

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

17, 18, 19 and 20 October 2017

(Extract from book 17)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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

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The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

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The ministry

(from 13 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
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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, 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, 17 October 2017

Treasury Corporation of Victoria

Raised with: Treasurer
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 22 March 2017

REPLY:

The manner and costs associated with the attendance of board members is a matter for the TCV Board. TCV has an established policy that provides for the payment of a component of travel expenses for directors. The reimbursement of travel expenses is a matter solely for the TCV Board.

I note that Ms Kelly has undertaken to personally meet the costs of her flights to and from board meetings.

Boroondara police stations

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 8 August 2017

REPLY:

There is no intention to alter the current servicing arrangements across the Boroondara Police Service Area. The Boroondara Police Service Area is serviced by three police stations: the Boroondara Police Complex, Camberwell Police Station and Ashburton Police Station.

To best address any piece of correspondence, it is important that the response befits the correspondent's needs. In this case, the correspondent referred to an incident at Ivy Grange in Kew, which is located between the Boroondara Police Complex and the Camberwell Police Station. As these two police stations would be the most relevant points of contact for the correspondent, these were referred to in the correspondence.

Contact details for the Station Commander in charge of the Camberwell Police Station were provided to the correspondent, and a copy of the correspondence was referred to the Office of the Chief Commissioner of Police for consideration, as the correspondent had raised an operational matter.

With regard to the Member's comments on Ashburton Police Station, I can advise that this station continues to provide a counter-service to the community on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9.00am and 5.00pm. This operating model was adopted in line with Victoria Police's 2015 internal review, which found that face-to-face contact with the public equated to approximately 20 minutes per day.

Veterans in Construction

Raised with: Premier
Raised by: Mr Leane
Raised on: 9 August 2017

REPLY:

Thank you for your question in relation to Veterans in Construction. I recently met with Dan Cairnes from Veterans in Construction and commend him for the incredible work he is doing. I look forward to the Government working

further with Veterans in Construction and with other Ex-Service Organisations to further support Victoria's veterans.

In November 2016 I announced a target of 250 veterans to be employed across the Victorian Public Sector. This initiated the Public Sector Veterans Employment Strategy.

Major General David McLachlan (Rtd), former President of the RSL Victorian Branch has been appointed as the Veterans Employment Advocate to help veterans find a new career in Victoria's public sector. Major General McLachlan will use his extensive expertise and sector knowledge to ensure the state's Employment Strategy is implemented with veterans' needs at front of mind.

Tailored resources and tools are being developed to help ex-service personnel translate their Australian Defence Force experience to the public sector. Materials will also be available to help employers understand the valuable skills and capabilities veterans have to offer.

The Government is tracking the number of veterans who apply for positions in the public sector. This will assist us to understand how many veterans are applying for positions in the public sector and to monitor their progress and address any barriers they may experience in securing employment.

Cardinia transport infrastructure

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 10 August 2017

REPLY:

The Monash Freeway Upgrade is underway to reduce congestion and get drivers home sooner and safer. The upgrade will improve safety and travel time reliability by adding more lanes, widening ramps and putting in place a smart freeway management system.

Upon completion in 2018, we can expect more reliable trips for more than 200 000 daily motorists and room for an extra 2000 vehicles per hour during peak times.

During construction of the Monash Freeway Upgrade, safety is always at the forefront of our mind as we endeavour to minimise disruptions and keep traffic moving as these important upgrade works take place. During the busiest periods on the Monash Freeway, being morning inbound and afternoon outbound, we are keeping all lanes available to road users during these peak periods.

The Andrews Labor Government is also committed to increasing participation in healthy forms of transport, such as cycling and walking. Not only will greater participation improve Victorian's health but it will take cars off the road.

The Government has set up Active Transport Victoria (ATV), a unit dedicated to promoting the benefits of cycling and walking and leading multiagency programs to improve safety and infrastructure. One of these programs is the Safer Cyclists and Pedestrians Fund, an unprecedented \$100 million Government allocation to cyclist and pedestrian infrastructure improvements.

VicRoads, together with local councils, has developed fund proposals for cyclists and pedestrian infrastructure improvement projects across metropolitan and regional Victoria proposing a range of treatments. They include separated bicycle ways, bicycle intersection prioritisation, new shared user paths and the creation of Strategic Cycling Corridors, which turn disconnected bike routes into continuous, safer and more navigable routes.

Teams from VicRoads and local councils will be talking to communities across the state over the coming year for their feedback on the proposals before submitting them to Government for approval. Our goal is a future where more people leave their cars at home and use their bicycles or feet instead. The result will be a safer, fitter, more environmentally friendly Victoria.

Mordialloc bypass

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 22 August 2017

REPLY:

The Mordialloc Bypass project has been determined by the Planning Minister to be subject to an Environment Effects Statement (EES).

This decision will allow interested individuals and groups to raise issues they think should be considered in the EES process and ensure the delivery of this project takes account of the important environmental significance of the area.

Further to this, VicRoads will also soon be referring the project to the Federal Department of Environment and Energy to make a determination on matters covered under the Environment Biodiversity and Conservation Act.

West Gate tunnel project

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 22 August 2017

REPLY:

We're building the West Gate Tunnel Project to slash congestion and provide a vital alternative to the West Gate Bridge.

More and more people use the West Gate every day, it can barely keep up with demand. A single incident can bring Melbourne to a standstill, with traffic backed up for miles and nowhere to go.

Drivers coming from the west desperately need an alternative.

In addition to extra lanes on the West Gate Freeway and a tunnel to take trucks and cars off residential streets, it also includes world class urban design, new open space and a city bypass that will take traffic off Spencer and King Streets.

The development of this project has been thorough and involved the community and councils at every step of the way, and the design has changed based on that feedback.

More than a dozen experts, most with decades of experience, worked on the traffic modelling and economics that underpins this project.

All aspects of the project are currently being assessed through a comprehensive, transparent and independent inquiry and we stand by that process to ensure the best outcome for Victorians.

Bridge Street–Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 22 August 2017

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that it has recently undertaken a crash analysis at the above location, which indicates that in the five-year period ending 31 December 2016, there have been no crashes reported at this site. Furthermore,

VicRoads conducted site inspections of traffic and pedestrian movements during peak periods and observed that there is no major traffic delay or unusual pedestrian demand at this location.

As you may appreciate, VicRoads receives many requests each year for road improvements (such as traffic lights) throughout Victoria. All requests are prioritised based on the extent to which such a treatment would improve safety and/or congestion. VicRoads considers factors such as the need to cater for pedestrians, the historical safety record of the site, and the impact that treating the intersection would have on the performance of the surrounding road network. Based on such considerations, VicRoads currently has no plans to introduce traffic lights at this intersection.

Australian marriage law postal survey

Raised with: Minister for Equality
Raised by: Ms Shing
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government acknowledges that the Federal Government's decision to conduct a national marriage equality postal survey is having a significant and damaging impact on the wellbeing of LGBTI Victorians across the state.

LGBTI people in regional Victoria are among the worst impacted by the prolonged national debate on marriage equality. This is one of the reasons the Andrews Labor Government's LGBTI Rural and Regional Roadshow has visited 23 towns across Victoria over the last year to identify needs, offer support and create connections to these communities. This is also why we announced an additional \$500 000 of funding in August to support the growing demand for vital mental health and well-being services for LGBTI communities across Victoria during this difficult time.

This funding will provide additional individual and peer group counselling services and access to updated mental health resources. The Victorian Aids Council will lead the delivery of additional counselling services to vulnerable LGBTI cohorts, including isolated people in regional and rural communities. An additional 1000 hours of LGBTI specific crisis counselling services will be delivered in areas of need, including outer suburban and regional areas through local community health centres. Drummond Street Services will lead the coordination of mental health resources and deliver a suite of activities and events across Victoria that will provide much needed support and link LGBTI Victorians to supportive allies and mental health services. The Youth Affairs Council of Victoria will provide direct funding to Healthy Equal Youth Project (HEY) program partners, especially in regional areas, to increase peer support activities for young LGBTI people.

In Victoria, equality is not negotiable. The Andrews Labor Government is committed to ensuring that LGBTI Victorians have the support they need during the Federal Government's wasteful and damaging postal survey.

South Yarra Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to making Victoria the Education State and that means ensuring all Victorian families have access to a great school no matter where they live. The last three State Budgets delivered the largest ever investment in Victorian school infrastructure, allocating more than \$2.5 billion to build, upgrade and maintain schools across the state. This funding means that 56 new school projects are now in the pipeline, which come online in the next few years.

The Government is conscious that enrolment growth pressures are being felt in a number of communities, including in the inner city. The Government's Inner City Schools Package will see significant investment in this area including:

- \$44 million to construct the new South Melbourne Primary School scheduled to open in Term 1, 2018
- \$31 million to construct the new South Melbourne Park Primary School scheduled to open in Term 1, 2019
- \$43 million to construct the new Richmond High School scheduled to open in Term 1, 2018
- \$42 million for the new Prahran High School scheduled to open in Term 1, 2019
- \$5 million to deliver additional classroom spaces at Albert Park College
- \$1 million to masterplan the future Docklands Primary School
- Identification of sites for a primary school and secondary school at Fishermans Bend
- Identification of a site for a new primary school at North Melbourne

These investments will assist to accommodate the growing demand for education places in the inner city.

Labor is investing more to build our government schools in three years, than the Liberals did in four years. Our record funding boost of \$2.5 billion in school infrastructure is repairing the damage done by four years of chronic under-investment, where funding fell under the Baillieu and Napthine Governments to a mere \$200 million a year.

I am advised in response to the enrolment growth at South Yarra Primary School in 2017 the Department provided a new, triple storey relocatable building to increase capacity at the school. The Department is working closely with South Yarra Primary School to confirm enrolments for 2018, which can be accommodated within the existing facilities at the school, while maintaining availability of the library, multi-purpose rooms (where the school currently offers music and after-school care) and art. Based on the current enrolment projection South Yarra Primary School will also be able to maintain its current standalone languages room.

It is important to be aware that the Department's Entitlement Schedule does not provide for specialist languages rooms. Should enrolments continue to grow, South Yarra Primary School will manage the provision of language classes across existing classrooms.

In addition, the Victorian School Building Authority is continuing to engage with the City of Melbourne to ascertain whether it may be possible to consider an expanded use of Fawkner Park to accommodate additional space for South Yarra Primary School in the future.

South Melbourne Primary School will open in 2018 and South Melbourne Park Primary School will open in 2019. These two new schools will accommodate local enrolments and local enrolment boundaries will be progressively updated as these new schools open.

The Department will continue to work directly with the South Yarra Primary School Principal to address accommodation needs in 2018 and beyond.

Thompsons Road duplication

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

For your response to Jason of Seaford, and any others concerned about the congestion on Thompsons Road, I am pleased to confirm that the Government is committed to completing the duplication of Thompsons Road between EastLink in Carrum Downs and Berwick-Cranbourne Road in Clyde North. This commitment by the Andrews

Government is clearly demonstrated in recent Budget commitments where a total of some \$175 million has been allocated for this important road duplication project.

Beyond this, a further \$65.9 million has also been provided from the Government's Level Crossing Removal Program so that the rail level crossing at Lyndhurst will also be removed as a part of the project. The total commitment of the Government to this section of Thompsons Road is therefore in excess of \$240 million.

The plans for the upgrading of Thompsons Road are now well advanced with works already commenced on the first stage of the project, which will duplicate Thompsons Road between the South Gippsland Highway to the west of Evans Road, including the rail overpass of the Cranbourne rail line. Tenders have also closed for the duplication of the remaining sections Of Thompsons Road and a contract for the constructions of these works should be awarded shortly. All of these works will result in a minimum of two lanes in each direction on Thompsons Road. It is expected that all of these duplication works will be completed by mid 2019.

With regard to Jason's concerns about the existing roundabouts along Thompsons Road, I am happy to inform you that the roundabouts with single lane approaches at Westernport Highway, Evans Road and McCormicks Road will all be upgraded to large signalised intersections which will significantly reduce the congestion currently being experienced at these sites.

Ageing strategy

Raised with: Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing

Raised by: Ms Patten

Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to enhancing the participation of seniors in the local community, and particularly their health and wellbeing. Investment to date includes:

- \$1.2 million for Age Friendly initiatives to promote the inclusion of older people; support services, business and community leaders to better plan for the needs of seniors; and enhance the quality of life for people as they age
- more than \$600 000 for 108 cultural and linguistically diverse seniors group and clubs to create or expand social participation opportunities for socially isolated seniors
- \$700 000 over three years for the Victorian Active Ageing Partnership, which aims to increase participation in physical activity for older Victorians, especially those who are disadvantaged, isolated or inactive
- \$2.1 million over three years for Active and Healthy Ageing Advisers that support healthy ageing initiatives and enhance partnerships to improve organisational and workforce capabilities.

In addition, in response to the Commissioner for Senior Victorians' report 'Ageing is everyone's business: a report into social isolation and loneliness':

- \$760 000 has been invested in the Strengthening Seniors Inclusion and Participation in Local Communities' project. This project aims to build the capacity of local community-based organisations to reach out and better respond to the needs and interests of older people at risk of social isolation and loneliness
- the Senior Victorians Flagship Project has been established to develop appropriate pre-accredited programs that address the evolving training needs of Seniors Victorians in their immediate communities, for example, digital literacy classes.

\$1 million is also invested annually in free transport and free or low cost activities for seniors during the Victorian Seniors Festival held in October. The Festival is an opportunity for the community to celebrate and honour our Victorian seniors and promote the significant and positive contribution that seniors make to the Victorian community.

Eastern Freeway

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Dunn
Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that it will continue to ensure that all road infrastructure projects are future-proofed so that potential mass transit options between the Manningham area and central Melbourne are not precluded in the longer term.

Transport for Victoria is currently undertaking a study into potential options for future improvements to Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) bus services between Manningham and central Melbourne. The outcomes are expected to improve journey time, reliability and user experience, making the DART service a highly appealing mode of transport.

Energy supply

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

Victoria's power stations are privately owned. The closure of Hazelwood was a commercial decision made by the station's private operators, Engie and Mitsui and Co.

The claim that 3565 wind turbines will be built to meet the Victorian Renewable Energy Targets (VRET), is inaccurate. If 80 per cent of all new renewable energy introduced under the VRET was produced by wind farms, this would require at most between 700 and 1100 turbines. However, the VRET targets will support a number of renewable energy technologies, including large-scale solar.

Bayside bay trail

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mrs Peulich
Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

The council is the proponent and is resolving how to manage on-road and off-road parking, a shared path and roadside vegetation.

VicRoads has indicated its in-principle support for proposals that maintain the capacity and safety of Beach Road for all road users while implementing a Bay Trail extension. Further, VicRoads recommended that the community has an opportunity to be consulted on the plan and the council has undertaken community consultation.

The council requires VicRoads' approval through a consent process of the Road Management Act 2004, before it decides to implement the extension of the Bay Trail.

Belmont High School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 6 September 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I'm pleased you and the Member for South Barwon were able to enjoy your reunion at Belmont High School, a great local state school.

As part of your fairly circumlocutory reminiscences about your time at Belmont High, you neglected to remember how poorly served and represented the school was by the previous Liberal Government and current Member for South Barwon — not one dollar went towards capital upgrades at the school under the Liberal Government.

Fortunately for the school and school community of Belmont High, these days it is far more ably represented through the tireless efforts of the Member for Geelong, Christine Couzens, and the Andrews Labor Government.

And this has reaped significant benefits for the school. In the 2016-17 State Budget, Belmont High School received \$5.24 million to upgrade and modernise its facilities, with refurbishment of the existing library included in the scope of works. Construction will start later this year.

In the meantime, the school has been provided with a temporary building, so that it can continue its library services for staff and students.

So, when you next attend a high school reunion at Belmont High, I hope you enjoy the fantastic new facilities, including the library, courtesy of the Andrews Labor Government. That's definitely something worth remembering.

Kingston City Council

Raised with: Special Minister of State
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 7 September 2017

REPLY:

I thank the Honourable Member for raising this issue.

The Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate investigates matters relating to council operations and possible breaches of the Local Government Act 1989 and is operationally independent of the Executive Government.

On this basis, it is a matter for the Inspectorate to determine whether it is appropriate to initiate an investigation in relation to these matters.

However, my Department has referred these issues to both the Chief Municipal Inspector and the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission for their consideration.

Cyclist safety

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Hartland
Raised on: 7 September 2017

REPLY:

I would like to thank Ms Colleen Hartland MLC for her question on cyclist safety.

The government recently established Active Transport Victoria, a new unit within Transport for Victoria. Since its formation the unit has been working across Transport for Victoria and its agencies to ensure that pedestrians and cyclists are considered front and centre.

Active Transport Victoria has been working to update and finalise the new Victorian Cycling Strategy to guide investments over the next decade, and this is expected to be released soon. The Strategy provides an important opportunity to set a new and exciting direction for cycling in Victoria and to encourage interested, but concerned, cyclists onto the network. This will mean that investments are focused on delivering safe and low stress cycling.

A combination of high-quality infrastructure will be considered such as separated and protected cycleways, shared streets optimised for cycling with low vehicle volumes and speeds, and dedicated off-road paths. In some locations, installing bike lanes may also be considered.

We will also strongly support a collaborative approach with local governments to join up cycling routes on local streets, arterial roads, highways, rail corridors and green spaces. We will work closely with local governments to plan, identify and deliver improvements to strategic cycling corridors, as government recognises that the strategic cycling corridors are the 'arterials' of the bicycle network, which join up important destinations especially for cycling to schools, trains stations and activity centres.

Bayles Regional Primary School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Mulino
Raised on: 7 September 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

Thank you for your continuing advocacy on behalf of the people of Eastern Victoria, particularly on matters relating to education.

To ensure a high-quality education in a safe school environment for every child, the Andrews Labor Government is rolling out the largest ever removal of asbestos from schools. This includes an investment of \$155 million in the Victorian School Asbestos Removal Program.

The Permanent Modular School Buildings Program is an integral part of this investment. This innovative program is demolishing 100 school buildings and replacing them with brand new modular facilities. Architecturally-designed permanent modular buildings reduce planning and building times, and mean less disruption to students, staff and teaching programs.

Minister Merlino was delighted to visit Bayles Regional Primary School to announce that the school is receiving \$400 000 for a brand new multipurpose room building. I have asked the Victorian School Building Authority to work closely with the school to achieve the best possible outcome for this exciting project.

Environment Protection Authority Victoria pilot program

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr Eideh
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is investing \$162.5 million over five years to reform the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The reforms will provide Victorians with a strong and modern environmental regulator that is fit for purpose and capable of delivering the services we need.

The \$4.8 million Officers for the Protection of the Local Environment (OPLE) pilot program will embed ten OPLEs in local councils for a period of 15 months commencing in September this year. All OPLEs will commence work between 25 September and 9 October.

The successful councils in the Member for Western Metropolitan's electorate have been allocated two OPLEs. Brimbank and Hobsons Bay councils will be sharing a full-time OPLE who is due to begin work on 28 September and the OPLE allocated to Wyndham City Council will start on 9 October.

As the Member for Western Metropolitan has identified the OPLEs will work closely with council and EPA Victoria to respond to reports from the local community and businesses on smaller-scale and lower risk waste and pollution issues.

The new OPLEs will complement the role of existing EPA based environment protection officers meaning more officers on the ground, more support and expert advice, and more investigations into compliance.

Duties of the OPLEs will also include responding to complaints, providing information and education activities to support prevention of pollution, and proactive inspections of premises to support compliance.

EPA based environment protection officers will continue to take the lead and respond to high risk pollution and waste issues such as the stockpiling of recyclable material, while also delivering quicker responses to local pollution issues.

Waurin Ponds train stabling depot

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Ramsay
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

The first stage of work has identified a suitable site. Works included geo-technical, cultural and environmental field investigations to assist the planning and design process.

Presently, timeframes for the next stage of work are being finalised as part of the planning process. Local residents will be kept informed of the timelines.

Australian Formula One Grand Prix

Raised with: Minister for Tourism and Major Events
Raised by: Ms Pennicuik
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

The Government is committed to supporting the Victorian Major Events Calendar, which is the envy of the rest of Australia. The Formula One Australian Grand Prix showcases Melbourne on the world stage, raising its profile, encouraging domestic and international tourism and business investment, as well as delivering economic and branding benefits to Victoria.

The 2017 Formula One Australian Grand Prix attracted around 296 000 attendees, and the Formula One season is broadcast to more than 150 countries around the world each year.

Government has a contract in place to host the Formula One Australian Grand Prix until 2023.

Comprehensive analysis was also undertaken as part of Government's decision to extend the hosting of the event to 2023.

Youth control orders

Raised with: Minister for Mental Health
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

The Department of Health and Human Services does not maintain waiting lists for drug and alcohol treatment services.

Wait times for individual clients can vary by location, service type and clinical need.

Youth justice clients have designated pathways and prioritised access to treatment services.

Latrobe Valley employment

Raised with: Minister for Industry and Employment
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 19 September 2017

REPLY:

The Labor Government is proud to have implemented an Australian-first Worker Transfer Scheme because we know that this will maintain the Latrobe Valley's highly-skilled workforce and contribute to the region's proud power generation industry.

The new positions created at Loy Yang were publicly advertised and have been brought in-house as a result of an ongoing process improvement program undertaken by AGL. The Worker Transfer Scheme was not related to the creation of the positions.

The two workers from Loy Yang can access direct help and support from the Worker Transition Service through provided via the Latrobe Valley Authority. These services include:

- career counselling including career and employment market advice;
- job search support, employment placements and support in the new job;

- skills development and training;
- community and peer support; and
- ensuring people are provided with financial advice or small business advice to start a new business.

If the workers require extra support and are deemed to be at risk of long term unemployment, they may be able to access additional personalised employment placement assistance through Jobs Victoria. Over \$2.4 million in funding has been allocated to the Gippsland region to support over 250 jobseekers into sustainable employment.

The Worker Transfer Scheme is one part of a \$266 million transition package supporting economic growth, creating new jobs and fulfilling a promise we made to get behind the Gippsland and Latrobe Valley communities.

Taxi and hire car industry

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 19 September 2017

REPLY:

Globally, the industry is changing and every jurisdiction in Australia is moving towards regulating ridesharing.

The Government has acknowledged the impact these global changes is having on the existing industry and is providing over half a billion dollars in financial assistance with over 4000 payments having been made. The Liberal Shadow Minister for Public Transport, David Hodgett MP, announced the Liberal party opposed these 4000 payments describing them as “a slush fund to buy the votes of license holders”.

The Liberal Opposition supports ridesharing but voted to oppose the provision of financial assistance to the existing industry in the Government’s legislation. This is consistent with the long-held position of the Liberal party to not assist taxi and hire car licences holders. Under reforms brought in by the former Liberal Government, licence values were cut in half and not a single cent of financial assistance was provided.

The Government’s transitional financial assistance payments are being made in accordance with Government auditing standards and based on the legal entity that owns the licences.

Bolte Bridge safety barriers

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

I am advised that the VicRoads Bridge Public Safety Barrier Policy (Policy) was developed to ensure that safety reviews on bridges were based on research findings and data analysis.

To ensure decisions are based on quality data, VicRoads has established an information sharing arrangement with the Coroner’s Court Prevention Unit to enable access to the most current and accurate data available.

Following previous safety reviews on the Bolte Bridge, the evidence available led to alternative treatments to Safety Barriers being implemented.

However, my office, VicRoads and Transurban are currently assessing the broader network to identify what improvements can be made, including installing barriers on the Bolte Bridge.

Truck curfews

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

VicRoads has engaged the community, via an online survey in March 2017, and also consulted with stakeholders including the cities of Kingston, Bayside and Port Phillip, Victoria Police, Victorian Truck Association, Victorian Ports Corporation, and Spirit of Tasmania operators about truck use along the Beach Road corridor and the curfew arrangements.

In the lead up to the trial, VicRoads will deploy signage to inform the community and passing motorists of the trial. In addition, VicRoads will broadcast this change via social media posts such as Facebook, and a specific webpage has been created which will be updated regularly with information related to the trial extension. VicRoads will continue to work with stakeholders during the trial.

VicRoads and Victoria Police handle curfew compliance. VicRoads currently undertakes patrols of these roads during curfew hours based on concerns and heavy vehicle intelligence reporting. The frequency and timing of any additional patrols during the trial curfew extension will be prioritised based in the context of improving compliance across the whole network.

Lyme disease

Raised with: Minister for Health
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

I am saddened to hear of the difficult time Madison has been through with her recent illness.

The Department of Health and Human Services recognises that Lyme disease can be acquired through the bite of ticks infected with the *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacterial species. Ticks carrying this organism are found overseas, and Australians may contract it while travelling overseas, as appears to be the case for Madison. The causative bacteria is not known to be generally endemic in Australia.

All levels of Australian government acknowledge that the issue of Lyme disease and Lyme-like illness is a serious one. The Clinical Advisory Committee on Lyme Disease in Australia, which was established by the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer, has released a number of progress reports which are available at: <http://health.gov.au/lyme-disease>. These recognise that there are many Australians who suffer from chronic debilitating symptoms they associate with a tick bite.

In 2015, the Senate Community Affairs References Committee was asked by the Commonwealth Senate to conduct an inquiry into this issue. The final report, *The growing evidence of an emerging tick-borne disease that causes a Lyme-like illness for many Australian patients*, was produced in November 2016 and is available at http://aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/Lymelikeillness45/Final_Report.

Following the Senate inquiry, the Commonwealth developed a guideline on the diagnosis and treatment of overseas acquired Lyme disease, which is available at [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-lyme-disease.htm/\\$File/Aust-guideline-diagnosis-overseas-acquired-Lyme-disease.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-lyme-disease.htm/$File/Aust-guideline-diagnosis-overseas-acquired-Lyme-disease.pdf).

The Andrews Labor Government supports the information provided in this national guideline, which is based on the most current research evidence available from both Australia and overseas, and encourages general practitioners to access the guidelines when managing patients with suspected Lyme disease. In addition, the Royal

Australian College of General Practitioners provides a range of information and educational activities for general practitioners. I am advised this has included case studies that address Lyme disease and information for general practitioners, as well as information on the Commonwealth Lyme disease guidelines that was reported in the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners In Practice newsletter in July 2016.

The Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer continues to update the community on the progress of research and other activities relating to Lyme Disease. The most recent progress report was published in July 2016 and is available at: <http://www.health.gov.au/lyme-disease#statement-cmo>.

Midland Highway upgrade

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Raised by: Mr Ramsay

Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

After an accident that involves any loss of life or serious injury, VicRoads does undertake a thorough investigation to identify any road safety improvements that may be required.

In this particular case, VicRoads has already started this investigation and is working closely with Victoria Police to understand the circumstances of this accident. Once VicRoads has completed its investigation and if it identifies that road safety improvements are required, VicRoads will make detailed recommendations to Government.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Wednesday, 18 October 2017

Northern Victoria Region police numbers

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

The allocation of police personnel to particular police stations is an operational matter for Victoria Police. However, please be assured that the Government is committed to ensuring Victoria Police has the resources and powers it needs to reduce harm in the community and keep Victorians safe.

Central to the Community Safety Statement is boosting of police numbers right across the state. In total, the Government is funding 3135 additional frontline police, including 415 specialist family violence officers, over the next five years to support police respond to crime in our communities.

With regards to the concerns you have raised about the staffing arrangements at Tatura Police Station, members transferring, resigning and taking personal leave cannot always be pre-planned.

Victoria Police has also indicated that with the management of family violence as a divisional and organisational priority, a member of the Tatura Police Station requested assignment to the Divisional Family Violence Unit. That particular members' request was supported by the Tatura Station Commander, with the assignment commencing on 20 February 2017. Victoria Police has indicated that there was no direct impact on service delivery to the Tatura community in allowing this single secondment.

I understand that since February 2017, three new police officers have commenced at the Tatura Police Station. While the appointment of new members at the Tatura Police Station was undertaken, the police station had been supplemented by staff from Murchison, Mooroopna and Shepparton on a regular basis to ensure service delivery was maintained.

Leave rosters are completed on a cluster basis across all stations within the Greater Shepparton Police Service Area (PSA), enabling better coverage and service delivery for the region. I understand that Victoria Police representatives explained this to those in attendance at the community safety forums you referred to.

In relation to police numbers in Shepparton, the figures you have provided appear to have been taken at the Police Service Area (PSA) Level. However, since 2014 Victoria Police has shifted some resources that were previously at the PSA level to the Divisional level in order to give greater flexibility and more resources where they are required in the Division. Over the same time the divisional numbers have increased from 376 to 389.

I regularly travel across Victoria meeting with local police and communities to discuss the issues they think are most important in their areas. I visited Shepparton on 9 June 2017 with the Member for Shepparton and had the pleasure of meeting with local police and local community members to discuss their perceptions of safety in Shepparton.

Northern Victoria Region police numbers

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

I regularly travel across Victoria meeting with local police and communities to discuss crime in their areas. I visited Shepparton on 9 June 2017 and also made trips to Bendigo on 4 May and Mildura on 17 March 2017 where I listened to the concerns of the local communities and spoke to the police officers working there.

The Government is committed to ensuring Victoria Police has the resources and powers it needs to reduce harm in the community and keep Victorians safe.

Central to the Community Safety Statement is boosting of police numbers right across the state. In total, the Government is funding 3135 additional frontline police, including 415 specialist family violence officers, over the next five years to support police respond to crime in our communities.

It is the biggest boost to frontline police in Victoria's history, and it is crucial to dealing with the growing demand on police services, particularly the challenges of repeat youth offenders, increasing aggravated burglaries, high-volume crime such as car theft, and family violence.

To achieve this more efficiently, Victoria Police, in conjunction with experts in modelling and resource allocation, and in consultation with the Police Association of Victoria, has developed an innovative Staff Allocation Model (SAM). The SAM uses factors such as baseline staffing requirements, recorded crime, calls for police assistance, distances police need to travel, and the amount of time it takes to respond to different types of crime to determine a State-wide frontline resourcing benchmark.

The SAM also has capacity to forecast frontline resourcing needs based on factors including population growth and crime rate.

The Government will ensure Victoria Police has the power and resources it needs to reduce harm in the community and keep Victorians safe. Victoria Police are having an impact. Overall the most recent release of crime statistics shows us that the crime rate has decreased by 2% and offences has decreased by 0.6%. This is the first time in 6 years that we have seen any decrease in crime rate. I thank Victoria Police for their hard work in tackling crime in our state.

Whittlesea police station

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

Since becoming Police Minister in 2016, my number one priority has been to deliver extra resources to Victoria Police and to reduce the harm in the community caused by crime.

As the member has noted, the government made a landmark commitment to fund an additional 3135 frontline police over the next five years as part of the Community Safety Statement, including an additional 45 police for the Whittlesea PSA. These extra police will greatly strengthen local police responses in the Whittlesea area and highlights the government's commitment to providing Victoria Police with the power and resources it needs to reduce harm in the community and keep Victorians safe.

Regarding your specific comments on the Whittlesea Police Station I can confirm that I have been in close dialogue with Police Command and the Police Association on the matter. The Member for Yan Yean has been a strong advocate for the officers at the Whittlesea Police Station, and the community that they serve.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Wednesday, 18 October 2017

COUNCIL

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The opening of the Mernda police station in the coming months, which will have 45 new officers to support the Whittlesea Police Service Area, will allow Whittlesea Police to focus more of their time on the Whittlesea community.

I can confirm that there is no change being made to the Whittlesea Police Station operating hours. I also understand that Police Command has begun an immediate process to recruit to some of the vacancies, and that this has been communicated to local officers and to the Police Association.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 19 October 2017

Family violence

Raised with: Attorney-General
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

A swift response by the justice system to breaches of family violence intervention orders and other family violence related criminal offences is vital, both for ensuring the safety of victims and for holding perpetrators to account.

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria, in collaboration with Victoria Police and Victoria Legal Aid, is progressing a staged implementation of a fast track listing process for family violence related criminal proceedings to courts around Victoria. The fast track listing process includes proceedings for breaches of family violence intervention orders.

The fast track process involves identifying, prioritising and setting accelerated timeframes for the hearing of criminal offences arising out of family violence. This initiative recognises that the rate of recidivism for crimes against intimate partners is much higher than violent crimes against strangers, and ensures a timely response by bringing family violence offences to court sooner and reducing the overall time to finalisation.

The fast track process for family violence offences commenced at Dandenong Magistrates' Court in 2014, and is now in operation at the Magistrates' Courts in Ballarat, Ringwood, Broadmeadows, Shepparton, Heidelberg, Melbourne, Frankston, Moorabbin, Bendigo, Geelong, La Trobe Valley, Sunshine and Werribee, and at the Neighbourhood Justice Division of the Court.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence heard submissions about the potential of the fast track process to reduce delays and the duration of legal proceedings, increase early guilty pleas, increase the participation of victims, impose swift consequences, and limit the opportunity for perpetrators to re-offend.

The Royal Commission did not make any specific recommendation to amend the penalties for breaches of family violence intervention orders or any other family violence offences. However, following the Royal Commission, and in line with its recommendations, the Government is investigating a number of strategies for holding perpetrators to account.

These include asking the Sentencing Advisory Council to consider swift and certain sentencing, reviewing the operation of the persistent contravention offence, and noting the recommendation that the Director of Public Prosecutions consider identifying a suitable case in which to seek a guideline judgment from the Court of Appeal on sentencing for family violence offences.

Small business multicultural programs

Raised with: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Raised by: Mr Elasmr
Raised on: 19 September 2017

REPLY:

Victoria has a lot to gain by supporting entrepreneurial migrants to build businesses. We understand the importance of improving economic access and participation for Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)

communities — such as those in the Northern Metropolitan region — through entrepreneurship and business development support.

In 2016, I established LaunchVic an independent company working with entrepreneurs, industry, business and the community to strengthen Victoria's entrepreneurial and startup ecosystem. In August 2017, LaunchVic unveiled its third round of grant recipients, supporting organisations that deliver programs to improve access and participation in the Victorian startup ecosystem for first generation migrants and refugees.

The funding round supports organisations to deliver a range of services and programs that encourage migrants and refugees in Victoria to develop their ideas and embed their startup skills. Grant recipients included amongst others, Free to Feed a not-for-profit social enterprise based in Thornbury in the Northern Metro region. Free to Feed supports refugees and new migrants in a range of innovative food based enterprises.

Additionally, in 2017 the Government has already delivered 38 small business workshops in Northern Metropolitan suburbs, four of which were specifically tailored to the CALD community. In October and November 2017, there are 14 workshops scheduled in the region, some of which are tailored to women in the CALD community. These workshops cover a variety of entrepreneurial topics, from setting up a business to understanding where extra support is available.

The Government also offers other support programs including small business mentoring. To date, 45 mentoring clinics have been held in the Northern Metropolitan region in 2017, with another 13 scheduled for the year. To ensure we are able to reach all potential business owners the Small Business Bus has been stationed 17 times in the region this year, and I can say the Bus will be making the Northern Metropolitan rounds a further three times in October and November.

Ballarat bus services

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mr Morris

Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

Unlike the former Liberal National Government that slashed bus routes across Victoria without consultation, in developing the new Ballarat Bus Network that was delivered in January 2017 Public Transport Victoria (PTV) undertook an extensive community consultation process. This included speaking with over 260 people at seven community forums and providing two presentations to Ballarat Senior Citizens' Group.

In preparation for the consultation process, approximately 9000 emails were sent to registered Myki users within the region, inviting community members to participate. Additionally, the community consultation sessions and proposed network changes were also promoted via Local news outlets on television and radio stations, advertisements in the Ballarat Courier and on the PTV website.

The Labor Government has also committed \$5 million to the design and delivery of a new bus interchange at Ballarat Station that will be delivered in 2018. This will see buses stopping within the station precinct.

The Ballarat bus network has been updated to include more direct bus routes that connect to shops and the train station.

South Morang railway line services

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Patten
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is making significant investments to support growth across the Victorian rail network, including the South Morang catchment.

The \$600 million Mernda Rail Extension will build eight kilometres of new, duplicated track and three state-of-the-art stations at Mernda, Hawkstowe and near Marymede Catholic College. The stations are expected to be used by around 8000 passengers every day when they open.

We are also funding the Hurstbridge Line Upgrade project, which includes track duplication between Heidelberg and Rosanna to increase service capacity on the Hurstbridge and South Morang lines. By removing a significant bottleneck on the Hurstbridge line, services can be optimised, with flow-on benefits for the South Morang line.

The 2017-18 State Budget provides a further \$5 million in development funding for Stage Two of the Hurstbridge Line Upgrade project, which will determine the requirements for further capacity upgrades on the Hurstbridge and South Morang lines.

While there are no current plans to run express services on the South Morang line, the timetables associated with the Hurstbridge Stage 1 and Mernda extension projects will seek to provide additional services on the line.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Friday, 20 October 2017

Hume Valley School

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 9 August 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to making Victoria the Education State, providing better educational and life outcomes for all Victorian children and young people.

I am pleased to confirm that the school's budget has been fully adjusted and significantly increased throughout 2017.

Ms Diane Bassett, Principal of Hume Valley School, is receiving ongoing support from the Department of Education and Training, to assist with school enrolment and application processes.

Noise pollution

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 22 August 2017

REPLY:

I can confirm that I have since responded to the correspondence from the individual in which the member has raised this matter on behalf.

All road users have a responsibility to abide by the road rules, which includes ensuring that vehicles comply with noise limits.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Victoria Police and local authorities work together to reduce vehicle noise. It is an offence to own or use a vehicle that exceeds noise limits in the vehicle emissions regulations. When the EPA or Victoria Police detect a vehicle emitting excessive exhaust noise, they can issue a notice to the owner of the vehicle requiring them to present the vehicle for testing. Testing by the EPA can then determine whether a vehicle is compliant with the prescribed exhaust and noise limits. Persistent noise problems can be reported to the EPA on 1300 372 842, or online at www.epa.vic.gov.au.

Additionally, Victoria's strong anti-hooning laws have provisions to reduce the damage caused by reckless and antisocial behaviour, including deliberately causing a vehicle to skid, smoke or make excessive noise. 'Hoon' driving offences are governed by Part 6A of the Road Safety Act 1986. Police may impound any vehicle responsible for a 'hoon' offence, for up to 30-days. This period can be extended for repeat offenders.

Members of the public can assist police in the detection of drivers who do not comply with the regulations by reporting offenders on the 1800 333 000 Crime Stoppers Hotline, or online at www.crimestoppersvic.com.au. Gathering this information enables police to target repeat offenders and act to prevent this behaviour.

Police enforcement of the road rules continues to focus on detecting irresponsible and unsafe driver behaviour.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Mobile phone locator fees

Raised with: Minister for Police
Raised by: Ms Patten
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

I thank the member for her question on this important issue. This type of location based technology is of great importance in assisting Victoria Police in a variety of investigative cases.

The authorisation for Victoria Police to access telecommunications data is granted under the Commonwealth Telecommunications (Inception and Access) Act 1979. In particular, sections 178 and 178A which pertain to enforcement of criminal law and locating missing persons respectively.

All data service costs charged by the Telecommunications companies are paid by Victoria Police. I am informed that the fees range from \$5 to \$3800 depending on the service and the time taken to retrieve the requested data. All data requests are audited annually by the Commonwealth Ombudsman and the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.

Access to reasonably priced telecommunications services is important to everyone, and I intend to raise this matter with the Commonwealth Government.

I can assure you that the Government will ensure that Victoria Police has the power and resources it needs to reduce harm in the community and keep Victorians safe.

Family violence action plan

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

REPLY:

The 2016 Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV) made specific recommendations regarding the experiences of family violence victim survivors and their interaction with the Victorian infringements system. Recommendations 112 and 113 address these key issues.

Recommendation 112 provides: DJR investigate whether the Road Safety Act 1986 (Vic) should be amended so that if a perpetrator of family violence incurs traffic fines while driving a car registered in the name of the victim, the victim is able to have the fines revoked by declaring:

- they were not the driver of the vehicle at the time of the offending
- they are a victim of family violence — as evidenced by a statutory declaration, a copy of a family violence safety notice or family violence intervention order, or a support letter from a family violence worker, general practitioner or other appropriate professional
- they are unable to identify the person in control of the vehicle at the time due to concern about their safety.

Recommendation 113 provides: The Victorian Government amend the Infringements Act 2006 (Vic) to provide that the experience of family violence may be a special circumstance entitling a person to have a traffic infringement withdrawn or revoked.

The Victorian Government has already implemented recommendation 113, which came into effect on 1 July 2017. However, applying for a fine to be withdrawn or revoked under the existing scheme would still require the family violence victim to admit to the offending behaviour, regardless of whether they actually committed it.

In order to respond to the issues dealt with by recommendations 112 and 113, the Government has introduced the Fines Reform Amendment Bill 2017, which will establish a new scheme to assist victim survivors of family violence who come into contact with the infringements system. The Bill sets out a new, customised and standalone scheme for victims of family violence, which will be managed as part of the infringements system.

The new scheme will enable eligible applicants to have relevant fines withdrawn without naming the perpetrator. It will also be available to victims who incur fines as a result of their own offending which was substantially contributed to by their experience of family violence. The scheme will be administered by trained, specialist staff within Fines Victoria.

Consistent with the existing enforcement review scheme, serious road safety offences including drink-driving, drug-driving and excessive speed infringements will be excluded from the scheme. The scheme will be subject to a statutory review two years after its commencement.

The scheme proposed in the Bill is intended to recognise that while victims sometimes become liable for infringement offences because of their own offending, which can be dealt with under special circumstances, they can also become liable for infringement offences they did not commit because they are too scared to nominate or reject a nomination from a perpetrator.

The reforms proposed in this new scheme will help support victims of family violence who come into contact with the infringements system, whilst maintaining the system's integrity.

Penalty rates

Raised with: Minister for Industrial Relations

Raised by: Mr Gepp

Raised on: 7 September 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government maintains our opposition to any reductions in penalty rates as outlined in our submission to the Fair Work Commission (FWC) on 11 March 2016. On 18 July 2017, the Victorian Government made a submission to the Senate Education and Employment References Committee — Inquiry into Penalty Rates. This submission outlined the Government's position as expressed in a number of industrial relations reviews and inquiries about the importance of penalty rates as part of the Fair Work safety net.

The submission also referred to a commissioned report on the impact of reductions in penalty rates on Victorian workers, conducted by Professor David Peetz of Griffith University. That research confirmed that the penalty rates decision will cause significant hardship for low paid workers in the retail, hospitality and accommodation sectors across Victoria. Many of these workers are women and young people, who due to their family and study commitments have limited alternatives to award-based weekend work or are unable to find other work options.

The Victorian Government has emphasised these impacts in its submission to the Fair Work Commission's Annual Wage Review 2016-17 and that the cuts to penalty rates for already low paid workers is a factor that should be taken into account when reviewing award wages — particularly when the affected sectors are significantly award reliant compared to other industries.

As we also emphasised in our original submission regarding penalty rates to the Fair Work Commission in March 2016, reductions in penalty rates will also affect small businesses in regional Victoria. There will be less discretionary income and therefore likely to be less spending in the cafes, restaurants, shops and hotels outside of metropolitan Melbourne.

Because of all our concerns about the impacts of the Fair Work Commission's penalty rates decision, the Victorian Government established a Parliamentary Penalty Rates and Fair Pay Select Committee, to inquire into and report on the economic and social impact and cost of the cuts to penalty rates to thousands of Victorian workers. The Committee will also investigate legislation and policy options to mitigate the impact of these reductions on

Victorian workers. The Inquiry reporting date has been extended to 30 June 2018 by resolution of the Legislative Assembly on 20 June 2017.

The Victorian Government will continue to advocate on behalf of all of the low-paid Victorian workers, families and communities affected by the Commission's Decision.

Vocational education and training

Raised with: Minister for Training and Skills
Raised by: Mr Gepp
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I whole-heartedly agree with the Member's comments regarding the need to understand and address the unique skills and training needs of each region of Victoria. On 28 September 2017, I visited Mildura and joined the Victorian Skills Commissioner (VSC) in launching his Regional Skills Demand Profile-Mallee Region. This event was attended by industry and training stakeholders, including the members of the Regional Skills Taskforce that provided input to the report. I then took the opportunity to visit the Sunraysia Institute of TAFE and its Dulka Yuppata Indigenous Training Centre.

This trip was an opportunity to understand first-hand how the training needs of employers and learners in Mildura and wider the Mallee area are being addressed. By preparing learners for the opportunities in their area, we not only meet the workforce needs of employers, we are also better able to achieve employment outcomes for regional residents, regardless of their background or individual challenges. This in turn bolsters regional economies and communities and reinforces their sustainability. The Profile itself provides a valuable evidence base to reflect the current and future skilling needs of the region, underlines the need to ensure skills training is aligned to industry demands, and allows the Victorian government to shape and fund relevant training programs in response to this demand.

As the Government continues its program of work to rebuild the Victorian training and TAFE system, we are mindful of the need to ensure the unique training and skills requirements of each region of Victoria are understood and supported. The Victorian Skills Commissioner will be leading further regional taskforces elsewhere in the State to achieve this.