

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

14, 15 and 16 November 2017

(Extract from book 19)

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
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
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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, 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, #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, 14 November 2017

Firearm permits

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 10 August 2017

REPLY:

The Government is currently considering the findings of the Inquiry into the Control of Invasive Animals on Crown Land and will respond in due course. In terms of the recommendations relating to category C and D firearms and, more generally the use of category C firearms, this will be considered in the context of the National Firearms Agreement and the established genuine reasons for those firearms.

As always, the Government will take the advice of Victoria Police on the best way to ensure community safety.

Victoria Legal Aid

Raised with: Attorney-General
Raised by: Ms Pennicuik
Raised on: 7 September 2017

REPLY:

The Government has made significant investments to support Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) and the courts and improve access to justice.

From 2017-18, the Andrews Labor Government is providing new funding of \$85.4 million to Victoria Legal Aid (VLA).

This funding includes \$39.6 million for VLA to provide legal responses to family violence and child protection — including support for the roll-out of Specialist Family Violence Courts.

The Government's investment also includes \$17.9 million to respond to recommendations of the Access to Justice review and alleviate pressure on key services. The funding will provide additional duty lawyer services and grants of legal aid, as well as additional translating and interpreter services. It will also provide for the expansion of VLA's website and Legal Help telephone service.

The Government delivered a major boost to courts through the 2017-18 Victorian State Budget, including \$89.2 million to update ageing technology systems at the Magistrates' and Children's Courts and \$25.2 million for the expansion of the Court Integrates Services Program (CISP) and CISP Remand Outreach pilot.

In the aftermath of the Bourke Street tragedy, the Victorian Government worked with Magistrates' Court Victoria to establish a night court to improve the availability of magistrates to consider bail applications. In line with recommendations made by Mr Paul Coghlan QC in his review of bail laws, work is underway to establish a new Bail and Remand Court which will sit for extended hours, building on the current weekend and night court models. This is a longer-term project that requires careful planning to ensure it operates effectively.

The Government is working with all relevant stakeholders including VLA, Victoria Police, the courts, the Office of Public Prosecutions to alleviate the pressures on the courts and ensure they can meet future demand.

Homelessness

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

It is surprising that those in the Coalition, with such an appalling record of cuts in housing and homelessness support in their term of office, would criticise an Andrews Labor Government that is putting in unprecedented investment. Particularly in the context of an absent Federal Coalition Government, which is leaving it to the States to deal with a national housing and homelessness problem.

The Family Violence Royal Commission outlined the last government's \$330m cut to housing and homelessness. The Productivity Commission's 2015 Report on Government Services revealed that the Federal Government made that a \$470m cut when their cuts were added in. It doesn't appear that the Coalition Government consulted service providers about those drastic cuts to services, which the Andrews Government has been repairing over the last three years.

The Commonwealth further recently confirmed they will not be increasing in real terms support for housing and homelessness. The challenges of housing and homelessness are complex and demand a partnership approach across all levels of government. This includes the need for significant additional Commonwealth Government investment, and a commitment from the Commonwealth to use the many levers at its disposal, including taxation and welfare. Analysis led by Tony Nicholson, Executive Director of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, shows that of those people rough sleeping in Victoria, 43% were receiving Newstart or Youth Allowance. All the Turnbull Government is offering is a plan to drug test people and reduce support to those that need it most.

Our \$799 million investment in housing and homelessness initiatives will aid those homeless people fleeing family violence, recovering from trauma, or battling mental health issues. It provides earlier, targeted support to help over 19 000 people back on their feet. It builds on the \$2.1 billion in financial backing as part of Homes for Victorians which will deliver thousands of new social homes. We're delivering flexible packages of support for vulnerable Victorians, and rental brokerage to help sustain tenancies in the private market. Our funding has already delivered 480 new homes in partnership with community housing through the \$73 million Rapid Housing Assistance programme.

Tony Nicholson from the Brotherhood of St Laurence is providing advice to Government on a rough sleeping strategy, with recommendations to be provided shortly. Through our Rough Sleeping Response Taskforce, we're linking homelessness support services with City of Melbourne and Victoria Police to reduce rough sleeping in the CBD.

As part of the Towards Home programme, innovative and comfortable modular homes are going up around Melbourne, in ordinary streets in both affluent and working-class communities. The Towards Home program works with leading service providers to support Victorians with a house and targeted support to get back on their feet. We're expanding outreach efforts into the suburbs and regional areas to assist people at their point of origin, and providing targeted responses for veterans, young people and people exiting prison. 8 new accommodation and support projects are collectively to receive \$27 million, with half of the projects to be in regional areas.

Those in the Coalition would do better to lobby their friends in Canberra to come to the table and provide real leadership for Australian in housing stress than make baseless arguments about the record of this Government.

Energy prices

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

I met with Mr Peter Radevski of Radevski Coolstores in Shepparton on 26 October 2017 to discuss his energy situation. The meeting was set up in collaboration with Ms Suzanna Sheed MP. I have asked the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning to follow up with Mr Radevski to work on energy solutions appropriate to his individual circumstances.

Victoria's energy companies operate in a competitive market, and retail energy prices are set by the market, rather than by government. While retailers are required to adhere to a strong retail customer protection framework, they are able to design their own tariff structures based on market factors, customer demand and their own costs.

Recent energy price rises have been driven by several factors, including higher gas prices due to the export of domestically produced Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) from Queensland. The export of LNG from Queensland means that domestic gas prices on Australia's east coast have now become linked to higher international gas prices. This has increased the cost of gas for Victorian consumers and has also increased electricity prices, as gas is used as a fuel for electricity generation. Another key reason for rising energy prices is the policy uncertainty regarding a national emissions reduction strategy, which has reduced energy market investor confidence.

The Andrews Labor Government understands the pressures Victorian businesses such as Radevski Coolstores are facing from rising energy prices, and is putting in place a range of measures to assist businesses.

\$7.2 million has been allocated through the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Victorian State Budgets for a range of energy efficiency programs to help businesses of all sizes reduce their energy costs. More details of these programs can be found at <http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/helping-businesses-to-reduce-their-energy-costs>.

They include the \$6.1 million Boosting Business Productivity program, which supports businesses to access expert advice and support needed to cut energy and materials costs, reduce greenhouse emissions, and improve energy productivity. The program includes grants, a sustainable finance service, training, events, and information resources.

In September 2017, Energy Assessment grants were increased from \$9000 to \$15 000 per business. The program now also includes grants of up to \$50 000 announced for businesses to invest in gas-related projects, including capital equipment upgrades, non-routine maintenance and repairs, fuel switching, and improved metering. These will improve energy productivity and affordability, support jobs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. More details of these programs can be found at <http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/services-and-advice/business/energy-and-materials-efficiency-for-business/boosting-productivity>.

Victorian Energy Upgrades (formerly known as the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target) is providing businesses of all sizes with increased incentives to upgrade their facilities and reduce energy costs. New customised ways of measuring energy savings have been introduced creating incentives for large, unique or complex upgrades, as well as new simpler activities and enabling a greater range of businesses to lower energy costs. Very large energy users can now also benefit from the program by choosing to opt-in and receive incentives for energy-saving upgrades. To find out more about the program and how businesses can save visit <http://www.victorianenergysaver.vic.gov.au/victorian-energy-upgrades>.

The \$200 million Future Industries Fund provides a range of initiatives to assist Victorian manufacturers, including the \$20 million New Energy Jobs Fund, which supports projects that create jobs, reduce emissions, and drive innovation in new energy technologies. The third round of the New Energy Jobs Fund opens in late 2017. More detail about the Future Industries Fund is available at <http://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/future-industries>.

The Investment Attraction and Assistance Program, which received an additional \$90 million in the 2017-18 Victorian State Budget to help create and retain jobs in priority industry sectors such as manufacturing, including by managing the impacts of a volatile national gas market.

North-east link

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

REPLY:

The North East Link Authority is currently working towards a preferred road corridor, with 4 corridors currently under consideration (i.e. Corridors A — D). Technical studies and assessments will inform the selection of the preferred corridor, and business case due later this year. In response to the request for further information, please note the following summary:

- In regard to Corridor A, the Doncaster rail or Doncaster bus rapid transit will not be precluded as part of the design solution.
- The expansion or improvement to the Doncaster park and ride will be reviewed by Government as part of its consideration of the preferred corridor.
- Preliminary traffic information has been shared with the community previously through the Technical Summary Report, which was released in August 2017.

Mouse control

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 17 October 2017

REPLY:

As you have raised, Zinc phosphide is a Schedule 7 chemical that is used to control pest mice in the agricultural industry.

In Victoria, organisations must hold a licence issued under the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 in order to be able to lawfully manufacture and supply zinc phosphide.

This is because zinc phosphide is a dangerous poison that poses a high risk of harm to humans if it is not stored, handled and used appropriately.

Applications may be made by an organisation for such a licence to manufacture and/or supply zinc phosphide. The Department of Health and Human Services acts to assess and process these applications in a fair and timely manner. The average processing time for a licence application is normally between two to three weeks.

Mobile phone emergency alerts

Raised with: Minister for Innovation and the Digital Economy
Raised by: Mr Bourman
Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

Telecommunication infrastructure is essential to growth, liveability and the safety of our regional and rural communities. That is why the Andrews Labor Government continues to make unprecedented investment to increase mobile phone coverage across the state.

I am pleased to note that under this government 31 new mobile towers are being built across the local government areas of Gippsland. Licola sits within the Wellington Shire Council where there are four new mobile towers being constructed, in which one of these new mobile towers is already complete at Gormandale. Tonimbuk sits within the

Cardinia Shire Council, where there are two new mobile towers being constructed within this local government area.

In the 2017-18 State Budget, the Victorian Labor Government committed a further \$11 million to continue improving mobile coverage for regional Victoria. In addition, I was pleased to announce in October 2017 that the Andrews Labor Government has also partnered with Optus to build 25 new mobile base stations throughout regional Victoria. These sites are being built without Commonwealth Government co-investment. Our government will continue to advocate to the Federal Coalition Government for those sites to be considered in the Mobile Black Spot Program.

The Victorian Labor Government has prioritised new mobile towers for communities in bushfire prone areas by working closely with the Emergency Management Commissioner.

Try before You Ride

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Leane

Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

Try Before You Ride is a very successful community focused program, with over 200 people attending the recent event in Box Hill on 11 October 2017.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to the Try Before You Ride program under the State Disability Plan, and will continue to work with operators to participate in the program.

The Labor Government will continue to look for opportunities to expand the program and explore new locations, and I look forward to working with the Member for Eastern Metropolitan in doing so.

Wilson's Promontory commercial boat tours

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change

Raised by: Mr O'Donohue

Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

In determining the appropriateness and eligibility of Pennicott Wilderness Journeys' proposal to operate boat tours from Tidal River, Parks Victoria conducted stakeholder and community engagement activities in February and March 2017.

Engagement activities were targeted at involving key stakeholders and the general public in exploring views, ideas, opportunities and areas of concern via both face-to-face meetings and various digital platforms.

In total, the views of approximately 865 community members and visitors were collected and considered. This included 465 face-to-face conversations with visitors to Tidal River and approximately 400 surveys completed either online or in hard copy.

The Friends of the Prom and the Wilsons Promontory Advisory Group were consulted during a stakeholder workshop on 12-13 February 2017. I also met with the Friends of the Prom on 5 April 2017 to discuss their concerns about the proposal.

The Operations Plan is being developed by Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, in consultation with Parks Victoria. This plan, combined with the Lease and Licence will establish the guidelines or rules for the operation of the tourism venture, including but not limited to vessel movements through Tidal River, launching procedures from Normal Beach, maintenance of vessels and Emergency Management.

Parks Victoria's comprehensive assessments included seeking independent external advice to ensure that the integrity of the natural environment; that wildlife remains protected and assessed the impact of the proposal on the environment. The consultant reported that the activities involved in operating the cruises were of low impact to the environment and that Pennicott Wilderness Journeys' proposal demonstrated a commitment to managing environmental impacts and promoting environmental sustainability.

King Valley Prosecco Road

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture
Raised by: Ms Symes
Raised on: 19 October 2017

REPLY:

Victoria's King Valley region has an 18-year history of producing prosecco and is the leading regional producer of Australian prosecco, with total sales worth \$22.3 million in 2016.

I share the Victorian Wine Industry's concern about efforts by Italian wine producers to restrict the use of the grape variety name 'Prosecco'.

Prosecco is growing rapidly in popularity and King Valley producers have invested significantly in developing the region's leadership in this wine category.

I have recently written to the Commonwealth Ministers for Agriculture, Regional Development, and Trade, Tourism and Investment, requesting that they use all available opportunities to resist efforts to protect the name Prosecco, particularly in any negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with the European Union. I am looking forward to continued, active engagement with them on this important issue for Victoria's wine industry.

Moe & District Netball Association

Raised with: Minister for Sport
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 19 October 2017

REPLY:

In March 2017 the Andrews Labor Government announced an \$85 million community sporting package investment into the Latrobe Valley. This includes:

- \$3 million to upgrade the Ted Summerton Reserve in Moe
- \$5 million for 9 local reserves to be upgraded, of which Monash Reserve in Newborough is one.

We are aware of Latrobe City Council's Moe Newborough Outdoor Recreation Plan, dated July 2015 and the proposal to relocate the Moe & District Netball Association to a new site in Newborough.

I would encourage the Moe & District Netball Association to work closely with Latrobe City Council to develop a project that could be considered for funding from one of our community sports infrastructure funding programs or through the Latrobe Valley Authority's infrastructure programs.

The Andrews Labor Government is very supportive of providing new opportunities for women and girls to play the sports they love. As the most popular sport for females in Victoria, this government is providing significant investment to netball to ensure it can build participation across the state for females of all abilities and backgrounds.

Our investments also include \$8 million into the Country Football and Netball Program, partnering with the AFL and Netball Victoria. This is in addition to significant netball infrastructure investments through our \$120 million Community Sports Infrastructure Fund and our \$22 million Better Indoor Stadiums Fund.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 15 November 2017

Violence against women

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

I thank the member for bringing this matter to my attention. My office will be in contact to organise a meeting with Ms Robertson to discuss the tragic circumstances of her daughter's death.

Violence against women is a priority law and order concern for the Andrews Labor Government as it effects the lives of so many Victorians.

As outlined in the Government's Rolling Action Plan, we are undertaking an ambitious reform agenda in order to implement all 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Central to these reforms are the voices of victims and their families Accordingly I welcome the opportunity to meet with Mrs Robertson in the near future.

In recognition of the key role gender inequality plays as a cause of violence against women, the Victorian Government is currently implementing a series of reforms under the Safe and Strong Strategy. This primary prevention strategy involves a systemic and whole of community approach to change harmful social norms that drive and contribute to violence against women. Community consultation and engagement plays an integral part of the implementation process, and the Family Violence Steering Committee will support this approach.

A number of initiatives have commenced roll-out in 2017. These include the behaviour change campaigns, cultural change programs, additional housing provided for victims of family violence, and preparation and planning for the Specialist Family Violence Court. A notable achievement is the creation of six Multi-Disciplinary Centres operating across Victoria. Centres are dedicated to helping victims of family violence and include Victoria Police, dedicated trauma counsellors and child protection workers. Victoria Police family violence teams have recently moved into a new Centre situated in Dandenong.

Policing will also continue to prioritise preventing, detecting and prosecuting violence against women and children. The Community Safety Statement sets the Government's agenda for policing and has five priority areas of which putting victims first is one. An additional 3135 frontline police officers, including 415 family violence specialist officers, will transform how police respond to family violence incidents. This will ensure that victims and witnesses are supported, and vulnerable women and children are kept safe and live free from family violence.

To support these reforms the Government has allocated an unprecedented \$1.91 billion funding as part of the 2017/18 budget. Utilising this finding, we will continue to work in partnership with Victoria Police, the social services sector and victim survivors and their families to achieve our shared vision for a Victoria free from family violence.

Caulfield–Dandenong line elevated rail

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

Safety is of paramount importance on all construction projects and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR) has been involved in the Safety Management Systems for the project to remove the nine most congested and dangerous level crossings in Victoria.

All safety incidents are taken extremely seriously, fully investigated and measures put in place to prevent recurrences.

The greatest threat to public safety on the Caulfield to Dandenong line is the existence of these nine dangerous level crossings that have already cost too many lives. The Member for Southern Metropolitan voted in Parliament in support of a motion to delay the removal of these crossings. The Government is getting on with removing them as quickly and as safely as possible.

Detailed information on all aspects of the project, including safety, is available at www.levelcrossings.vic.gov.au.

Taxi and hire car industry

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 18 October 2017

REPLY:

Globally the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry is changing and every jurisdiction in Australia is moving towards regulating ride-sharing.

In Victoria, the Andrews Labor Government has announced a financial assistance package for the existing industry of over half a billion dollars, of which more than \$350 million has already been provided.

Fairness Fund payments began in March 2017 and continue to be paid as they are assessed by the independent Chair of the Fund. As Minister I play no role in the assessment of individual applications and I reject the calls from the Member for Northern Metropolitan that I should intervene and instruct the Chair of the Fairness Fund in relation to the assessment of a particular application.

While I acknowledge the concerns and hardship of the Member's constituent, it is important to point out that the Liberal party voted to provide her with no financial assistance at all.

In Parliament, the Liberal Opposition supported regulating ridesharing, supported removing taxi and hire car licences but voted against providing any financial assistance to the existing industry.

I have met with many licence holders and their representative bodies on numerous occasions, as has my office and many members of the Labor caucus.

Individuals who are seeking advice from the Fairness Fund on the status of their application should contact the Fairness Fund support line on 1800 875 122 or by email on fairnessfund@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 16 November 2017

WorkCover

Raised with: Minister for Finance
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 20 October 2017

REPLY:

WorkSafe Victoria's (WorkSafe's) travel reimbursement rate is calculated to provide for the extra running costs incurred as a result of injured workers need to attend approved healthcare appointments, utilising their own vehicle. The running costs include fuel, tyres, servicing, repairs, and a component of vehicle depreciation.

The methodology used to calculate the travel reimbursement rate for injured workers reflects a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal decision, requiring WorkSafe to have the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV) review the rate for travel reimbursement for the extra running costs. The RACV has completed subsequent reviews for WorkSafe, with the current reimbursement rate recommended at 30 cents per kilometre.

WorkSafe has its next RACV review prior to 1 July 2018. Any recommended changes will be reflected in WorkSafe's 2018-19 pricing, and is applicable from 1 July 2018.

It would be inappropriate for me to comment on how other jurisdictions set their travel reimbursement rates.

A worker who was injured on or after 5 April 2010 in Victoria, is entitled to superannuation contributions on their weekly payment once they have received 52 weeks of compensation. This is as a result of legislative changes that took effect from that date.

The national superannuation guarantee scheme does not require employers to make superannuation contributions during periods of incapacity caused by work-related injury or illness. This is because superannuation contributions are calculated on the basis of 'ordinary time earnings', and a worker's compensation payments are not classified as ordinary time earnings.

Opal Seahaven

Raised with: Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 31 October 2017

REPLY:

This Adjournment Debate is not the responsibility of the Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation but falls under the responsibility of the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing. Accordingly, the question should be directed to Minister Foley.