

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

31 October and 2, 3 November 2017

(Extract from book 18)

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 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 |

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

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 |
| Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development | The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP |
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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, 31 October 2017

Victims of crime financial assistance

Raised with: Attorney-General
Raised by: Ms Crozier
Raised on: 8 August 2017

REPLY:

The Victorian Government is committed to supporting victims of crime, including victims of aggravated burglaries. As part of the Victorian Budget 2017/18, the Government is delivering \$28.5 million to boost the number of frontline staff and support services for victims, witnesses and vulnerable children.

Victims of crime can apply to the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) for financial assistance. VOCAT will provide assistance for expenses incurred, or reasonably likely to be incurred, as a direct result of crime. Depending on where crimes occur, victims may also be eligible to apply to WorkSafe or the Traffic Accident Commission for compensation.

The Government funds the Victims of Crime Helpline, which provides free information and support to victims of crime to help manage the effects of crime and to guide victims through the legal process. The Helpline operates from 8am-11pm, seven days a week.

The Helpline will refer eligible victims to the Victims Assistance Program (VAP), where they will be provided with a dedicated case manager. The VAP works with victims to develop a care plan tailored to their needs, liaise with police, legal and health services on their behalf and to provide practical assistance such as emergency accommodation, childcare and transport.

Child abuse redress scheme

Raised with: Attorney-General
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 9 August 2017

REPLY:

On 4 November 2016, the Commonwealth Government announced that it will establish a national redress scheme for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. The scheme will offer a financial payment of up to \$150 000, options to receive psychological counselling, and a direct personal apology from the responsible institution. The Commonwealth Government has advised that the scheme will commence in July 2018. From March 2018, a dedicated telephone helpline and website will be available to provide information about the proposed scheme and connect survivors and/or their families with support services.

The Victorian Government supports working toward a national scheme and we are working with the Commonwealth and other states and territories on the design of this scheme. The Victorian Government has heard from stakeholders about the importance of fair, consistent, and equitable outcomes within a redress scheme, regardless of where in Australia a case of abuse may have occurred. The Victorian Government also recognises that some stakeholders are seeking a redress scheme that captures the forms of abuse addressed by the Betrayal of Trust report. As part of developing the key elements of a national redress scheme, work continues on how a redress scheme may support survivors of non-sexual abuse.

The Victorian Government acknowledges that survivors of institutional child abuse have been waiting for a redress scheme for a long time. We continue to seek more detail from the Commonwealth Government in order to determine whether a state-based scheme or joining the national scheme will provide the best outcome.

Following the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in September 2015, Victoria has always been supportive of a national redress scheme. However, the Victorian Government is also committed to implementing the recommendations from the Betrayal of Trust report, and it has made substantial progress in developing a Victorian redress scheme in the event that a national scheme does not commence.

Toll infringement fees

Raised with: Attorney-General
Raised by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Raised on: 23 August 2017

REPLY:

On 23 August 2017, you raised the matter of unpaid tolling infringement debt collection. Concession deed arrangements relating to toll roads fall within the portfolio responsibilities of the Treasurer.

The use of criminal sanctions and infringement notices reflects the ease with which people can drive on toll roads without physical barriers, and the relative difficulty the tolling companies would face in pursuing court action to collect small amounts of unpaid tolling debts.

While most motorists do the right thing, some people refuse to pay their tolls and fines. Other Australian jurisdictions, such as New South Wales and Queensland, also make it an offence to drive on a toll road without paying the appropriate tolls (although the exact nature of the offences differ from Victoria's system). Further, both jurisdictions enable enforcement of their relevant offences through the use of infringement notices.

For some people, fines can become unmanageable. To make the infringements system easier for people to navigate, the Victorian Government is implementing a significant number of changes as part of the Fines Reform Program.

When it comes into effect, the Fines Reform Act 2014 will establish a new fines model to make it easier and simpler for people to manage their fines. Under the new Act, responsibility for the enforcement of infringement and court fines will shift to the Director of a new administrative body — Fines Victoria. Fines Victoria will provide a one-stop-shop point of contact for the public to pay or deal with their unpaid fines. It will also provide an opportunity for people to consolidate their fines into one payment arrangement.

Some fines reform social justice initiatives have already come into effect on 1 July 2017. These initiatives will help some of the most disadvantaged in the community and include:

- consolidation of fines into a single payment arrangement to allow fines (including those issued by different agencies and courts) to be dealt with simply
- strengthening of internal review provisions, including introduction of a new oversight function to ensure consistent internal review decision-making
- options for vulnerable and disadvantaged people with fines to undertake community work and other activities to pay off their fines, and
- introduction of an administrative enforcement review process aimed at reducing the number of matters the Magistrates' Court of Victoria is required to determine, helping free up Magistrates' Court resources to deal with issues such as family violence.

We're also helping to put more people on payment plans before their fines escalate and working to reduce the pressure on the court system with a new call centre. In July 2016, the Department of Justice and Regulation launched a new state-wide call centre aimed at helping people manage and pay their fines early, to avoid added fees and penalties. The new call centre also reminds people when they have passed the first due date on their infringement notice, meaning fewer matters end up in court. The call centre has contacted more than 68 000 people and assisted over 40 000 matters to be entered into payment plans valued at \$8.4 million.

Murchison-Tatura Road

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

REPLY:

VicRoads advises me that it will recommence work on Murchison-Tatura road in late October 2017. The delay was due to inclement weather conditions during the winter months causing parts of this project to be suspended.

Aurora estate, Epping

Raised with: Minister for Major Projects
Raised by: Mr Ondarchie
Raised on: 7 September 2017

REPLY:

Development Victoria has been a wholesale provider of optical fibre infrastructure through its Fibre to the Home (FTTH) network at several residential estates, including Aurora in Epping North, since 2009, providing retail Internet Service Providers (ISPs) with the network bandwidth they request to service their customers.

Development Victoria currently holds commercial agreements with two retail ISPs — iiNet and iPrimus — who deliver phone and internet services to residents serviced by the FTTH network.

Residents in the Aurora estate are the direct customers of these retail ISPs.

In August 2017, Development Victoria completed works to enable the ISPs to improve bandwidth and Internet speeds at Aurora. Testing conducted by Development Victoria in August and September 2017 showed improvements in Internet speeds resulting from these configuration updates.

Furthermore, in October 2017, Development Victoria sold its wholesale FTTH network to RedTrain Networks, an experienced licensed provider that is expanding its investment in fibre infrastructure.

The sale will not impact services to residents, who will continue to receive services directly from their existing ISP.

Development Victoria has been engaging directly with Mr Kernaghan and Ms Twyford, who have contacted both their ISP and Development Victoria's FTTH helpdesk to address their concerns.

Metropolitan partnerships representation

Raised with: Minister for Suburban Development
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

The Partnerships are advisory bodies to the government and are not intended to duplicate the function of elected bodies, including councils. There are no elected representatives from any level of government appointed as members of the partnerships.

Local councils will play a key role in the success of the metropolitan partnerships and the government has asked council CEOs to participate in an ex-officio capacity over the four-year appointment period of partnership members.

It is envisaged that council CEOs will share information with the partnership on council-endorsed strategic plans and agreed priorities, and conversely, that the CEOs will keep councils updated on the progress of their partnership.

A key event in the annual cycle of each partnership is the annual assembly, and all Mayors and Councillors have been invited to attend the assembly for their region.

These important events enable the partnerships to seek feedback from the broader community on priorities for the region, and the contribution from the local council elected representatives in these forums will be highly valued.

Southern Metropolitan Region rail services

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

REPLY:

The Andrews Labor Government is investing extensively to improve train services in Melbourne's south-east by removing nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong, building the \$11 billion Melbourne Metro Tunnel project, and delivering 65 high capacity metro trains to operate on the Cranbourne-Pakenham lines from 2019.

Unfortunately, passengers across the rail network (and particularly those living in the south-east) suffered from four years of inaction and a total lack of investment by the previous Liberal-National Government. During this time, no new projects commenced and no new rolling stock was ordered, despite the growth in both patronage and population.

In relation to service performance, the Government has negotiated a new contract with Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) that puts passengers first, with higher performance targets and tougher penalties for failure to meet those targets.

The new contracts increase penalties for station skipping, poor communication and information, unclean rolling stock, graffiti, and inappropriate advertising. We have also introduced a passenger experience regime, with associated penalties for under-performance. In addition, passengers will benefit from more timely and accurate information.

A massive 37 per cent increase in maintenance and renewal investment will improve network infrastructure to reduce the number of faults on the system, including signalling failures and overhead wires and points failures which lead to train delays and cancellations.

The new contracts also subject MTM to further stringent penalties, including a \$10 million fine if it fails to maintain the network in accordance with its contract, and a levy of up to \$700 000 to compensate passengers in the event of a major network failure.

Water supply plastic contamination

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Ms Springle
Raised on: 19 September 2017

REPLY:

Victoria's water agencies supply drinking water using a preventive risk management framework in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003. This legislation includes a requirement for all water agencies to identify risks to drinking water supplies and take steps to manage those risks. The authoritative reference for management of drinking water supplies is the Australian drinking water guidelines which provides health-based guideline values for parameters of concern in drinking water.

The government is not aware of any evidence regarding the occurrence of microplastics in Australian drinking water supplies.

Upon publication of peer-reviewed studies the significance of any findings can be established and the need for further research to inform the current knowledge base can be assessed.

However, we know plastics can cause significant environmental harm, particularly to marine life.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to reducing the environmental impacts of plastic pollution in Victoria. That's why we have committed to ban single-use, lightweight plastic shopping bags. Reducing the number of plastics bags we use is an important part of addressing the overall impacts of plastic pollution. Right now, we are seeking input from the Victorian community to make sure we design a ban that is effective and lasting.

A plastic bag ban, while important, is just the beginning. We are also consulting with Victorians about approaches to manage other plastic pollution. This includes considering the emerging issue of plastic microfibres.

Other work to address plastic pollution includes investment of over \$200 000 in innovative trial programs to tackle some of Victoria's priority litter issues. This includes a citizen science project to better understand the sources and impacts of microplastics across the entire Port Phillip Bay catchment.

Plenty Valley Cricket Club

Raised with: Minister for Sport
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

I refer to your adjournment debate matter regarding the establishment of 10 turf practice wickets at Yarrambat War Memorial Park oval, raised in the Legislative Assembly on 20 September 2017.

Providing high quality sport and recreation facilities in Victoria is a key aim of the Victorian Government.

That is why the government is investing \$120 million into the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund to facilitate the upgrade and development of community sports facilities during this term of government. The fund includes \$14 million for female friendly facilities to build or upgrade women's change rooms.

As such I would like to congratulate the Plenty Valley Cricket Club on the work they are doing for women's cricket in the region.

I have been advised by the Department of Health and Human Services that the project was unsuccessful under the 2017-18 Community Sports Infrastructure Fund. I am advised that at the time, funding was not confirmed from other sources including Council and Cricket Victoria and the project not sufficiently planned, scoped or developed compared to other projects submitted to the department. This feedback was provided to council officers.

Even though the project had benefitted from the extra year of planning and securing of council support, it was also unsuccessful under the 2018-19 Community Sports Infrastructure Fund as the project was still not sufficiently planned compared to other projects submitted to the extremely comprehensive and oversubscribed fund.

Furthermore, Cricket Victoria is currently developing their State Facilities Plan, with the draft expected to be released in the coming months which will have included consultation with the cricket community.

I encourage Plenty Valley Cricket Club to continue to work with Nillumbik Shire Council and Cricket Victoria to ensure Yarrambat War Memorial Park is appropriately planned to function as the regional home for Premier Women's Cricket.

Thank you for raising this matter with me and I trust this information has been of assistance to you.

Bus safety

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Dunn
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

Transport Safety Victoria is working closely with Transdev to identify and rectify safety issues in Transdev buses.

Doctors in Secondary Schools

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

You will be happy to know that participating GPs provide the same level of healthcare support for young people that they can already access at any GP clinic in Victoria. This program does not change the current legal requirements placed on the medical profession.

No laws have been changed and the rights of parents are the same as they have always been.

We know that adolescents have some of the lowest GP attendance rates of all population groups, meaning many are missing out on the vital healthcare they need due to barriers in accessing services.

Ormond railway station development

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

The site at Ormond Railway Station represents a unique opportunity for an integrated development opportunity to realise the potential of land freed up by the removal of the level crossing at the station and facilitate urban renewal.

On 4 September 2016 the site was referred to the Victorian Transport Projects Integrated Development Opportunities Standing Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee is to provide independent advice on integrated development opportunities created by Victorian transport projects.

A range of notice was undertaken by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to potentially affected parties, coinciding with the commencement of exhibition. Public hearings were held over nine days in February 2017, allowing submitters to present their views to the committee. The committee also provided for parties to make submissions in writing.

Following this transparent and consultative process, the committee provided a report that made recommendations as to the most appropriate planning provisions for the site.

I have made my decision to amend the Glen Eira Planning Scheme to allow for an integrated development on the site based on the committee's report, which has been made publicly available at:
www.planning.vic.gov.au/panels-and-committees/current-panels/victorian-transport-projects.

I note the reference made to a 20-storey building on the site. This is not correct. Amendment C170 to the Glen Eira Planning Scheme introduces an incorporated document to the scheme, which allows for a maximum of 13 storeys on a relatively small section of the site.

Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr O'Donohue
Raised on: 20 September 2017

REPLY:

Parks Victoria has undertaken extensive consultation with the community and stakeholders over a 2-year period during the development of the Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan.

This included the establishment of a community reference group, three separate rounds of community consultation, including briefings and drop in sessions, listening posts and meetings with stakeholder groups. In total over 215 people attended consultation events and Parks Victoria received 560 survey responses. This valuable information has directly informed the Olinda Golf Course Precinct Plan.

Parks Victoria is now leading the implementation of the first stage of works under the precinct plan which were funded in the 2017/18 State Budget.

This month Parks Victoria is initiating the procurement of design services which will include a sports field for junior competition and training, a playscape, and a dog off-lead area. This design process considered all values, such as cultural, natural, visitor movement, terrain and vistas in reaching the outcomes articulated in the plan document.

As part of this process, several, assessments are being undertaken including an environmental risk assessment, land survey and cultural heritage assessment. Further to this, Parks Victoria is working with the Yarra Ranges Council to ensure other planning matters and investigations are considered.

There will be further community engagement and information provided on various aspects of the plan. As part of this engagement, Parks Victoria is hosting the Olinda. Community Open Day on November 18 when the wider community will be able to view and discuss aspects of the precinct plan with members of the project team.

Parks Victoria is looking forward to continuing the conversation with the community about this exceptional project.

Horse-drawn vehicle safety

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

REPLY:

I note that Council has made a determination in relation to street trading permits for horse drawn vehicles, and this is a fitting action to take if Council has determined that it is not appropriate for trade to continue.

As the coordinating road authority for all municipal roads in the City of Melbourne, Council is also able to exercise greater control over horse drawn vehicles through access restrictions and prohibition. Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1989 includes powers to move, remove and impound vehicles, power to restrict traffic, and power to restrict road use by vehicles of a particular size.

Horse drawn vehicles are considered to be vehicles under the Road Safety Act 1986, consistent with the Australian Road Rules. There are currently no plans to amend the legislation as this is a local not a statewide matter.

La Trobe University international students

Raised with: Minister for Trade and Investment
Raised by: Mr Elasmarr
Raised on: 17 October 2017

REPLY:

La Trobe University, like all international education providers, offer a suite of services to support international students during their time living in Victoria.

International education providers are required to assist overseas students to adjust to study and life in Australia, and have appropriate orientation programs that help overseas students to access the information and services they require. This requirement is set out in the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018.

Complementing the services available through La Trobe University, the Andrews Labor Government has invested in a number of initiatives to protect and raise the reputation of Victoria as a high quality and welcoming education destination. These investments include:

- the Study Melbourne Student Centre, which provides free and confidential support and information for all international students in Victoria. These services are available both in person at the Centre at 599 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne, which is open Monday to Friday, 9am until 5pm and via telephone at all hours, seven days a week;
- the International Student Welfare Program, which offers grants of up to \$75 000 for projects that improve the wellbeing of international students living in Victoria. This includes a specific funding category for international student associations;
- the ‘Lead. Intern. Volunteer. Experience.’ (LIVE) initiative, which improves the employment readiness of international students and connects them with the local community; and
- the Study Melbourne website and social media channels, which provides timely advice and information to international students on the full range of experiences and services available to them across Victoria.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Thursday, 2 November 2017

Victoria State Emergency Service Cobram unit

Raised with: Minister for Emergency Services
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 8 September 2017

REPLY:

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

Please be assured that I understand your concerns. I previously met with Unit Controller John Stava and Assistant Chief Officer Keith O'Brien in Cobram to discuss the challenges experienced by the Cobram Unit.

I encourage the Cobram Unit to continue to work with VICSES to address this issue.

I trust that this information assists in addressing your concerns.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

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

Friday, 3 November 2017

Monash Freeway widening

Raised with: Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Raised by: Mr Mulino
Raised on: 21 September 2017

REPLY:

The Monash Freeway works are well underway to reduce congestion and get drivers home sooner and more safely. 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 extra vehicles during peak times.

The Monash Freeway upgrade forms an important part of the Government's plan to improve the M1 corridor from Geelong to Pakenham.

The benefits of the Monash Freeway upgrade include:

- reduced travel times of up to 10 minutes a day for motorists using the Monash Freeway;
- room for an extra 2000 vehicles during peak periods,
- smoother travel and better reliability for over 200 000 motorists a day on the busiest sections;
- improved freeway management system that will allow traffic flows to be managed with world leading technology;
- the technology and new freeway electronic signs installed will allow incidents to be managed more smoothly; and
- stronger links between key employment and education precincts along the M1 corridor.

The works have already made significant progress and will be completed in 2018.

Animal Welfare Victoria

Raised with: Minister for Agriculture
Raised by: Mr O'Sullivan
Raised on: 20 October 2017

REPLY:

Animal welfare is a high priority for the Government. The Victorian community expects we do the right thing by animals — whether in industries, communities, or homes.

On 19 October 2017, the Government announced it will establish a dedicated public sector body called Animal Welfare Victoria to deliver more support for animal welfare.

Animal Welfare Victoria is expected to be operating by February 2018, and will see animal welfare officers continue to operate through the RSPCA, Agriculture Victoria and local government.

The Government is prioritising the review of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act — informed by consultation with key stakeholders and the Victorian community — replacing it with a modern animal welfare act in 2019.