

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

12, 13 and 15 December 2017

(Extract from book 22)

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

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

The ministry

(from 16 October 2017)

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

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

(to 15 October 2017)

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
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Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Police and Minister for Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Industry and Employment, and Minister for Resources	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Training and Skills, and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. G. A. Tierney, MLC
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Thomas, MP

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

(to 12 September 2017)

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. M. Kairouz, MP
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Police and Minister for Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Industry and Employment, and Minister for Resources	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence (until 23 August 2017)	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Training and Skills, and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. G. A. Tierney, MLC
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Thomas, MP

Legislative Council committees

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 Bourman, #Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Mr Gepp, Ms Hartland, Mr Leane, #Mr Melhem, Mr Ondarchie, Mr O’Sullivan and #Mr Rich-Phillips.

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

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

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

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

Fire Services Bill Select Committee — Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Melhem, Mr Mulino, Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Rich Phillips, Ms Shing and Mr Young.

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, Ms Hutchins, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula and Mr Walsh.

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

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Ms Bath, Ms Patten and Mr Somyurek. (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon 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*): Dr Carling-Jenkins and 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 Gepp 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 D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward.

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

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Ms Bridget Noonan

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

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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

President:

The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President:

Mr K. EIDEH

Acting Presidents:

Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmar, Mr Melhem, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mr Purcell, Mr Ramsay

Leader of the Government:

The Hon. G. JENNINGS

Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

Leader of The Nationals:

Mr L. B. O'SULLIVAN

Leader of the Greens:

Dr S. RATNAM

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John ¹	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 ⁷	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel ³	Western Metropolitan	AC	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 ⁸	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 ⁴	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
Elasmar, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ratnam, Dr Samantha Shantini ⁹	Northern Metropolitan	Greens
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Gepp, Mr Mark ⁵	Northern Victoria	ALP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph ⁶	Northern Victoria	ALP	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaclyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP

¹ Resigned 28 September 2017

² Appointed 15 April 2015

³ DLP until 26 June 2017

⁴ Resigned 27 May 2016

⁵ Appointed 7 June 2017

⁶ Resigned 6 April 2017

⁷ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁸ Appointed 12 October 2016

⁹ Appointed 18 October 2017

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

AC — Australian Conservatives; 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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WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Tuesday, 12 December 2017

‘Chuck a healthie’ campaign

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Ms Patten
Raised on: 10 May 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises the important role that employers can play in the health of their workers. Being a health conscious workplace makes good business sense, and employers that actively support their workers’ health and wellbeing reap significant returns in terms of work performance and productivity.

Through the Department of Health and Human Services, the government is supporting programs like the Achievement Program and the Healthy Eating Advisory Service. These programs support Victorian businesses to improve the health of their workforce, by making the healthy choice the easy choice for employees.

The department is also working closely with the WorkHealth program, which is leading new investment in workplace mental health, and exploring innovative ways to improve mental health, safety and wellbeing.

Bendigo Health

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Ms Wooldridge
Raised on: 10 August 2017

REPLY:

Bendigo Health Care Group continues to provide safe and high quality services for their community.

On my request, Safer Care Victoria worked closely with Bendigo Health Care Group clinicians, management and external specialists in infectious disease and pathology to assess the safety of the changes to the microbiology model. This initial assessment has concluded with advice regarding the new model provided by Safer Care Victoria to the Department of Health and Human Services as requested.

Safer Care Victoria advised that the technical aspects of the proposed changes, do not reduce safety for patients so long as enhanced governance and monitoring arrangements are in place and are strictly adhered to by Bendigo Health Care Group and the private pathology provider.

Bendigo Health Care Group has provided Safer Care Victoria with evidence of strategies to increase the monitoring of the microbiology service including but not limited to:

- the establishment of a Pathology Committee sub-group comprised of Clinical Directors to be chaired by the Bendigo Health Chief Medical Officer
- increasing reporting requirements of the private provider
- appointment of an Infectious Disease Physician.

The Department of Health and Human Services, with oversight by Safer Care Victoria, continue to closely monitor the microbiology model at Bendigo Health Care Group to ensure continued delivery of a high quality service.

In regard to the transition from anaesthetic technicians to anaesthetic nurses, I would again stress that this transition has brought Bendigo Health Care Group in line with the requirements of the Safe Patient Care (Nurse to Patient and Midwife to Patient Ratios) Act 2015, which is arguably the most comprehensive nursing and midwifery staffing Act anywhere in the world.

In addition, Bendigo Healthcare Care Group is continuing to deliver for its community as it progresses the implementation of the Electronic Medical Record which will improved clinical safety and patient experience. Furthermore, Bendigo Health Care Group is actively recruiting a new Chief Executive Officer and I expect an announcement to be made in the coming months.

Due to the increase demand for services and combined with ensuring appropriate quality and safety in a new facility, Bendigo Health Care Group's waiting list did increase for the first few months after the new building opened. The end of the year results showed that Bendigo Health Care Group were able to provide increased surgeries to the community and undertook 13 221 surgical procedures in 2016-17 compared to 12 656 in 2015-16 which is an additional 565 procedures.

The government is supportive of Bendigo Health Care Group and has funded them \$290.50 million in 2017-18. This is \$25.62 million or 9.67% more than 2016-17 and \$56.72 million or 24.26% more than 2014-15. This growth in funding enables Bendigo Health Care Group to continue to expand their services to ensure they meet the needs of the local community.

Bangerang Cultural Centre

Raised with: Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

I thank the honourable member for Northern Victoria for raising this matter.

The Bangerang Cultural Centre (the Centre) is a significant part of local cultural assets in the Shepparton region.

The member is right to highlight the importance of maintaining and celebrating the culture of the various Traditional Owners in Victoria, which is why this government reformed the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and is working towards a treaty.

My department currently does not have a funding stream that aligns to the Centre's request at this time.

Ambulance services

Raised with: Minister for Ambulance Services
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 19 September 2017

REPLY:

All calls to triple zero are assessed according to the individual need of patients and Ambulance Victoria provides the most appropriate response for those patients to ensure that ambulances are available for emergencies.

Ambulance Victoria have commenced an investigation into the circumstances surrounding a patient from Bacchus Marsh who had a taxi provided to them to transport them to hospital.

The patient will be contacted as part of the investigation and will also be informed of the outcomes.

VicRoads

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 17 October 2017

REPLY:

VicRoads captured a low volume of customer concerns in comparison to the vast number of registration renewal notices issued within this timeframe. I understand that no trends among customer concerns were established during this period.

VicRoads advises me that based on the data collected, it is unable to establish if a person has received a fine for driving an unregistered vehicle. The Department of Justice and Regulation manages the end-to-end infringements system in Victoria.

Sunbury Road, Tullamarine, upgrade

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 17 October 2017

REPLY:

As part of the CityLink Tulla Widening project, works are currently being undertaken at the inbound Sunbury Road entry ramp to the Tullamarine Freeway.

The ramp will be widened to allow for the installation of ramp metering traffic signals.

To facilitate this work, it was necessary to temporarily shift traffic on to the left hand shoulder to provide sufficient space for safety barriers to be installed on the right hand side. In doing so, this created a safe work area for construction crews to begin the upgrade.

Works on this entry ramp are due for completion in late November. Temporary safety barriers will then be removed, final pavement will be placed, and the new widened road will be available to the public.

We thank motorists for their ongoing patience while we complete these essential works.

Respect Is the Rule

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Raised by: Ms Patten
Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

Sexual harassment in any workplace is unacceptable.

Employers and their employees working in licensed premises in Victoria are subject to the law regarding sexual harassment in the Equal Opportunity Act 2010.

The purpose of Responsible Service of Alcohol training is to equip managers and staff supplying alcohol in licensed venues with the skills to do so in a responsible manner in accordance with the liquor laws in this state. It is not intended to cover all issues that may arise in licensed premises or relieve the employer of their obligation to provide a safe harassment-free workplace for their staff.

The issue of sexual harassment in licensed venues has been raised with government in the context of patron safety at live music events.

My department, together with Creative Victoria, is funding a pilot sexual harassment and sexual assault program for licensed live music venues. This pilot program will include staff training and providing venue-based promotional material. An independent evaluation of the program will be undertaken.

CityLink-Tullamarine Freeway widening

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 20 October 2017

REPLY:

The CityLink Tulla Widening project is being delivered in a live traffic environment, and the project's on-road construction generally takes place overnight when the traffic volumes are lower to avoid impacting daytime and peak travel periods.

Although the project's construction is scheduled to cause minimal impact, motorists may experience some delays in off-peak periods while traffic management measures are in place, including temporary lane closures and speed limit reductions.

Keeping road users and construction workers safe throughout the project's work zone is a key priority, and these traffic management measures are in place to protect this safety.

The works stretch over a long section of the CityLink-Tullamarine corridor and there will be times where workers are concentrated in specific locations, so they may not be visible everywhere.

The project recognises that drivers may become frustrated by travelling at lower speeds when there is no obvious construction activity taking place, and the traffic team ensures that speed limits are returned to normal as soon as it is safe to do so.

I appreciate your suggestion to introduce variable tolling on CityLink. However the contractual arrangements between the State Government and CityLink Melbourne Limited (CML) do not provide for tolling levels to be varied based on speed limits.

Somerville Recreation & Community Centre

Raised with: Minister for Sport
Raised by: Mr Mulino
Raised on: 20 October 2017

REPLY:

I refer to your Adjournment Debate matter regarding Somerville Recreation and Community Centre raised in the Legislative Assembly on 20 October 2017.

The Better Indoor Stadiums Fund assists in meeting the community demand for indoor sport and recreation participation opportunities by providing funding for indoor multi-sport stadiums across metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Applications for the second round of the Better Indoor Stadiums Fund opened in March 2017.

I am pleased to advise that on 21 November 2017 I announced Mornington Peninsula Shire Council was successful in their application for funding of \$1.3M for the Somerville Recreation and Community Centre Expansion project from the Better Indoor Stadiums Fund.

I understand that the previous two court stadium at the site was destroyed by fire in May 2016, and planning for the reconstruction and expansion of the Somerville Recreation and community Centre commenced immediately following the fire. Prior to being destroyed by fire, the recreation centre accommodated a range of sports including basketball, badminton, netball, floorball and various other community activities and casual users.

The project will construct an additional two multi-sport courts, associated change rooms and amenities (including accessible), storage and a first aid room. The total project cost is \$3.9M.

Victoria State Emergency Service Cobram unit

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr Gepp
Raised on: 1 November 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) Cobram Unit, who selflessly devote their time and skills to promote the safety and wellbeing of the community. The Victorian Government recognises the vital work that the VICSES Cobram Unit perform as highly trained and skilled service providers and appreciates the commitment of its volunteers dedicated to serving the community

I would welcome the opportunity to visit the VICSES Cobram Unit on my next trip to Northern Victoria.

Country Fire Authority Arthurs Creek and Strathewen brigade

Raised with: Minister for Water
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 2 November 2017

REPLY:

Yarra Valley Water understands the important role that local volunteer fire brigades undertake to protect the community. To support this vital service, Yarra Valley Water undertakes programmed maintenance on its assets every 12 months and does reactive maintenance when users report a fault. Although, there have not been any reported faults to Yarra Valley Water's contact centre over the past 12 months, my Department has investigated the fault following your request. Yarra Valley Water has confirmed that a site inspection has been carried out and the water-filling station is operational. Yarra Valley Water welcomes reports of faults if there are continuing problems.

I have asked my Department to work with the CFA brigade and Yarra Valley Water to make sure the issues are fully understood and addressed. This includes investigating the safety of the alternate water source.

Prisoner drug and alcohol testing

Raised with: Minister for Corrections
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

It seems that Mr O'Donohue obtained information from my ministerial briefing folders improperly. This question shows that he has failed to understand the information within my briefing folders.

Firstly, Mr O'Donohue seeks to aggregate data from drug and alcohol testing regimes in prison.

There are several reasons that it is not advisable to combine the number of drug and alcohol tests, including:

- The urinalysis program (drug testing) operates across all prisons, where as breath testing only occurs at select prisons at the discretion of General Managers.
- The urinalysis program has a random test regime and a targeted regime, which is informed by intelligence holdings and officers' assessment of suspicious prisoner behaviour.
- The testing of alcohol is usually used when staff suspect or have intelligence that a prisoner has used, or is under the influence of, alcohol. It is also routinely undertaken upon the return of a prisoner from authorised leave.

Regardless, as stated in a previous written answer to question without notice, there has been an increase in the number of drug tests undertaken in 2016/17 from the previous financial year.

Additionally there were 11 046 recorded breath tests in 2016/17.

The apparent decrease in reported breath tests in 2016/17 is understood to be largely a statistical anomaly arising from an inadvertent change in recording practice at one prison that was inconsistent with practice elsewhere (and with previous years), and which has since been rectified.

Despite the change in reporting, I am advised the number of actual breath tests administered would be similar to previous years.

Koo Wee Rup Secondary College

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to investing in education and school infrastructure, and this has been demonstrated through the overall allocation of more than \$2.5 billion to school facilities in the last three State Budgets. Our challenge is to responsibly balance and prioritise the needs of over 1500 government schools in Victoria, all in varying condition.

Ensuring school premises are safe, secure and well maintained is a shared responsibility between schools and the Department of Education and Training. I understand that Koo Wee Rup Secondary College has recently undergone emergency make safe works to address ageing tile cladding on the building facade.

I am advised that this matter has been addressed to ensure the ongoing safety of students, staff and the local community. WorkSafe notices have now been acquitted following completion of the emergency works.

I appreciate that Koo Wee Rup Secondary College is eager to see the delivery of further works. I am pleased to confirm that \$1.2 million has been allocated to the college, as part of the Andrews Government's Planned Maintenance Program, to upgrade its roof and affected pebble cladding facade.

These funds are in addition to the \$1.6 million received through the Andrews Government's Shared Facilities Fund, which will go towards upgrading the college's oval, construct a pavilion and upgrade its existing synthetic hockey pitch.

I would be pleased to visit the college as soon as my schedule permits.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Autism services

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that people with a disability can access the services they need.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is a good news story for people with a disability, including people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Once fully implemented the total annual funding for commitment to the NDIS in Victoria will be \$5.1 billion, with the Victorian Government contributing \$2.5 billion.

About one in four NDIS participants in Victoria have an autism related disorder with nearly 4500 children and adults currently supported by the NDIS. This number is expected to increase once the NDIS is fully implemented in Victoria.

In areas that have transitioned to the NDIS, Local Area Coordinators (LAC) and Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) partners of the National Disability Insurance Agency work with people with disability and their families to get access to information and supports available to them under the NDIS. LACs will also work with the local community to make sure it is more welcoming and inclusive for people with disability.

In areas that are yet to transition to the NDIS, the Department of Health and Human Services provides information about supports and services and can also provide assistance with planning and short-term support to people with a disability, their families and carers in their local area.

On 22 June 2017, the Family and Community Development Committee tabled its report on the Inquiry into services for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (the Inquiry).

The Victorian Government welcomes the comprehensive work of the Inquiry and is taking action to ensure that people with ASD receive the supports that they need to live an ordinary and productive life. The Government will have more to say about its response soon.

Our focus is on strengthening Victorian mainstream service systems to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of people with ASD and their families, including people like Taylor. This means taking a more person centred approach to meeting their needs and to develop a skilled Victorian workforce to better identify, diagnose and link people with ASD to the right interventions.

South Melbourne public housing

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert

Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

217 Moray Street South Melbourne is not a public housing estate.

Ballarat railway station precinct

Raised with: Special Minister of State

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 3 November 2017

REPLY:

Government departments and agencies are committed to processing FOI requests transparently, efficiently and in the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

There has been a significant increase in FOI requests made to government in recent years. To meet this increased workload and to strengthen public access to information in accordance with the Act, departments are working to bolster their FOI staff and improve processes in order to ensure FOI applications are processed with expedience.

Across Government in 2016-17, the average number of days to process a request was 66 days. 78 per cent of requests were processed within 45 days, meaning only 22 per cent of all requests took longer than 45 days — typically due to the complexity of the request and volume of documents.

Amendments to the FOI Act came into effect on 1 September 2017. As well as establishing the Office of the Victorian Information Commissioner, the most significant amendments are the implementation of a shorter statutory timeframe of 30 days to process FOI requests and provisions requiring additional consultation with third parties.

Delays in processing requests can occur and I encourage any applicant who is not satisfied with a department's handling of an FOI request to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner. Agencies and Ministers have an obligation to cooperate with the Information Commissioner in relation to complaints made about them.

FOI processing is the responsibility of each individual department. Therefore, any questions about the department's handling of a specific a FOI request, should be referred to the responsible department and minister.

Dairy industry water charges

Raised with: Minister for Water
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 15 November 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is well aware of the issues facing northern Victorian irrigators.

We conducted our own socio-economic study earlier this year focussed on our northern irrigation communities.

The Victorian Government is concerned about the level of debt Victorian dairy farmers are carrying and the external impacts on their businesses and communities. Unlike Mr O'Sullivan and his colleagues who have been silent on key issues such as water theft in NSW, we stand by our farming communities.

The figures in the Weekly Times article reflect how hard our dairy farmers have been hit by recent market conditions.

I am pleased to say that GMW is continuing to provide these farmers with the support they need to get through these very difficult times; including

- offering a debt management and a hardship program;
- providing flexible payment options such as instalment plans;
- increasing up-front payment discounts;
- waiving interest payments for those entering a payment arrangement;
- not restricting supply for those on hardship programs;
- and providing refinancing, financial and health advice.

Almost half (935) of those with debts to GMW (1934) owe less than \$1000 and 474 owe between \$1000 and \$5000.

My Department continues to work with GMW on managing these issues and GMW is continuing to work closely with the VFF to ensure that the best possible support can be provided to our dairy farmers as they face these difficult times.

The VFF's Richard Anderson said, "They've (GMW) done the right thing, bringing in different payment options and scheduled payment arrangements."

Dairy farmers in the Macalister Irrigation District are also affected by this issue and Southern Rural Water is also supporting its irrigators by providing extended payment arrangements when needed.

The Government recognises that the best thing we can do is support these farming businesses stay open and operating — they support jobs and local communities — and my Department will continue to work with GMW on this issue.

We need to remember that the Victorian Government has a strong record supporting the dairy industry with our \$18 million dairy support package announced in late 2016.

Gippsland rail services

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Shing
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

Public Transport Victoria (PTV), V/Line and major project teams are working together to continuously improve how they communicate to keep passengers up-to-date with changes to the network.

Passenger information is published and updated on the PTV website at least one week prior to a planned disruption, detailing how passengers can continue to travel during the affected period. A summary of this information is available in the PTV app and via the PTV journey planner. PTV also delivers a subscription-based email every Wednesday outlining planned disruptions taking place over the coming 10 days. Passengers can sign up to this service via the PTV website.

PTV and V/Line also update their Twitter channels about a planned disruption the day before it begins. In response to your feedback, the teams will commit to more regular updates to this channel throughout the period of disruption.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority also provides regular Twitter updates on the works being undertaken on the Cranbourne/Pakenham line and the resulting disruption for passengers, including Gippsland line passengers.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to delivering improved rail services to Gippsland.

To that end we are investing heavily, in partnership with the Federal Government, on a \$435 million program to upgrade the Gippsland line, with an additional \$95 million to upgrade the Avon River Bridge.

We are however, not waiting for that work to be completed, and have delivered key initiatives aimed at ensuring fair shared access of track through the metropolitan area Enshrined in the new contract with Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM), are more stringent requirements of MTM to better balance the interests of V/Line and metropolitan passengers. This includes:

- New, tougher KPIs recording the equitable management of train paths through the metropolitan area,
- Shared timetable development between V/Line and MTM;
- A new system that allows MTM signallers to monitor the status and running time of V/Line trains approaching the metropolitan boundary;
- A new communications link, allowing MTM train controllers to speak directly to V/Line drivers (both as they approach the metro boundary, but also on departure from Southern Cross) to better manage the path of V/Line services through the metropolitan area

These new requirements will become key features of the Access Agreement and Operating Protocols between MTM and V/Line that govern the operation of V/Line services in the metropolitan network and help ensure that MTM provides fair and equitable access for regional passengers.

Parliamentary sitting hours

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

Sitting hours of the Legislative Council is a matter for the Legislative Council.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 13 December 2017

Fiskville former training site

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 31 October 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to exploring options for the future use of the former Country Fire Authority (CFA) Training College at Fiskville and bringing employment opportunities and economic benefits to the local community.

The Victorian Government closed the CFA Training College, Fiskville in 2015 after tests showed firefighters were exposed to dangerous chemicals that likely cause cancer. Decommissioning works at the Fiskville site commenced in July 2017.

Public concerns about safety at Fiskville were raised in December 2011, during the term of the previous government.

Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) is continuing work exploring the potential use of the former Fiskville site following a feasibility study commissioned by the Victorian Government.

EMV is working with Regional Development Victoria and other Government stakeholders to examine available options.

The Victorian Budget 2016-17 allocated \$31 million to invest in a new Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre (VEMTC) in the Region. As I announced in May 2017, the Victorian Government has purchased a 35 hectare site in Ballan, near Ingliston Road. Not only will this world-class training facility service the training needs of CFA, SES and other emergency services, its construction will also create new jobs and contribute to economic activity in the local community.

Port of Melbourne

Raised with: Treasurer
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 15 November 2017

REPLY:

This is a matter best dealt with by the Minister for Ports.

The charges referred to by DP World (DPW) are not imposed by the Port of Melbourne. These are charges determined by DPW.

The Port of Melbourne is a landlord port, with many tenants each determining their own pricing for their services.

The strengthened economic regulatory (price) framework, overseen by the Essential Services Commission, applies to the regulated services provided by the Port of Melbourne.

The framework does not, and has never, applied to stevedores. Stevedores are able to determine their own charges, as is the case at all major Australian container ports.

Emergency services road safety

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

The Government implemented a community awareness campaign in July this year to correspond with the commencement of the new road rule. The campaign consisted of radio, digital and social media communication methods. Information about the new rule was also included in the RACV's Royal Auto magazine in July, which is distributed to over 2.1 million members.

Awareness of the new road rule is growing. Further promotion of the rule is planned for early 2018.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Friday, 15 December 2017

Parliamentary sitting hours

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

The length of time each house can sit is determined by the respective Standing Orders. The Legislative Council's orders require the president to interrupt debate at a set time. Any extension to sitting times can be approved by a Member without debate for up to two hours at one hour intervals, with any further extension to be considered and determined by the Council itself. The sitting time of the Legislative Assembly can be extended if the majority of members vote in support of it.

Electricity supply

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Ms Patten
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

The *State Emergency Response Plan Extreme Heat Sub-Plan* (the Plan) sets out the Victorian arrangements for the coordinated response to the impacts and consequences of extreme heat events on the community, infrastructure, and services. It is available on the website of Emergency Management Victoria at <https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/responsibilities/state-emergency-plans/state-extreme-heat-sub-plan>.

As you have noted, Clause 5.6 of the Electricity Distribution Code (the Code) outlines the specific requirements placed on electricity distribution companies when dealing with power dependent (i.e. life support) customers.

Electricity distribution businesses are required to provide all customers with four business days' written notification of any planned interruption to supply. This written notice must include the expected date, time and duration of the planned interruption and include a 24 hours telephone number for inquiries. Advance notification allows customers to plan for the interruption and/or to put alternative arrangements in place for the period that power supply is unavailable. On days of extreme heat, electricity distribution businesses will either seek to defer their planned works or, if the works must proceed due to safety and security concerns, will seek to commence works as early as possible in the day to avoid the hottest part of the day.

You have also noted the additional functionality provided by smart meters. Some electricity distribution businesses are indeed already using smart meters to provide greater selectivity in which customers can be kept on supply and thereby minimise impacts on the community. This functionality can only be used under certain scenarios however, and is not an option for all types of power outage. This functionality can be used for example to address supply demand imbalances but not where there has been a technical failure of local infrastructure.

While electricity distribution businesses will register power dependent customers in their individual systems, there is no single 'Do not disconnect register' in existence, nor, as noted above, is it possible to prevent all planned maintenance works and unplanned outages. There is, however, a Vulnerable People Register (VPR) which was developed as part of the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS's) Vulnerable people in

emergencies (VPE) policy in response to Recommendation 3 of the 2009 Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission's final report. The purpose of the VPE policy is to improve the safety of vulnerable people in emergencies through supporting emergency planning, developing local lists of facilities where vulnerable people may be located and developing local lists of vulnerable people through the VPR.

I thank you again for having raised this important matter and hope that the information provided is of assistance.

Parliamentary sitting hours

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

The length of time each house can sit is determined by the respective Standing Orders. The Legislative Council's orders require the president to interrupt debate at a set time. Any extension to sitting times can be approved by a Member without debate for up to two hours at one hour intervals, with any further extension to be considered and determined by the Council itself. The sitting time of the Legislative Assembly can be extended if the majority of members vote in support of it.

Parliamentary sitting hours

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 16 November 2017

REPLY:

The length of time each house can sit is determined by the respective Standing Orders. The Legislative Council's orders require the president to interrupt debate at a set time. Any extension to sitting times can be approved by a Member without debate for up to two hours at one hour intervals, with any further extension to be considered and determined by the Council itself. The sitting time of the Legislative Assembly can be extended if the majority of members vote in support of it.