of July 2017, with further consultation with customers and regional stakeholders to be undertaken before any works are initiated.

Following the collation of all the relevant information and supporting data, business cases for each town will be created and considered by Wannon Water.

In addition, Wannon Water launched the Great Tasting Water Project in December 2016 with the Portland District Hospital, following the hospital's public commitment to remove sugary drinks and cordial. This project aims to improve the taste of tap water at the hospital and encourage people to use water as a healthy alternative to sugary drinks

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Treasurer
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

The Commonwealth and Victoria are parties to a signed agreement on Asset Recycling, which provides 15 per cent of the sale price of recycled state assets, which in this case amounts to \$1.46 billion. The \$1 billion offered by the Federal Government represents a substantial reduction of the funding due to Victoria — funding which they have sought to direct to certain projects. The Federal Government have reneged on a deal and have cheated the Victorian Government out of hundreds of millions that is owed.

This could not be more different to the manner in which the Federal Government have engaged with New South Wales or other jurisdictions. The Victorian Government will keep pushing for full receipt of Victoria's asset recycling funds, and continue fighting for Victoria's fair share.

The Victorian Government is not in a position to comment on the progress of the any of the regional rail projects which relied upon the full receipt of the asset recycling funding and these will be subject to the progress of ongoing discussions.

As a result of the latest Turnbull Budget, Victoria now receives only 8 per cent of Federal infrastructure funding, compared to 46 per cent in the Prime Minister and Federal Treasurer's home state of New South Wales.

Northern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Ondarchie
Directed to: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

The Government is always considering future investment in arterial road developments across Melbourne.

More specifically, in November 2016, the Victorian Government allocated \$250 000 to commence planning investigations for the future duplication of Craigieburn Road West. Planning investigations currently being undertaken include traffic modelling, environmental studies and cultural heritage assessments. This is being progressed as part of the broader planning investigations being undertaking in the Northern suburbs.

The Victorian Government has announced road projects in surrounding suburbs to help alleviate congestion in the Northern Suburbs. In the 2016-17 Victorian State Budget, Government announced that it will invest:

- \$139.4 million to upgrade Plenty Road (Stage 1 and Stage 2);
- \$131.2 million for Yan Yean Rd Stage 1; and
- \$77.8 million (joint State and Federal funding) to build a new interchange with the Hume Freeway at O'Herns Road and duplicate O'Herns Road from the freeway to Epping Road.

In the 2017-2018 Victorian State Budget, the Government announced that it will invest \$96.6 million for Yan Yean Road Stage 2 (2017-18).

In addition, the Victorian Government is building eight kilometres of new rail line and three state-of-the-art stations at Marymede, Mernda and Hawkstowe as part of the Mernda Rail Extension Project. Opening in early 2019, the new rail line will help connect one of Victoria's fastest growing areas and help to alleviate congestion on arterials roads in the north.

South Eastern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mrs Peulich
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

The previous Liberal Government did not remove a single level crossing on the Frankston line and due to the strong advocacy of the member for Southern Metropolitan the community remains well aware of the Liberal Party's continued opposition to the removal of these congested death traps.

The community is also very well aware that the Andrews Labor Government is delivering on its election commitment and is getting rid of thirteen sets of boom gates on the Frankston line with three already gone.

The supposed safety concerns raised by Member for Southern Metropolitan in relation to elevated rail need to be understood in the context that elevated rail safely exists right around the world, including the existing 98 rail bridges across Melbourne.

The Andrews Government will continue to consult with the community as we get on with our election commitment to remove 50 of Victoria's worst level crossings.

Southern Metropolitan Region

Question asked by: Mr Davis
Directed to: Minister for Planning
Asked on: 11 May 2017

ANSWER:

As a point of clarification it should be noted that the Metro Tunnel Project is being administered by the Melbourne Metro Rail Authority (MMRA) and not by the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA).

The question relates to my Minister's Assessment and my recommendation that the position of Domain Station should be further investigated. The MMRA undertook this investigation and found that by moving the station to the Shrine Reserve it would reduce transport outcomes, increase project cost, and cause significant impact to the Reserve, including to many commemorative trees and nationally significant memorials.

The heritage permit application lodged with the MMRA for Domain Station was assessed by the independent statutory body Heritage Victoria for its impact upon the cultural heritage significance of the St Kilda Road boulevard, as required by the Act.

A permit with stringent conditions and a requirement to provide substantial financial security was issued in April for the removal of eight London Plane Trees and ten Elm trees. The Elm trees varied in terms of their maturity and condition.

A number of submissions were made to Heritage Victoria on the advertised heritage permit application which suggested alternative locations for the new Domain Station. The alternative locations which were suggested included the Shrine Reserve, Fawkner Park and the vicinity of Albert Park Lake. While it was not within the scope of Heritage Victoria to assess the suitability of these other locations, it is highly likely that these alternative sites would also have raised major heritage and other impacts.

Western Victoria Region

Question asked by: Mr Ramsay
Directed to: Minister for Public Transport
Asked on: 24 May 2017

ANSWER:

This matter does not fall within my portfolio responsibilities. Please redirect this question to the Minister for Roads.