

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

**WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
WITHOUT NOTICE**

8 September to 21 September 2017

(Extract from book 16)

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 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
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, 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 Barber, 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 — #Mr Barber, Ms Bath, #Mr Bourman, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmr, #Ms Hartland, Mr Melhem, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, Ms Shing, #Ms Symes and Mr Young.

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

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

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

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 Elasmr 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 Elasmarr, 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:

Mr G. BARBER

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ¹	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ⁶	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel ²	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 ⁷	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin ³	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	VILJ
Elasmarr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Gepp, Mr Mark ⁴	Northern Victoria	ALP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph ⁵	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

¹ Appointed 16 April 2015

² DLP until 26 June 2017

³ Resigned 27 May 2016

⁴ Appointed 7 June 2017

⁵ Resigned 6 April 2017

⁶ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁷ Appointed 13 October 2016

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; VILJ — Vote 1 Local Jobs

CONTENTS

WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

8 SEPTEMBER TO 21 SEPTEMBER 2017

<i>Motorcyclist safety</i>	4961
<i>Taxi and hire car industry</i>	4962
<i>West Gate tunnel project</i>	4962
<i>Keppel Prince Engineering</i>	4963
<i>Heyfield timber mill</i>	4963
<i>Australian Paper</i>	4964
<i>West Gate tunnel project</i>	4964
<i>Timber industry</i>	4964
<i>Child protection</i>	4965
<i>Firearm regulation</i>	4965
<i>Electorate office budgets</i>	4965
<i>500 Startups Melbourne</i>	4966
<i>Hazelwood Pondage</i>	4966
<i>Victoria Police sex industry coordination unit</i>	4966
<i>Prison capacity</i>	4967
<i>Heyfield timber mill</i>	4967
<i>Caulfield–Dandenong line elevated rail</i>	4968
<i>Anti-vilification legislation</i>	4968
<i>Recreational boating</i>	4969
<i>Political donations</i>	4969
<i>GOTAFE</i>	4970

WRITTEN RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Responses have been incorporated in the form provided to Hansard and received in the period shown.

8 September to 21 September 2017

Motorcyclist safety

Question asked by: Mr Purcell
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 6 September 2017

RESPONSE:

Victoria has introduced a new Motorcycle Graduated Licensing System for motorcycle learner permit and licence applicants. The curriculum has a strong focus on understanding and adapting to road hazards, in both country and metropolitan areas. In addition to classroom tuition covering road hazards, candidates must demonstrate safe riding practices in a series of on-road assessments before being awarded a licence.

Because learner and newly licensed motorcyclists are over-represented in crash statistics, headlight use is mandatory for learners and newly licensed riders in their first three years of riding. Headlight use is high amongst motorcyclists generally, because most new motorcycles are designed so that the headlight illuminates automatically and cannot be turned off.

Victoria has an ongoing program of consumer information to encourage the use of high-quality protective clothing and helmets. Campaigns by the Transport Accident Commission and announcements by Victoria Police have highlighted the importance of wearing safer clothing and Victoria Police has conducted operations to advise riders on better clothing choices.

In regard to legislation, Victoria is committed to working in partnership with Australia's other jurisdictions on matters that affect travel between states and territories. There is agreement between Australian jurisdictions that the Australian helmet standard and the European standard (both of which allow for open-face helmets) provide the best level of protection for motorcyclists. Any moves to ban open-face helmets would require agreement between the jurisdictions, and a willingness on the part of the Commonwealth to restrict trade by removing harmonisation with an international standard.

At present, little is known about the relative safety performance of motorcycling jackets and pants and Victoria needs more information about which products provide a safety benefit before any decision could be made about the best approach to increasing their use. Victoria is a partner in a national research program to test motorcycle clothing, in order to developing a consumer information program for motorcyclists. The program will assist riders to make informed choices about the protective clothing they purchase.

The Motorcycle Safety Levy (MSL) was introduced in 2002, to fund safety projects for motorcyclists that would otherwise not be implemented. Currently, a total of 262 projects valued at \$72.71 million have been approved since the program commenced to fund infrastructure, education and training, enforcement and enhanced data collection and analysis. These projects include 193 infrastructure projects (\$48.28 million) and 69 non-infrastructure projects (\$24.43 million).

In regards to the condition of country roads, more than \$530 million is currently being invested to make regional roads safer and stronger. The Government has doubled its funding to repair regional roads from \$114 million to \$260 million for pavement maintenance in 2017-2018. More than 850 kilometres of roads in regional Victoria will benefit from a \$260 million maintenance boost for repairs and resurfacing.

Over the past five years, the number of motorcycle fatalities (year to date, 6 September 2017) has trended downwards in Country Victoria from 12 in 2013 to 8 in 2017. Country fatalities made up 44% of fatalities in YTD 2013, but only 31% in YTD 2017.

Taxi and hire car industry

Question asked by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 6 September 2017

RESPONSE:

The Taxi and Hire car Fairness Fund was open for applications for five months from November 2016 through to April 2017. During this time, all taxi and hire care licence holders were written to several times by the Taxi Services Commission encouraging them to apply, and outlining the application process. The community legal centre, Westjustice, was engaged by the Government to provide assistance in completing applications and provided advice to over 500 applicants. Factsheets on the applications process were made available in 11 different languages and were distributed via a variety of stakeholder and community groups.

Any licence holders who did not apply for the Fairness Fund will still receive transitional financial assistance payments of up to \$250 000 depending upon the type and number of licences they hold.

The recent legislation passed by the parliament provided for over half a billion dollars in financial assistance to the existing taxi and hire car industry. This remains the amount available and the Government is not considering extending the financial assistance.

West Gate tunnel project

Question asked by: Ms Hartland
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 6 September 2017

RESPONSE:

The Government has released the business case for the West Gate Tunnel Project. It was the first time a Victorian Government had released a full business case at such an early stage of a major infrastructure project.

Extensive, independent transport modelling was included in the Environment Effects Statement for the West Gate Tunnel Project and it shows the project will reduce congestion and slash travel times.

The transport assessment has been prepared by traffic experts and subject to rigorous review and comprehensively refined in the two years since the business case.

This modelling is now subject to the scrutiny of an independent Inquiry and Advisory Committee and they have been provided with extensive documentation, including hundreds of pages of transport modelling, to make their assessment.

Veitch Lister Consulting (VLC) who prepared the transport model, has presented to the panel and been subject to cross examination. VLC has also submitted documents to the panel, which show the modelling is comprehensive, and fit for purpose.

The documents are Cabinet in Confidence and the government does not release cabinet in Confidence documents.

Keppel Prince Engineering

Question asked by: Mr Purcell
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 12 October 2016

RESPONSE:

On 10 March 2017 the Andrews Labor Government announced its support towards Keppel Prince Engineering's \$1.97 million expansion project at its Portland manufacturing facility. Support for the expansion program and capacity building is being provided through the \$500 million Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund, as well as the Driving Renewable Energy Program. This government support has helped the company secure the expansion project, creating 50 new jobs and retaining 80 local wind tower manufacturing jobs in Portland.

The expansion will allow Keppel Prince to achieve production efficiencies and reduce current bottlenecks within its fabrication lines. New machinery will be installed to deliver productivity gains, reduce operating costs and allow total production to increase to 175 towers per year making it more competitive against imported towers. The upgraded facility will position the company to undertake further investment in its Portland site and grow its manufacturing capabilities to meet the anticipated 50 per cent increase in national demand for wind turbine towers.

Much of the increased demand for wind turbine towers and associated job creation is a direct result of the Andrews Labor Government's Victorian Renewable Energy Target, which the Opposition wants to axe, along with the associated jobs and investment.

This Government acknowledges the significant economic contribution Keppel Prince provides as a major employer in the Portland area and is considered a key stakeholder in the renewable energy sector. Through government like this, initiatives significant opportunities will be created for Victorian businesses, such as Keppel Prince, to support the delivery of a pipeline of renewable energy projects to meet the ambitious targets set and capture the major economic benefits generated including the creation of new and sustainable local jobs.

Heyfield timber mill

Question asked by: Ms Dunn
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 23 August 2017

RESPONSE:

The Andrews Labor Government understands the vital role the Heyfield mill plays in the local community and across the timber products industry.

That's why we are committed to the mill remaining operational.

The Government reached an in-principle agreement with the Hermal Group to buy the Heyfield mill, subject to due diligence checks.

The sale process is in the final stages of completion; the details of which are commercial-in-confidence.

Australian Paper

Question asked by: Ms Dunn
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 23 August 2017

RESPONSE:

Payments made by the State Government to Australian Paper arising from the State Government's legislated obligation to supply Australian Paper with timber from the designated forest area are not in the nature of fines imposed under the terms of the wood pulp agreement.

West Gate tunnel project

Question asked by: Ms Hartland
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 6 September 2017

RESPONSE:

The Government has released the business case for the West Gate Tunnel Project. It was the first time a Victorian Government had released a full business case at such an early stage of a major infrastructure project.

Extensive, independent transport modelling was included in the Environment Effects Statement for the West Gate Tunnel Project and it shows the project will reduce congestion and slash travel times.

The transport assessment has been prepared by traffic experts and subject to rigorous review and comprehensively refined in the two years since the business case.

This modelling is now subject to the scrutiny of an independent Inquiry and Advisory Committee and they have been provided with extensive documentation, including hundreds of pages of transport modelling, to make their assessment.

Veitch Lister Consulting (VLC) who prepared the transport model, has presented to the panel and been subject to cross examination. VLC has also submitted documents to the panel, which show the modelling is comprehensive, and fit for purpose.

Timber industry

Question asked by: Ms Dunn
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 7 September 2017

RESPONSE:

Following the recent listing of the Greater Glider as threatened under Victoria's Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is leading work to ensure the protection of the Greater Glider as a matter of priority. DELWP is preparing an action statement that will outline research and actions to help the Greater Glider over the longer term. DELWP is also in discussions with VicForests and my department, the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, on implementing interim measures whilst longer term protections are being developed.

Child protection

Question asked by: Ms Springle
Directed to: Minister for Corrections
Asked on: 7 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

The Department of Justice and Regulation is preparing advice for the Attorney-General on the issues raised by Sylvia Rowley's story on the historic practices used to record child protection matters in Victoria. It is important that these practices are examined thoroughly to determine the nature of the relevant issues and any action that may be required. The Department of Justice and Regulation is working to prepare this advice as soon as possible.

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

The Attorney-General will consider any public statements about these practices when he has received detailed advice from the Department of Justice and Regulation.

Firearm regulation

Question asked by: Mr Bourman
Directed to: Minister for Corrections
Asked on: 7 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

There is a national collaborative approach to regulating firearms. This involves sharing information on firearms and classification. I am advised that Victorian agencies work with all state and territory and federal agencies, including the Australia Federal Police, with responsibility for the identification and classification of firearms. Victorian agencies give and receive advice when required or requested, as do all other jurisdictions.

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Victoria Police is responsible for regulating the Victorian firearm industry. The Government takes the advice of Victoria Police in matters relating to firearm classification. Victoria Police takes its role very seriously in the categorisation of firearms to ensure regulatory compliance and consistency with its State and Territory partners, and where there may be some ambiguity on the classification of a firearm it will take steps to seek advice from experts both at the State and Commonwealth levels. On firearm matters more broadly, the Government works closely with the Victorian Firearms Consultative Committee.

Electorate office budgets

Question asked by: Ms Lovell
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 8 September 2017

RESPONSE:

No.

500 Startups Melbourne

Question asked by: Mr Ondarchie
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 8 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

Unfortunately, no due diligence checks can account for the concealment of illegal activity. For more information on LaunchVic's approach to due diligence checks for their grant applicants, I refer you to Dr Cornick's public statements on the relevant requirements.

500 Startups Melbourne

Question asked by: Mr Ondarchie
Directed to: Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade
Asked on: 8 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

No awarding of contacts have ever been linked to or demanded any such clause. That you attempt to smear me is one thing, but your attempt to smear and impugn the integrity of the LaunchVic board is both pathetic and desperate.

Hazelwood Pondage

Question asked by: Ms Bath
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 8 September 2017

RESPONSE:

I thank the Member for Eastern Victoria for her question.

The total cost of removing barramundi and tilapia from Hazelwood Pondage using an external contractor was \$52 000 ex GST between the period from 4/3/17 to 1/9/17.

This is from a Target One Million budget of \$46 million.

The work included water temperature and fish population monitoring, removal of fish, transport of fish and the holding of fish in frozen storage.

Victoria Police sex industry coordination unit

Question asked by: Dr Carling-Jenkins
Directed to: Minister for Corrections
Asked on: 8 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

I thank the member for her question. From its commencement in 2012 SICU has played a pivotal role with law enforcement partners to identify trends and develop intelligence in both the illegal and legal brothel industries. SICU also works with other stakeholders such as Project Respect, Australian Catholic Religious Against Human Trafficking in Humans, Scarlet Alliance and others concerned for sex workers.

I am advised by Victoria Police that SICU is currently being reviewed but only to determine its best fit within the organisation and whether it should remain within the Transit and Public Safety Command or move into a new area. The SICU will continue as a critical unit within Victoria Police.

At this time it is envisaged that the Senior Sergeant's position will be filled. This recruitment is appropriately a matter for Victoria Police.

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

The overall resourcing of the unit will be determined following the conclusion of the SICU review.

Prison capacity

Question asked by: Ms Pennicuik
Directed to: Minister for Corrections
Asked on: 8 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

In 2011, 2012 and 2013, the previous government expanded prison capacity, but did so through a significant number of temporary beds at all security levels, as well as 'double bunking'.

This expansion included 600 additional bunks into existing single cells (known as 'double bunking'), 311 beds in converted shipping containers, and at its peak 189 fold-out or surge beds.

Bunks have been taken out of the Metropolitan Remand Centre in line with the Walshe Review, however there are bunks and beds in converted shipping containers still being used.

I am advised that 30 per cent of male prisoners are in 'double bunked' cells.

RESPONSE TO SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION:

As I stated in my answer in the Chamber there has been substantial growth in Victoria's prison system. This is due to changes to bail laws, a significant increase in police numbers and reforms to Victoria's parole system.

An increase in prison population is consistent with jurisdictions across Australia and across the world.

The Government is addressing this growth through significant investment in expanding amenities across the prison system meaning prisons are better equipped to meet increasing demand in the prison system.

There is also work being done within the department and in coordination with a number of agencies to do forecast planning of the system to cater for this prison population growth.

The opening of the Ravenhall Correctional Facility this year will provide further capacity in our prison system and Corrections Victoria continues to assess and allocate all prisoners to the most appropriate prison.

Heyfield timber mill

Question asked by: Ms Bath
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 19 September 2017

RESPONSE:

No jobs were lost during the finalisation of the purchase of the Heyfield timber mill. Post the sale, twenty four workers have agreed to take a voluntary redundancy package. The majority of these staff have secured other employment, or are retiring. Latrobe Valley Authority Worker Transition Service support will be provided where required.

The confirmation of a guaranteed timber supply of 80 000m³ a year over the next three years provides stability. The board, once appointed, will review the best operating model for the sawmill that will protect as many jobs as possible for the long-term.

Caulfield–Dandenong line elevated rail

Question asked by: Mr Davis
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 19 September 2017

RESPONSE:

Residents are being offered relocation due to noise and flood lighting issues resulting from the operation of the straddle carrier. All potential safety risks are independently assessed and there are no safety risks that would require residents to leave their properties.

The Office of the National Safety Regulator (ONRSR) have been closely involved in the process and are satisfied that the operation of the straddle carrier is in accordance with the Safety Management System and the obligations under the Rail Safety National Law.

The disruption and requirements to offer relocation to nearby residents have been significantly minimised by the elevated design as opposed to a trench based solution.

Anti-vilification legislation

Question asked by: Ms Patten
Directed to: Minister for Corrections
Asked on: 19 September 2017

RESPONSE TO SUBSTANTIVE QUESTION:

The Victorian Government is keenly aware 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. We have allocated additional funding of \$500 000 to meet immediate LGBTI mental health and wellbeing needs arising from the survey process.

The Andrews Labor Government has taken legislative action on a number of fronts to improve the rights of LGBTI Victorians in this term. We have removed the outdated and discriminatory offence of intentionally causing HIV from the Crimes Act 1958. We have secured the passage of legislation to allow same sex couples to adopt. We have amended the Relationships Act 2008 to: make it easier for same sex couples to register their relationship in Victoria; to recognise couples who have formalised their relationships in other jurisdictions, including by way of same sex marriage overseas; and ensure couples have access to ceremonial services similar to those provided to couples married at the Registry. We also put forward legislation to remove barriers to new birth certificates for trans and gender diverse Victorians, and legislation to reinstate the inherent requirements test in relation to religious exceptions and employment.

We have made a formal State apology to those convicted under unjust and prejudiced laws against homosexual acts prior to decriminalisation in 1981. This followed the establishment of the scheme to expunge convictions under such laws which came into effect on 1 September 2015. The Government thanks Ms Patten for her demonstrated support of our progressive legislative agenda and appreciates her advocacy on behalf of people affected by this damaging survey.

The Victorian Government acknowledges the newly introduced federal laws, which are intended to increase protections for LGBTI people during the survey period. We are constantly looking at ways to improve the effectiveness of Victorian laws, and will carefully monitor how the federal protections are applied.

Recreational boating

Question asked by: Mr Bourman
Directed to: Minister for Agriculture
Asked on: 19 September 2017

RESPONSE:

Recreational marine licensing revenue for the period 01 July 2011 to 30 June 2016 totalled \$72 626 832. Licence fees are set to recover the costs of marine safety regulation and related compliance monitoring and enforcement programs.

The boating facilities and safety education fee is collected at the time recreational vessels are registered or have their registration renewed. Revenue from the boating facilities and safety education fee for the period 01 July 2011 to 30 June 2016 totalled \$58 988 973.

During this period, \$29.5 million has been directly allocated to a range of boating safety initiatives and infrastructure projects through the Boating Safety and Facilities Program (administered by DEDJTR on behalf of the Minister for Ports).

Administration of the licensing and registration schemes (provided by VicRoads under contract for Transport Safety Victoria) accounts for approximately \$25 million of the above revenue.

Additionally, annual state budgets allocate operational funds to Victoria Police and Transport Safety Victoria for the delivery of safety and boating education functions and to undertake compliance monitoring and enforcement activities.

The Office of the Director of Transport Safety (known as Transport Safety Victoria (TSV)) is the State's maritime safety regulator and has responsibility for the regulation of recreational vessels operating on State waters.

Victoria Police assist TSV with on-water compliance and enforcement activities.

None of the revenue received from recreational boat licensing and vessel registration was directly allocated to any entity.

There are no duplicated enforcement activities. To the contrary, recreational compliance and enforcement activities are well coordinated across the above mentioned agencies.

Political donations

Question asked by: Ms Wooldridge
Directed to: Special Minister of State
Asked on: 20 September 2017

RESPONSE:

Political donations between different branches of political parties and associated entities will be subject to the \$4000 cap over four years. Donations to federal branches of political parties are subject to the existing Commonwealth's disclosure and regime and are a matter for the Commonwealth.

GOTAFE

Question asked by: Ms Lovell
Directed to: Minister for Training and Skills
Asked on: 20 September 2017

RESPONSE:

As this matter is ongoing I am limited in comments I can make at this time.

I can advise that as part of the Department of Education and Training's regular monitoring of training data that is submitted monthly by all Training Providers, issues emerged regarding some of the training delivery at Goulburn Ovens TAFE.

GOTAFE has cooperated fully in resolving these matters and both the Department and GOTAFE are actively working on resolving the issues.

I would like to add that the Department has not suspended, or instructed GOTAFE to suspend or stop, commencements in any programs.