

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**Book 1**

**Tuesday, 21 December 2010**

**Internet: [www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard)**

**By authority of the Victorian Government Printer**



## **The Governor**

Professor DAVID de KRETZER, AC

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

## **The ministry**

Premier and Minister for the Arts . . . . .	The Hon. E. N. Baillieu, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Bushfire Response, and Minister for Regional and Rural Development . . . . .	The Hon. P. J. Ryan, MP
Treasurer . . . . .	The Hon. K. A. Wells, MP
Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business, and Minister for Tourism and Major Events . . . . .	The Hon. Louise Asher, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Finance . . . . .	The Hon. R. W. Clark, MP
Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, and Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade . . . . .	The Hon. R. A. G. Dalla-Riva, MLC
Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing . . . . .	The Hon. D. M. Davis, MLC
Minister for Sport and Recreation, and Minister for Veterans' Affairs . . . .	The Hon. H. F. Delahunty, MP
Minister for Education . . . . .	The Hon. M. F. Dixon, MP
Minister for Planning . . . . .	The Hon. M. J. Guy, MLC
Minister for Higher Education and Skills, and Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession . . . . .	The Hon. P. R. Hall, MLC
Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship . . . . .	The Hon. N. Kotsiras, MP
Minister for Housing, and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development . . . . .	The Hon. W. A. Lovell, MLC
Minister for Corrections, Minister for Crime Prevention and Minister responsible for the establishment of an anti-corruption commission . . . .	The Hon. A. J. McIntosh, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Roads . . . . .	The Hon. T. W. Mulder, MP
Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects, Minister for Regional Cities and Minister for Racing . . . . .	The Hon. D. V. Napthine, MP
Minister for Gaming, Minister for Consumer Affairs, and Minister for Energy and Resources . . . . .	The Hon. M. A. O'Brien, MP
Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. . . . .	The Hon. E. J. Powell, MP
Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry . . . . .	The Hon. G. K. Rich-Phillips, MLC
Minister for Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Youth Affairs . . . . .	The Hon. R. Smith, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Food Security, and Minister for Water. . . . .	The Hon. P. L. Walsh, MP
Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Women's Affairs and Minister for Community Services . . . . .	The Hon. M. L. N. Wooldridge, MP
Cabinet Secretary . . . . .	Mr D. J. Hodgett, MP

**Heads of parliamentary departments**

*Assembly* — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

*Council* — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr W. R. Tunnecliffe

*Parliamentary Services* — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

**President:** The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

**Deputy President:** Mr M. VINEY

**Acting Presidents:** Ms Crozier, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Mr O'Brien, Ms Pennicuik, Mr Ramsay, Mr Tarlamis

**Leader of the Government:**

The Hon. D. M. DAVIS

**Deputy Leader of the Government:**

The Hon. W. A. LOVELL

**Leader of the Opposition:**

Mr J. LENDERS

**Deputy Leader of the Opposition:**

Mr G. JENNINGS

**Leader of The Nationals:**

The Hon. P. R. HALL

**Deputy Leader of The Nationals:**

Mr D. DRUM

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Hon. Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Lenders, Mr John	Southern Metropolitan	ALP
Broad, Ms Candy Celeste	Northern Victoria	ALP	Lovell, Hon. Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP
Coote, Mrs Andrea	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	O'Brien, Mr David Roland Joseph	Western Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Hon. Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Darveniza, Ms Kaye Mary	Northern Victoria	ALP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Davis, Hon. David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pakula, Hon. Martin Philip	Western Metropolitan	ALP
Davis, Mr Philip Rivers	Eastern Victoria	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin	Northern Victoria	Nats	Petrovich, Mrs Donna-Lee	Northern Victoria	LP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Elasmr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Elsbury, Mr Andrew Warren	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Hon. Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Guy, Hon. Matthew Jason	Northern Metropolitan	LP	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hall, Hon. Peter Ronald	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Tarlamis, Mr Lee Reginald	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Koch, Mr David Frank	Western Victoria	LP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP



# CONTENTS

---

## TUESDAY, 21 DECEMBER 2010

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT BY COMMISSION .....	1
PROCLAMATION .....	1
SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS.....	1
ELECTION OF PRESIDENT .....	1
ELECTION OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT .....	3
GOVERNOR'S SPEECH	
<i>Presentation</i> .....	3
<i>Address-in-reply</i> .....	21, 31
RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT BY GOVERNOR .....	8
CONDOLENCES	
<i>Russel Lee Bowman</i> .....	8
COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATH OR AFFIRMATION TO MEMBERS .....	8
MINISTRY.....	8
SHADOW MINISTRY .....	9
GREENS: LEADERSHIP.....	9
THE NATIONALS: LEADERSHIP.....	9
ACTING PRESIDENTS.....	9
QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE	
<i>Questions without notice: government policy</i> .....	10
<i>Hospitals: staff holiday pay</i> .....	10
<i>Kindergartens: funding</i> .....	11
<i>Minister responsible for the Teaching</i>	
<i>Profession: responsibilities</i> .....	11
<i>Ambulance services: funding</i> .....	12, 13
<i>Housing: waiting list</i> .....	13
<i>Information and communications technology:</i>	
<i>national broadband network</i> .....	14
<i>Planning: government policy</i> .....	15
<i>Bushfires: royal commission recommendations</i> .....	16
<i>Information and communications technology:</i>	
<i>government initiatives</i> .....	16
DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.....	12, 14, 31
PAPERS .....	17
NOTICES OF MOTION.....	19
PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES	
<i>Nominations</i> .....	20
STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL 2010	
<i>Introduction</i> .....	21
CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS .....	38
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE	
<i>Adjournment</i> .....	38
ADJOURNMENT	
<i>Water: government election commitments</i> .....	38
<i>Public holidays: Christmas Day</i> .....	39
<i>Schools: Officer</i> .....	39
<i>Planning: community consultation</i> .....	40
<i>Autism: western suburbs schools</i> .....	40
<i>Floods: government assistance</i> .....	40
<i>Eaglehawk, Comet Hill and Bendigo North</i>	
<i>primary schools: merger</i> .....	41
<i>Geelong Hospital: funding</i> .....	41

<i>Schools: city of Maroondah</i> .....	42
<i>Ambulance services: response times</i> .....	42
<i>Rail: Wendouree</i> .....	43
<i>Teachers: remuneration</i> .....	43
<i>Racing: Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund</i> .....	43
<i>Planning: Dandenong development</i> .....	44
<i>Responses</i> .....	44

MEMBERS INDEX .....	i
---------------------	---



**Tuesday, 21 December 2010**

**OPENING OF PARLIAMENT BY  
COMMISSION**

**Proceedings commenced at 11.03 a.m. by the Clerk  
reading the Governor's proclamation convening  
Parliament.**

**PROCLAMATION**

**Following proclamation read by the Clerk:**

I, David de Kretser, AC, Governor of the state of Victoria, acting under sections 8 and 20 of the Constitution Act 1975 and all other powers vested in me, fix 21 December 2010 at 11.00 a.m. as the time for the commencement and holding of the first session of the 57th Parliament of Victoria for the dispatch of business, at Parliament House, Melbourne. The members of the Legislative Council and the members of the Legislative Assembly are required to attend at that time and place.

Given under my hand and the seal of the state of Victoria, at Melbourne, on 3 December 2010  
David de Kretser, Governor

By His Excellency's command  
Ted Baillieu, MP, Premier

**The Commissioner, the Honourable Justice Marilyn Warren, AC, Chief Justice of Victoria, entered chamber and was conducted to chair by the Usher of Black Rod.**

**Commission authorising commissioners to open Parliament read by the Clerk.**

**SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS**

**Commission appointing the Honourable Justice Marilyn Warren, AC, Chief Justice of Victoria, to administer oath or affirmation of allegiance to members of the Legislative Council read by the Clerk.**

**The Clerk announced return of receipt of writ issued by the Governor for election of members to serve for regions set out below and endorsed to show election of following members:**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Member</b>
Eastern Metropolitan	Bruce Atkinson
Eastern Metropolitan	Richard Dalla-Riva
Eastern Metropolitan	Jan Kronberg
Eastern Metropolitan	Shaun Leane

Eastern Metropolitan	Brian Tee
Eastern Victoria	Philip Davis
Eastern Victoria	Peter Hall
Eastern Victoria	Edward O'Donohue
Eastern Victoria	Johan Scheffer
Eastern Victoria	Matt Viney
Northern Metropolitan	Greg Barber
Northern Metropolitan	Nazih Elasmr
Northern Metropolitan	Matthew Guy
Northern Metropolitan	Jenny Mikakos
Northern Metropolitan	Craig Ondarchie
Northern Victoria	Candy Broad
Northern Victoria	Kaye Darveniza
Northern Victoria	Damian Drum
Northern Victoria	Wendy Lovell
Northern Victoria	Donna Petrovich
South Eastern Metropolitan	Gavin Jennings
South Eastern Metropolitan	Inga Peulich
South Eastern Metropolitan	Gordon Rich-Phillips
South Eastern Metropolitan	Adem Somyurek
South Eastern Metropolitan	Lee Tarlamis
Southern Metropolitan	Andrea Coote
Southern Metropolitan	Georgie Crozier
Southern Metropolitan	David Davis
Southern Metropolitan	John Lenders
Southern Metropolitan	Sue Pennicuik
Western Metropolitan	Khalil Eideh
Western Metropolitan	Andrew Elsbury
Western Metropolitan	Bernie Finn
Western Metropolitan	Colleen Hartland
Western Metropolitan	Martin Pakula
Western Victoria	David Koch
Western Victoria	David O'Brien
Western Victoria	Jaala Pulford
Western Victoria	Simon Ramsay
Western Victoria	Gayle Tierney

**Members took and subscribed the oath or affirmation as required by law.**

**The Commissioner withdrew.**

**ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — I nominate Bruce Atkinson.

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — It is my great pleasure to second the nomination of Mr Atkinson for President.

**Mr ATKINSON** (Eastern Metropolitan) — I am happy to accept the nomination.

**The Clerk declared Bruce Norman Atkinson duly elected as the President.**

**Hon. B. N. Atkinson conducted to chair by proposer and seconder.**

**The PRESIDENT (Hon. B. N. Atkinson)** — Before taking the chair I desire to express my thanks to members and my acknowledgement of the honour which the Council has conferred upon me this day. I appreciate the confidence that members have expressed in me, and I trust that I will live up to that confidence.

**The President took the chair and read the prayer.**

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — It is a pleasure to make some remarks about the President and to indicate my support for him in his new position. The President has the knowledge and experience to play this very important role in the chamber, a role that requires even-handedness, discipline and a preparedness to listen to all in the chamber. The President has the requisite experience and knowledge. As Deputy President he distinguished himself in conducting the committee stages of many bills. That was a magnificent demonstration of the strength and empowerment of this chamber to do its work of scrutiny and holding to account and its work as a house of review. I wish the new President well.

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — I too congratulate you, President, on your elevation to the presidency. I must admit I was a bit excited when I came into the chamber and you were sitting on the opposition side. I was holding out a bit of hope that this impartiality might get us up to 20 members. But alas! I noted that the traditional reluctance to be dragged to the chair was not quite as visibly displayed as I have seen before.

On behalf of the opposition, I genuinely congratulate you, President, on your elevation to the presidency. The role of this chamber is as a house of review. We are different. You, President, distinguished yourself in your time as Deputy President both when you deputised for the then President and, in particular, when you chaired the committee of the whole. You have been in this place for 18 years. You have seen governments come and go; you have seen oppositions come and go; you have seen the great traditions of the place. I think you

will uphold them with dignity. We look forward to your term as President. We also wish you well, and we are confident that you will be dispassionate and look after the interests of the house. Congratulations!

**Ms PENNICUIK** (Southern Metropolitan) — President, on behalf of the Greens I would like to say we are very supportive of your election as President of the Legislative Council. As an Acting President in the previous Parliament I can say you were very fair. As Deputy President and chair of committees you conducted proceedings with great integrity. I learnt a lot from you when you were Deputy President and chair of committees of the whole about the proceedings of the house. We look forward to working with you as President in this term of Parliament.

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — On behalf of The Nationals in the Parliament I too would like to congratulate you on your appointment as President. It is not an easy task chairing this Council. I had a brief experience of it in years gone past, so I know the tasks involved. Today's display of confidence in you and unanimous support for your appointment to this position is well earned given your previous experience as Deputy President over the last four years. That was a task you undertook extremely well, and you earned the respect of all members of the chamber. We look forward to your presidency of the Council for the next four years. From the point of view of The Nationals our loyalty to you and to the authority of the chair will always be respected.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I will make a few brief remarks in acknowledgement of the comments that have been made by the respective leaders and a member of the Greens. It is a particular honour to take on this position, having knowledge of the traditions and heritage of this place, the important role this place has played in the scrutiny of government and the knowledge that it does have a very different style to that of the lower house. Members play a very important role in the Legislative Council notwithstanding some of the media comment that from time to time is cast about this house.

When I first came here I said in my maiden speech something to the effect that I came to this house with a good deal of experience, knowledge and certain skills. But I also came to this place with failings and shortcomings. None of us is complete when we come to this place as advocates for the people we represent. This is a place that draws on the experience, knowledge and skills of all people. Sometimes it is also informed by the shortcomings and failings of people, because that experience in life is important in terms of addressing

the needs of our community and particularly the needs of vulnerable people within our community today.

This is not a place for a contest of men. That is better left to other venues. This is a place for a contest of ideas. This is a place where we strive to meet the aspirations of Victorians and create opportunities for today's Victorians and Victorians of the future — our children and grandchildren. I look forward to playing my part in trying to ensure that the debates we have and the ideas we explore as a house seek to achieve those aspirations and create those opportunities going forward.

I have had the opportunity of working with many of you over an extended period. I have enjoyed the fellowship, I have enjoyed the camaraderie and I have enjoyed learning from each of you based on the skills and experience you have brought to this place. This is a very special place, and I think the people I welcome as new members of this house will find the experience an extraordinarily rewarding one whilst at the same time one of challenge, as we all have a great deal of responsibility to our fellow Victorians. I thank you for the honour you have bestowed on me. I take it on humbly and hope I am able to live up to your expectations.

## ELECTION OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! The Council is now required to elect a Deputy President. Are there any nominations?

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — I nominate Mr Viney to be Deputy President.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! Are there any further nominations? There being none, I have great pleasure in declaring Matthew Shaw Viney elected as Deputy President of the Legislative Council.

It is now my duty to inform members that they have some time for rest and relaxation before they will be required back in the chamber for the formal proceedings this afternoon. I remind members that the Governor will be pleased to receive me in the north library at 2.00 p.m. this afternoon, at which time I will have an opportunity to introduce members to the Governor ahead of this afternoon's proceedings. I ask members to meet in the central library a few minutes before that time in order to accompany me to meet with the Governor. I will resume the chair at 2.30 p.m.

**Sitting suspended 11.32 a.m. until 2.32 p.m.**

## GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

### Presentation

**The Usher of the Black Rod announced approach of the Governor.**

**The Governor entered the chamber.**

**Members of the Legislative Assembly, with the Speaker, attended in response to the Governor's summons.**

**The Governor addressed following speech to both houses of Parliament:**

Honourable President and members of the Legislative Council:

Honourable Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly:

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we gather, the Kulin nation.

The general election on 27 November resulted in a change of government in Victoria. Following the election I commissioned the Leader of the Victorian Liberal-Nationals coalition, Mr Ted Baillieu, to form a government.

Accordingly, I have called you together on this day, the first session of the 57th Parliament, to outline the policy agenda and legislative intentions of this new government in its first term.

The government's agenda will be based upon the principles of responsibility, fairness and respect. The government will carry out its responsibilities with stability, dignity, certainty and common sense. Victorian families will be listened to and their interest in what matters to them will be respected and honoured. This will be a government of inclusion and transparency, a government for all Victorians and for all families.

The government will be focused on fixing the problems to make a change for the better and build a positive future for Victorian families.

The government understands that there is great community concern about street violence and violent crime, regular failures in transport and health systems and increasing pressure on family budgets.

The government will meet these significant challenges by focusing on five goals for a stronger, fairer and safer Victoria.

## 1. A growing economy

The government is committed to building a stronger Victoria, a state of expanded opportunity and greater certainty, which leads the nation based on the energy of its economy, the cohesion of its society and the quality of its governance.

The government understands that rising living costs are hurting families and recognises that long-term youth unemployment can seriously undermine the economy. That is why job creation and skills training for young Victorians will be a priority, and business investment will be strengthened to secure the jobs that Victorian families rely on.

### *Financial management including the economy and innovation*

The government will work to build a stronger economy with sustained growth and commit to an annual minimum budget surplus of \$100 million. This commitment is made based on transparency, accountability and responsible financial management, and is part of a financially responsible management plan for the state's finances and a clear plan for debt management.

The government will manage Victoria's finances with a strong plan to deliver improved services and reduce waste. It will reduce the regulatory burden to improve Victoria's competitive position.

The government will cut stamp duty rates for first home buyers purchasing principal places of residence valued up to \$600 000, with the first home buyers grant and the bonus for new homes continued.

There will be a year-round 17.5 per cent electricity price reduction for concession card holders and ambulance membership fees will be cut in half for all Victorians.

The fundamental purpose of the government in the economy is to foster the creation of wealth, products and jobs by individuals in the private sector, and to encourage innovation to help deliver sustainable prosperity through higher living standards and greater employment growth.

The government will reduce waste and use the savings to increase resources for community safety, schools, hospitals and other public services year on year, allowing doctors, teachers, nurses and police officers to help Victorians in their daily lives.

A competitiveness report on the Victorian economy will examine state taxes and regulation, the quality and price competitiveness of Victoria's infrastructure services and our education and skills bases.

### *Regional and rural Victoria*

The government will establish a \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund to support regional Victoria and create new prosperity, more opportunities and a better quality of life. The fund will deliver money over eight years to build and upgrade local services and infrastructure, invest in local skills and industries to promote jobs, and help local communities devise positive responses to disadvantage.

The government will introduce stamp duty relief for young farmers and reinstate funding for the Victorian Young Farmers organisation to encourage Victoria's young men and women to pursue a future in the food and fibre industries.

One hundred and sixty million dollars will be invested into country roads and bridges to ease the burden on rural councils and \$100 million will be invested over the next four years to extend natural gas to encourage greater investment across regional Victoria and reduce energy costs for Victorian families.

## 2. Services that work

### *Transport*

During its first term the government will begin the process of rebuilding the public transport network. Significant investment and a clear plan are needed to meet future growth in commuter numbers.

The government will create a new independent public transport authority — the Victorian Public Transport Development Authority — to integrate the current multiple public transport agencies and authorities and administer all metropolitan trams, buses and trains, and regional trains and buses.

The government will invest \$900 million for rail asset renewal and maintenance, including a new \$100 million Maintaining Our Rail Network Fund administered by the Victorian Public Transport Development Authority, to increase maintenance of tracks, points, ballast and other rail network basics so that passenger comfort will be improved and reliability increased.

The government will purchase new trains for the Melbourne suburban network to move more passengers

during peak hour in safety and comfort and allow for more frequent services on Melbourne's suburban lines.

In addition, the government will plan a rail link to run from the city to Melbourne Airport. The government will also start building a new rail line to link Avalon Airport to Melbourne and Geelong and secure Avalon's future as Victoria's second international airport.

The government will make the public transport system safer through its \$200 million four-year Stopping Crime in its Tracks plan. One hundred additional Victoria Police officers will be recruited to join the transit safety division, bringing to 350 the total number of officers patrolling the entire train, tram and bus networks at all times. The government will also put 940 Victoria Police protective services officers on the train system — on every train station in metropolitan Melbourne and the major regional centres from 6.00 p.m. to the last train, seven days a week.

### *Community safety*

The government will deal with serious crime in this state, so that individuals and families can feel safe on the streets and in their own homes. This commitment will put more police on the streets, introduce a zero-tolerance approach to enforcement and bring sentencing more in line with community expectations.

The number of front-line police will be boosted by an additional 1700 recruits in the government's first term. This unprecedented investment in policing will protect communities across Victoria and will be the largest single increase in front-line police numbers over one term of government in the history of Victoria.

The government will also introduce tough new offences to specifically target violent and aggressive behaviour, particularly around licensed venues.

Violent drunks will be banned from licensed premises for two years. Venues that do not comply will be shut down with tough new liquor licensing laws that punish repeat offenders with automatic licence suspensions through a demerit points scheme, while good venues will be rewarded. The government will also focus on young people and binge drinking, including the introduction of legislation to control the secondary supply of alcohol.

The government's commitment to community safety will also bring sentencing more in line with community expectations. The government will abolish suspended sentences, end existing home detention laws, reform the law of double jeopardy, crush the cars of repeat

drivers and enforce a strong zero-tolerance approach to hoon driving.

Baseline minimum sentencing will be introduced for serious crimes and thugs who inflict gross violence on their victims will face at least four years in jail.

The government will invest in Victoria's prison capacity to ensure that those who commit violent and other serious crimes can be securely housed in Victoria's prisons.

These reforms are significant, wide-ranging and practical approaches to making Victorians feel safe again.

### *Planning*

The government will actively plan for Melbourne's future growth, consult with the community and develop opportunities for new housing in growth areas, activity centres and through urban renewal.

The government will establish a new Urban Renewal Authority to identify inner urban areas that may be suitable for large-scale urban renewal, and then manage the transition of these areas to a mostly residential base.

The government will establish a mechanism for urban renewal in urban areas that traditionally have an industrial base but can accommodate change similar to the Docklands, to take the pressure for high-density development off many existing suburbs.

The government will allow the adjustment of the urban growth boundary in growth areas to accommodate logical inclusions and will develop a population strategy for all of Victoria, not just for Melbourne. Importantly the government will protect the heritage character of Victoria.

### *Health*

The government is committed to fixing Victoria's health system and reducing waiting lists. Through a \$1 billion Health Infrastructure Fund provided from the sale of electronic gaming machine licences, public hospitals will get more beds and better facilities. Patients will be better informed, with real-time waiting list and hospital figures to be available online, making hospital waiting lists more accessible and transparent.

The government will produce a statewide health plan, build better health facilities in Melbourne and rural and regional Victoria, upgrade or replace a range of ambulance stations, as well as boosting ambulance and

mobile intensive care ambulance paramedic numbers to reduce delays.

With mental illness touching every Victorian household in some way and one in five Victorians likely to suffer from a mental illness at some stage in their lives, the government will ensure that Victorians with a mental illness in rural and metropolitan areas receive appropriate inpatient and community-based care.

The government will also support early intervention youth mental health initiatives and establish three new mother and baby units in regional Victoria for women with postnatal depression.

### ***Education***

The government will provide the best possible education standards and facilities for all students, giving parents choice and ensuring first-rate teachers are valued and given the support they need. Independent and Catholic schools will also be supported for the important role they play in the system.

The government will recruit additional mathematics and science teachers, and 400 teaching scholarships will be offered to science graduates. The government will also fund a major expansion of language education in primary and community language schools because it recognises that fluency in languages is important to build Victoria's future.

The government will fund an additional 150 primary welfare officers to provide early diagnosis and referral for students with behavioural, mental health and welfare problems.

The government will also give principals and school communities greater decision-making power in how they run their schools effectively.

### ***Community services***

The government recognises the critical importance that community services play in caring for Victoria's most vulnerable individuals and their families and is committed to providing effective, efficient and responsive community services.

The government will undertake a comprehensive judicial review of Victoria's child protection system. The review will assess the system, examine all reports and reviews made to date and engage with service providers, child protection workers, families and young people to identify the key gaps and recommend key strategies to fix the problems.

The government will also initiate new approaches towards preventing the abuse of children and supporting vulnerable young people in out-of-home care.

The government will provide leadership in the coordination of mental health, drug and alcohol services, child protection, family violence and education services to deliver a holistic approach to supporting at-risk children, young people and families.

The government will lead and drive the implementation of a new national disability insurance scheme to ensure that people with a disability and their families and carers have the lifetime support they need.

### **3. Strong families and vibrant communities**

The government is dedicated to building a fairer Victoria, where every citizen has a real stake in this state's future. The government will invest in events to benefit the whole of Victoria and attract investment and jobs across the state. Coalition governments have pioneered major events in Victoria and the government will once again focus on creating an events schedule with wide community appeal.

The government has committed to a major investment in the Bendigo showgrounds, discovery centre and Queen Elizabeth Oval, as well as securing the future of the Stawell Gift and boosting Ballarat Cup day. Victoria's major events need a renewed focus to ensure opportunities for small business and the community are maximised, to share in the success of the state's sports, arts and cultural program.

### ***Multicultural Victoria***

The focus of the government's multicultural policy will be providing world-class services in a culturally sensitive and appropriate manner that recognises the needs and aspirations of all Victorians to participate fully in society. The government will revolutionise language education in Victoria by creating one of the world's most diverse and effective languages-other-than-English programs.

### ***Veterans affairs***

The government recognises the enormous role veterans have played in safeguarding our democracy. The year 2014 will mark 100 years since the start of World War I. As that date approaches, the Liberal-Nationals coalition will be working with veterans organisations and the community to identify the best way to commemorate that anniversary.

**Arts**

The government will support Victoria's thriving innovative, unique and prosperous arts and cultural sector. It will restore the Victorian College of the Arts' funding shortfall and ensure its long-term future. Links will be built between Victoria and the thriving Bollywood film industry. Regional arts will also get a funding boost, with a \$14 million investment.

**Bushfire response**

The government will ensure that the 173 people who lost their lives on Black Saturday are never forgotten. The government will deliver a safer Victoria by implementing all of the 67 bushfires royal commission's final recommendations.

A range of initiatives will be introduced to support bushfire-affected businesses and economies. The government will ensure that bushfire prevention is made a basic, year-round role of government.

Bushfire prevention will be made a core component of the state budget process and considered, along with education and health, as a priority area for funding initiatives.

**4. Secure water and a healthy environment**

The government will support a range of practical measures to deliver common-sense environmental improvements.

**Water**

The government understands the challenges food producers face when water allocations are low. Water is the lifeblood of regional communities, and the government will make the changes necessary to ensure the water needs of all Victorians are adequately met. The government will make sweeping changes to the management of rural water in Victoria and establish water substitution targets for 2015, 2020 and 2030 to reduce demand on Melbourne's potable water supplies.

The government will hold an independent judicial inquiry to investigate the probity of decision making in the implementation of the food bowl project and the north-south pipeline and the social, economic and environmental impacts this project is having on communities throughout northern Victoria. It will phase out Melbourne's reliance on the north-south pipeline, using it only for critical human needs, and will continue to listen to communities opposed to the *Guide to the proposed Basin Plan*.

**Energy and resources**

Victoria faces new energy challenges, including the need to avoid the threat of increasing blackouts, increasing price pressures, a need to secure new generating plants and upgrading the reliability of electricity transmission and distribution. The government will also work to promote cleaner coal generation while supporting renewable and other lower emission energy sources.

The government is committed to providing an affordable, reliable and sustainable energy supply for Victorians and fostering the efficient and responsible operation of Victoria's earth resource sectors.

**Agriculture and the environment**

The government recognises the enormous contribution our technologically advanced and highly productive farm industries make to the state. Agriculture and associated food processing industries employ nearly 20 per cent of all workers in Victoria and make a huge contribution to the state's economy.

The government has identified specific initiatives for the future development and enhancement of Victoria's diverse and dynamic food and fibre producing sector.

The government will restore the Department of Primary Industries to its status as a major government department.

**5. Government you can trust**

The government will set new standards on integrity, accountability and transparency. The government will act immediately to establish an independent, broadbased anticorruption commission, which will work to investigate misconduct and corruption across government.

Freedom of information will be significantly strengthened and made more transparent through the appointment of an independent freedom of information commissioner, whose office will oversee the administration of FOI.

Another major reform will be to advertising standards. The government will end the use of taxpayers funds for self-promoting party-political advertising, introduce clear principles that all government advertising must comply with and establish an independent government advertising review panel to oversee, scrutinise and approve taxpayer-funded advertising to ensure that it accords with those principles.

I now formally open this Parliament, and pray that God may guide your deliberations.

**Copies of speech handed to the President and the Speaker.**

**The Governor withdrew.**

**Members of the Legislative Assembly withdrew.**

**Sitting suspended 3.22 p.m. until 5.04 p.m.**

## RECEPTION OF PRESIDENT BY GOVERNOR

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I have to report that, accompanied by members of the Council, I presented myself to the Governor this day as the choice of the Council for its President, and he was pleased to address me in the following terms:

President,

I have pleasure in congratulating you on your election to the high and distinguished office of President of the Legislative Council.

The able manner in which you have discharged the duties you have undertaken during your parliamentary career is recognised by the members of the Legislative Council who in their wisdom have selected you as their President.

I have confidence that you will fulfil the duties of this important office and hold fast to its traditions and customs.

David de Kretser  
Governor of Victoria.

## CONDOLENCES

### Russel Lee Bowman

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I ask the attendants to come into the chamber. It is my sad duty on this occasion to reflect on the recent passing of Russel Lee Bowman, known to all members who served in this place in the last Parliament and a friend and colleague of many of the staff and certainly those who wear the red coats in this place, the Clerks and various people in the papers office and so forth.

I wish to advise the house that Russel Bowman died on 24 October 2010. He was the principal attendant of the department of the Legislative Council.

Russel was born in September 1954 and was married to Jeanette, who is with us today. We welcome her to this place and indicate again — many of us had the

opportunity to attend Russel's funeral — our shared sorrow at the loss of her beloved Russel.

Russel was also the father of two daughters, Belinda and Amanda, and grandfather to Jack — in fact, a very proud grandfather to young Jack. Many of us have seen those photos of the progress of Jack, and we know that he was very fond of that part of his life.

Russel lived a very full life. He served in the Royal Australian Navy from 1972 to 1982. He worked as a cleaner at Thomastown High School in 1982, and he would have been popular with students there, because Russel was a very engaging person who was a good friend to those people he met. He was very obliging and willing to help people, and in each of his career changes he contributed a great deal to the experience of those people he worked with.

Russel was an officer of the Parliament from April 1983 until October 2010. He worked as a general hand in the parliamentary library from 1983 to 1984, then was appointed to the Legislative Council as doorkeeper in July 1984. He was promoted to senior parliamentary attendant in 1996 and promoted to principal attendant in 2003.

We are all saddened by the loss of Russel. It is quite different in this place not to have Russel bustling about the chamber attending to the needs and requirements of members, and doing it in his own inimitable style. He was a man who was well respected in this place by all members of the Parliament, and we sincerely share your loss, Jeanette. As a mark of respect to the memory of the late Russel Bowman I ask all members to stand in their places for a minute's silence.

**Honourable members stood in their places.**

## COMMISSION TO ADMINISTER OATH OR AFFIRMATION TO MEMBERS

**The PRESIDENT announced receipt from the Governor of commission authorising him to administer prescribed oath or affirmation of allegiance to any member of the Legislative Council who has not already taken and subscribed the same since his or her election to the Legislative Council.**

## MINISTRY

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — I wish to inform the house of the new responsibilities that will be undertaken by ministers in this Parliament. I will have responsibility for the roles of Minister for Health

and Minister for Ageing. I will also answer for the following Assembly ministers: the Premier, the Minister for the Arts, the Minister for Environment and Climate Change, the Minister for Mental Health and the Minister responsible for the establishment of an anticorruption commission.

The Honourable Richard Dalla-Riva is Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Manufacturing, Exports and Trade. He will answer for the following ministers in the Assembly: the Attorney-General, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business, the Minister for Tourism and Major Events, the Minister for Corrections, the Minister for Crime Prevention and the Minister for Major Projects.

The Honourable Matthew Guy is Minister for Planning. He will answer for the following ministers in the Assembly: the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, the Minister for Public Transport, the Minister for Roads, the Minister for Ports, the Minister for Gaming, the Minister for Consumer Affairs and the Minister for Local Government.

The Honourable Peter Hall is Minister for Higher Education and Skills and Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession. He will answer for the following ministers in the Assembly: the Minister for Bushfire Response, the Minister for Regional and Rural Development, the Minister for Education, the Minister for Energy and Resources, the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security and the Minister for Water.

The Honourable Wendy Lovell is Minister for Housing and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development. She will answer for the following ministers in the Assembly: the Minister for Sport and Recreation, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Minister for Regional Cities, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister for Youth Affairs, the Minister for Women's Affairs and the Minister for Community Services in the Assembly.

The Honourable Gordon Rich-Phillips is Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry. He will answer for the following ministers in the Assembly: the Treasurer, the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Racing.

The Honourable Wendy Lovell will be Deputy Leader of the Government.

## SHADOW MINISTRY

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — I wish to formally advise the house that I have been elected Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Leader of the Opposition. Mr Jennings is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mr Leane is the Opposition Whip and Mr Pakula, Ms Mikakos, Mr Tee and Mr Somyurek are our shadow ministers in this place.

## GREENS: LEADERSHIP

**Mr BARBER** (Northern Metropolitan) — I advise the house that my parliamentary colleagues have appointed me Leader of the Victorian Greens.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**Mr BARBER** — If it puts a smile on their dials, it is all worth it. Ms Pennicuik will continue to be the Greens Whip in this place. We will update our shadow portfolios via our website shortly.

## THE NATIONALS: LEADERSHIP

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — The Nationals are also an independent party in this Parliament. I wish to report that I have the honour of being elected as Leader of The Nationals in the Legislative Council and my colleague Mr Drum has been appointed The Nationals Whip.

## ACTING PRESIDENTS

**The PRESIDENT laid on table warrant nominating Ms Crozier, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Mr O'Brien, Ms Pennicuik, Mr Ramsay and Mr Tarlamis to be acting presidents whenever requested to do so by the President or the Deputy President.**

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! A number of new members of the chamber have been appointed as acting presidents. We will have a meeting early in the new year to give them some advice on how to proceed in the role, although some of the more experienced members are splendid role models.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr Barber** — On a point of order, President, members generally rely on a document called the general order to tell us which ministers are responsible

for which legislation so that we can direct our questions to them. When checking the Department of Premier and Cabinet website this morning I was not able to find that document, and I am wondering if the Leader of the Government can help us out with that.

**Hon. D. M. Davis** — On the point of order, President, we will provide that for Mr Barber. There is a circulated sheet which will assist members in the chamber.

**Mr Lenders** — On the point of order, President, Mr Barber asked specifically for the general order. It has not been gazetted. Through you, President, I ask Mr Davis how he will provide it if it has not been gazetted.

**Hon. D. M. Davis** — On the point of order, President, it will be made available as soon as possible.

**Mr Barber** — On the point of order, President, in order to direct a question to a minister about their exercise of a piece of legislation and sometimes a subset of that legislation that is given to a different minister we need to know which minister has responsibility for what. Over the last couple of weeks there has been nothing to stop these ministers from exercising their powers under legislation, including the Planning and Environment Act, but there is nothing official for us to work from.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I accept what Mr Barber said as far as it goes. Mr Davis has given an assurance that at the earliest opportunity a formal document will be presented. In the interim, Mr Davis has outlined in some detail and has circulated a form that indicates which ministers are prepared to take questions in regard to particular matters of government. For the purposes of this first day of sitting, I believe that will suffice.

### Questions without notice: government policy

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — My question is to Mr David Davis as the minister representing the Premier. Given the importance of question time in the scrutiny of government administration, especially as we do not have a general order, does the minister support the Premier's answer given to Josephine Cafagna in the leaders debate that Dorothy Dixers are a waste of time and that ministers should answer questions directly?

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — We are very prepared to be open and accountable. This is a government that will be open and accountable, unlike

the last government, which was not open and accountable.

**Mr Lenders** — Where's the general order? We don't know who to ask.

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** — I tell Mr Lenders that the general order will be provided. He can be very calm about that. What I would say in terms of parliamentary response is that we are very happy to provide answers to questions and we believe that improves government — through the good scrutiny of oppositions and third and fourth parties. They are key roles.

**Hon. M. P. Pakula** — What about the Premier's comments; do you support them?

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** — In terms of the government's commitment, the member just needs to stay tuned.

### *Supplementary question*

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — On a supplementary question, it is interesting that in the first answer from the so-called open, transparent and accountable government — a government that does not have a general order to tell us what to ask ministers — Mr Davis failed both tests: he did not answer the question about whether he supported his leader on Dorothy Dixers, and he did not answer directly.

**Hon. P. R. Hall** — On a point of order, President — —

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! There is no need for Mr Hall to raise a point of order. I also heard the same lecture. I rule out the supplementary question; there was no question.

### Hospitals: staff holiday pay

**Mr KOCH** (Western Victoria) — My question is addressed to the Minister for Health. Will the minister inform the house of Christmas holiday pay arrangements for staff in Victorian public hospitals?

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — I thank the member for his question and for his concern for Barwon Health and other major health services in his region. Let me inform the house of how this worked under the previous government. That was a government that made no provision in Treasury and no provision in the Department of Health for the \$55.2 million required to fund health-care workers in our major public health services this Christmas. Some \$55.2 million — a black

hole in funding — was not provided by the Treasurer and was not provided by the Minister for Health.

There are only two conclusions that can be drawn here. The first is that the former government was going to legislate and cut the holiday pay of health workers, doctors, nurses and others in the public sector and that former Minister for Health Daniel Andrews was going to play Scrooge at Christmas — Grinch, perhaps you might call him. That is the measure of the former government, the former Treasurer and the former health minister: \$55.2 million was required, but there was no provision in Treasury or in the Department of Health, and health workers were to be left out in the cold. I can tell you — —

**Mr Lenders** — On a point of order, President, Mr Davis referred to Mr Andrews as Scrooge. I ask him to withdraw.

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** — I withdraw; ‘Grinch’ might have been a better name to have called him. In the spirit of today I will not call him Grinch; I will just hold back. The point here is that the \$55.2 million was not provided for by Treasury or by the Department of Health and doctors, nurses and other health workers were left without funding. That funding will be provided. Those health workers will get their Christmas pay. They will not be left high and dry by the incompetent — or mean — previous Brumby government.

### **Kindergartens: funding**

**Ms MIKAKOS** (Northern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development. I refer to the fact that 200 babies are born each day in Victoria, and the Council of Australian Governments has mandated the expansion of kindergarten hours from 10 to 15 hours per week by 2013. In light of this, how will the government meet the growing demand for more kindergarten places and expanded kindergarten facilities, given that its policy will only provide an additional \$15 million in capital funding over the next four years under the children’s facilities capital program?

**Hon. W. A. LOVELL** (Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development) — I thank Ms Mikakos for her question, and I note that Ms Mikakos was afforded a briefing yesterday, at my request, from the Department of Education on these matters.

The coalition is committed to providing a place for every Victorian child in kindergarten. The previous

government signed up to 15 hours of kindergarten — a federal government commitment in 2007 under a federal government policy that is largely unfunded and will not deliver a place for every Victorian child unless the federal government is prepared to put in more money.

As Ms Mikakos points out, Victoria is experiencing a baby boom. There are a number of children being born, particularly in the growth corridors, and there is a severe shortage of kindergarten places in those areas because the previous government failed to plan for the necessary infrastructure that needed to be built in order to provide a place in kindergarten for every Victorian four-year-old.

Another unfortunate consequence of the federal government’s policy is the displacement of three-year-old programs. Next year some three-year-old programs will be displaced because of the need to provide additional four-year-old programs due to the previous government’s failure to plan and the federal government’s failure to fund its election promises.

### *Supplementary question*

**Ms MIKAKOS** (Northern Metropolitan) — In light of Treasury costing each new room at approximately \$300 000, which means that the government under its policy will provide only 50 extra rooms, can the minister advise what criteria she will use to determine which of Victoria’s kindergartens will get one of these 50 rooms?

**Hon. W. A. LOVELL** (Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development) — It will be based on need. I will be getting briefings from the department on that need in the next few days. We will be planning for the delivery of future kindergarten services, something that the former Labor state government failed to do.

### **Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: responsibilities**

**Mr DRUM** (Northern Victoria) — President, I congratulate you on your appointment.

My question without notice is to the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession, Peter Hall. Will the minister explain why the Liberal-National coalition government has assigned ministerial responsibility for the teaching profession, and will he outline what specific areas this portfolio will cover?

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession) — I thought it might be useful at this point in time to respond to a question like this,

particularly given that at the start of this question time Mr Barber asked the government to provide an outline of ministers' responsibilities. I welcome the opportunity to answer the question from my colleague and explain just why the coalition government has appointed a minister responsible for the teaching profession and outline some of the functions that I will have.

By way of background, it would be of interest to members that Victoria has around 41 000 teachers who are employed in Victorian government schools teaching some 540 000 students. In addition there are about 24 000 teachers who are employed at Catholic and independent schools. I do not think any of us in this chamber would dispute the fact that those teachers are critical to learning outcomes. Those people who stand in front of a classroom, those who perhaps sit around on the floor with kindergarten and preschool-age children or those who stand alongside our apprentices in a trades area are vital determinants of the sorts of outcomes that can be achieved. What we in the Liberal-National coalition government want to do is stand alongside those teachers and support them in their efforts to bring about continual improvement in learning outcomes for this state.

It is a proud day for me that, having started my working career as a teacher about 35 years ago, today I stand before this chamber and represent in the Parliament of Victoria and around the cabinet table those 41 000 public school teachers and 24 000 independent school teachers.

**Ms Pulford** — And the highest paid?

**Hon. P. R. HALL** — I would welcome a question on that from Ms Pulford if she wants to put that forward later on in question time. I would be happy to answer that question.

Specifically, my areas of responsibility will cover those related to teacher registration, teaching standards, workforce planning and matters relating to salaries and conditions associated with teachers at both school levels and preschool levels when those preschool teachers will be required to be registered by the Victorian Institute of Teaching. My other portfolio area of higher education and skills means that I will also have some input into standards applied to teaching in vocational areas.

In response to Mr Barber's question earlier, they are the general areas in which I will have responsibility. It is true that specific components of the Education and Training Reform Act cover those. The detailed information Mr Davis has said he will provide will

explicitly state which areas of the Education and Training Reform Act those responsibilities cover.

In summary I wish to say I am proud to be representing teachers in the Parliament and at the cabinet table. Their profession deserves that recognition, and we in the Liberal-National coalition government stand beside all the very fine and able teachers who operate in this state.

**Questions interrupted.**

## DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I wish by way of recognition and welcome to draw the attention of the house to the fact that one of Victoria's senators, Senator Michael Ronaldson, is with us in the gallery this evening.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Questions resumed.**

### Ambulance services: funding

**Mr JENNINGS** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — President, I congratulate you on your ascension to the Chair, and I also congratulate the incoming Minister for Health, Mr Davis, as I ask him a question. It relates not only to his challenge of meeting health demand, in particular demand for ambulance services, but also to meet the huge expectations that he and the incoming government have created for people around service provision and outcomes at the same time as significant reductions to the ambulance revenue have come through — —

**Hon. M. J. Guy** — It's not a speech.

**Mr JENNINGS** — I've got a minute. There will be a reduction in revenue coming to ambulance services because of the subsidy that is going to be provided to subscriptions. I understand the ambulance employees association estimates that this has led to a shortfall of about \$313 million in revenue to acquit the expectations that Mr Davis repeated on 12 December in the *Herald Sun*. I ask him: what is the net contribution of the budget to this outcome, and how is he going to achieve it?

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — The former minister will understand that I am unlikely to give him an answer about precise budgetary allocations at this point, but those matters will be revealed as we

move towards the budget, given that the program will be introduced on 1 July.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr JENNINGS** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I remember that in his first answer during this question time Mr Davis seemed to have an appreciation of some budgetary numbers, and yet when it comes to his commitments and undertakings and the commitments that were made by the Liberal Party at the last election, he is a little bit rubbery on what those costings might be. I think particularly the net costings going to ambulance services will continue to be an issue. You cannot run away from the net budgetary consequences of your commitments. If the minister cannot tell me the budget, can he tell me when he would expect the key performance indicators — and he has indicated to the people that the government will reduce waiting times from 15 minutes to 10 minutes — to be achieved?

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — Let me start with ambulances and indicate the tawdry record of the previous government. After 11 years in government there has been a terrible blow-out in response times that has put lives at risk around the state. I make the point that it was the former government and the state secretary at the time who promised 10-minute response times, and I never once promised 10-minute response times.

**Mr Jennings** interjected.

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** — No, it is important to get some facts on the record rather than the construction of the former minister. The point I make here is that the issues with Ambulance Victoria are very serious. They have built up over a number of years. Over six years there has been a serious decline in the performance of Ambulance Victoria, as outlined by the Auditor-General. The former minister will watch over the next period as we seek to steadily and incrementally improve the performance of Ambulance Victoria.

The key thing here is that the ambulance service under the former government became a terrible disgrace — with paramedics doing their very best. That government under John Brumby and Daniel Andrews —

**The PRESIDENT** — Time!

**Ms Pulford** — President, congratulations on your new role today. My point of order — and we may have been saved by the clock here — is that the Leader of the Government is debating the answer.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! Sadly, so was the supplementary question. When one throws a stone, one must expect it to come back.

**Ordered that answer be considered next day on motion of Mr VINEY (Eastern Victoria).**

**Housing: waiting list**

**Mrs KRONBERG** (Eastern Metropolitan) — President, I would also like to offer my congratulations to you, and they are very heartfelt.

My question is addressed to the Minister for Housing. Can the minister tell the house how long clients with high needs have been waiting for public housing?

**Hon. W. A. LOVELL** (Minister for Housing) — I thank the member for her question. I am informed by my department that there are some confronting figures when it comes to clients with high needs and their waiting times for public housing. Constituents have been left to languish on Labor's public housing waiting list for excessive amounts of time. Clients with high needs are classified on the public housing waiting list under early housing and are housed ahead of those on the general housing waiting list.

However, under the former Labor government many people with high needs have been left to languish on the waiting list. The average waiting time for early housing has blown out from 2.8 months in 1999 to 8.5 months this year. In fact the 8.5-month waiting time represents only the people who have been housed, so that is the average time that people who have been housed have been on the list. I am informed that in one situation last year a client who was housed had been on the waiting list for almost nine years. That is clearly unacceptable.

The figures for the regions are quite astounding. In the eastern metropolitan region the longest waiting time to be housed for a person from the early housing waiting list was eight years and nine months. In the north and west metropolitan region it was eight years, in the southern metropolitan region it was seven years, in the Barwon-south western region it was almost five years, in the Gippsland region it was over three years, in the Grampians region it was seven years and eight months, in the Hume region it was almost four years and in the Loddon Mallee region it was three years and nine months.

As I said, these figures represent the people on the list who are actually being housed. What is even sadder is all the people who are still languishing on the housing waiting list who the former government did not house.

There are people who have been there nearly 19 years. They are classified as in desperate need of early housing, and they have languished on the waiting list for nearly 19 years. That is in the southern metropolitan region. In the Barwon-south western region there are people who have been on the list for 16 years and six months and in the Gippsland region there have been people who have been on the list for over 13 years.

**Mr Leane** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I advise Mr Leane that this is not the cricket. I do not need a commentary on the answer. Nor do I need interjections that are consistently attacking the member. An occasional interjection might be okay, but it is not on when it is simply a consistent or persistent barrage, like what Mr Leane has been doing and to some extent Mr Pakula, too.

**Hon. W. A. LOVELL** — As I was saying, there are people who have been on the general housing waiting list for nearly 19 years. As a new minister, I am planning to assist high-needs clients to access public housing and to try to tackle some of those who have been waiting the longest time. Of course that is going to make that figure of 8.5 months as an average waiting time look slightly worse in the initial stages, because we will be housing people who have been on that list for a longer time.

In conjunction with the development of the common housing register, I am planning to review the early housing and wait term arrangements. The Baillieu government will provide outcomes for clients with high needs more quickly by expanding the options available through a common housing register. In addition, new properties are being delivered through Nation Building. They will be targeted towards the most vulnerable clients.

**Questions interrupted.**

### DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I take this opportunity — it is visitors' day — to indicate that a former minister of the Crown, the Honourable Robert Maclellan, is in the gallery this evening. We welcome him.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Questions resumed.**

#### **Information and communications technology: national broadband network**

**Mr SOMYUREK** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — My question is addressed to the Minister for Technology, Mr Rich-Phillips. I refer the minister to the report in *ARN* on 14 October this year in which he said the Victorian Liberal government would aggressively — I repeat 'aggressively' — pursue NBN (national broadband network) opportunities. Will the minister work with NBNC<sub>o</sub> to deliver high-speed broadband to Victorians by introducing legislation that allows NBNC<sub>o</sub> to make Victorian homes NBN ready?

**Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS** (Minister for Technology) — Firstly, I congratulate you, President, on your appointment to that high office.

I thank Mr Somyurek for his question regarding NBNC<sub>o</sub> and the Victorian government assisting in the attraction of investment or participation by Victorian companies in the national broadband network rollout.

Mr Somyurek's question goes to the issue of opt-out legislation. This is a matter the previous government seemed to have two positions on over the short time leading up to the last election. In October we saw comments attributed to the former Minister for Information and Communication Technology suggesting that the previous government had no intention of introducing opt-out legislation. A subsequent position put during the election campaign by the then government was that it would introduce opt-out legislation.

The position of the current government is that it does not support the introduction of opt-out legislation. I am not aware of any case being made to the Victorian government for the introduction of opt-out legislation. The chief executive of NBNC<sub>o</sub>, Mike Quigley, has indicated that he expects the rollout to proceed without such legislation being put in place. Until such a case for legislation is made to the Victorian government, we will be maintaining the status quo.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr SOMYUREK** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I thank the minister for his answer. I ask the minister: was the decision not to introduce opt-out legislation in Victoria decided before or after the election?

**Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS** (Minister for Technology) — I thank Mr Somyurek for his question. The position is that we are maintaining the status quo. No request has been made for legislation, and we are maintaining the status quo. There is no legislation.

**Planning: government policy**

**Mrs PEULICH** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — President, I also join the queue of those who have congratulated you on your elevation to high office, and I wish you a rewarding four years.

My question is to the Minister for Planning, and I ask: can the minister inform the house what action the Baillieu government has taken to protect Melbourne's built form?

**Hon. M. J. GUY** (Minister for Planning) — Congratulations to you, President, on your election to high office in this chamber. No doubt you will fill this chamber with esteem using the knowledge you have gained from your long period in this chamber.

I thank the member for her question; it is a fabulous question. Mrs Peulich has a fabulous record for maintaining Melbourne's built form. I inform the chamber that 27 November was the end of the Justin Madden-John Brumby era of planning in Victoria. It was the end of a one-size-fits-all planning solution for Melbourne; it was the end of the Sydney-fication of Melbourne; and it was the start of bringing planning back to what it should be — that is, a grassroots community formed from a proud and great city, which is what Melbourne is. I had great pleasure in signing away Labor's VC71 into history and signing away the destruction of Melbourne's bus corridors, tram corridors and train corridors which would have ruined our city and turned it into a socially dysfunctional city such as that built by the Wran Labor government in New South Wales. That was Labor's short-term agenda for Melbourne.

I had much pleasure in signing into existence planning amendment VC75, which will focus planning and population growth where they should be — on activities areas. We will bring forward urban renewal for Melbourne. We will see the greatest amount of urban renewal in this country since Canberra was first planned back at the turn of the last century. As I said, we are looking at urban renewal in activities areas but also in growth areas of Melbourne so a proper process is put in place for urban growth boundary renewal.

The Baillieu coalition government regards the built form as our best asset. We do not take a Whelan the

Wrecker approach to planning in Melbourne, as Justin Madden did. That is one of the reasons Justin Madden, the former minister, turned the safe seat of Essendon in the Assembly into a seat with just a 1.5 per cent margin and lost 14 percentage points of his primary vote. He was out-pollled and is only back in this Parliament courtesy of the Greens.

If these people feel as strongly about planning after the election as they did before, it is over to them. Why do they not move a disallowance motion on VC75? Why do they not have the courage to stand up for their former government's policies? I look forward to seeing the clapped-out, tired, old faces on Labor's front bench move a disallowance motion and put forward their own planning policies. They could move a disallowance motion. I say: bring it on! They should show us what they stand for. They will not have the courage to do so, because Labor's tired, old, clapped-out front bench, which would form an Andrews government in 2014 and which includes the member for Essendon in the Assembly, Justin Madden, the member for Bellarine in the Assembly, Lisa Neville, and a whole bunch of other failures, including Martin Pakula, Gavin Jennings and John Lenders — —

**Mr Viney** — On a point of order, President, I sat on the other side of the chamber and many times heard members of the then opposition express concern about ministers using question time to criticise the opposition rather than discuss their administrative responsibilities. I ask that you ask the minister to answer the question appropriately and in accordance with the apparent new spirit that the Leader of the Government and the Premier have indicated.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I uphold the point of order. I must say I am a bit surprised that Mr Viney did not get to his feet a little earlier to suggest that the minister was also debating the question. I would have thought the response to the question was far more debate than answer. The minister and other members might take that into account in responding to future questions.

**Hon. M. J. GUY** — Labor's rampant disrespect for our suburbs has been washed away by the Baillieu government with VC75. That is proof positive that immediately on coming to government we have honoured the election commitment that we said we would honour, which sets the scene for this government in planning. We will stand up for Melbourne and our built form, unlike the last government, which had a Whelan the Wrecker approach to planning in Melbourne.

**Bushfires: royal commission recommendations**

**Mr BARBER** (Northern Metropolitan) — My question is for the Minister for Planning, Mr Guy. It relates to recommendation 39 of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. Just to refresh the minister’s memory, it recommended:

The state amend the Victoria planning provisions relating to bushfire to ensure that the provisions give priority to the protection of human life, adopt a clear objective of substantially restricting development in the areas of highest bushfire risk — giving due consideration to biodiversity conservation — and provide clear guidance for decision-makers.

Can the minister tell me what is his plan to implement this particular recommendation?

**Hon. M. J. GUY** (Minister for Planning) — I congratulate Mr Barber on his elevation to Leader of the Victorian Greens. It is very good that they have now had a caucus meeting — and he obviously got the numbers there, so he can congratulate himself.

As Mr Barber realises, the government has said it will implement the recommendations of the bushfires royal commission. I am happy to take his question on notice and give him a full briefing with Mr Ryan, the Minister for Bushfire Response, as to how that will be done and get back to him at a proper time with a proper set of information about how that will be implemented.

*Supplementary question*

**Mr BARBER** (Northern Metropolitan) — It is the difference between bowling and batting. It is absolutely clear what is required, and that is a planning scheme amendment. The minister has moved with alacrity to make a number of planning scheme amendments since he was appointed minister. Can he tell me whether this particular planning scheme amendment will go through a public process, given that it will inevitably involve tens of thousands of properties across a number of municipalities across Victoria, or will it be one of those that is just him at a desk signing a briefing note?

**Hon. M. J. GUY** (Minister for Planning) — If Mr Barber knew the answer to the question he was going to ask, why did he not ask it in the first place? Why did he ask it in the second part?

**Ms Broad** interjected.

**Hon. M. J. GUY** — We have already talked about your situation, Ms Broad.

I have said to Mr Barber that I am happy to sit down with him and Mr Ryan’s staff and go through the

implementation of the bushfires royal commission’s recommendations and the government’s commitments to do that. I said I will do that, and I stand by the substantive answer I gave him earlier.

**Information and communications technology: government initiatives**

**Mr O’DONOHUE** (Eastern Victoria) — I, too, congratulate you, President, on your election as President and wish you well.

My question is addressed to the Minister for Technology. Can the minister inform the house on recent advances in training opportunities for the technology sector?

**Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS** (Minister for Technology) — I thank Mr O’Donohue for his question, and I congratulate him on his appointment as Parliamentary Secretary for Transport.

Mr O’Donohue’s question relates to training opportunities in the ICT (information and communications technology) industry. I would like to start by highlighting this government’s commitment to the development of the ICT sector in Victoria. It is a commitment that coalition governments have had for a long time, extending back to the 1990s with the appointment of the first minister for multimedia in former Treasurer Alan Stockdale, and it is a commitment that continues with the current government in seeking to further develop the ICT sector in Victoria.

ICT is, of course, an important employer in Victoria, employing around 90 000 people and generating around \$3 billion a year in exports. More than being just a discrete industry, it is an important enabler for other sectors of the Victorian and Australian economy. If the potential of the industry in its own right and its potential to provide productivity boosts to other areas of the Victorian economy are to be realised, it is important that skills development takes place.

It is heartening to see increased collaboration between academic institutions in Victoria and the ICT industry. Last week I was delighted to attend the contract signing between RMIT and Huawei Technologies of China for a collaborative training undertaking between RMIT and Huawei, which will allow 1000 students to be part of that undertaking over the next three years. It is encouraging to see the ICT sector joining in collaborative efforts with academia. We hear time and again about skills shortages in the ICT sector. It is encouraging to see an ICT company willing to partner

with a major training provider in Victoria in an effort to develop the ICT skills base in this state, and it is something that this government will support into the future.

## PAPERS

### Laid on table by Clerk:

Border Groundwaters Agreement Review Committee — Report, 2009–10.

Budget Update, 2010–11.

Confiscation Act 1997 — Report, 2009–10, from the Chief Commissioner of Police pursuant to section 139A of the Act.

Estate Agents Act 1980 — Notice of approval of registered education and training organisations under section 10C(1) of the Act.

Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984 —

Notices pursuant to section 32(3) in relation to Statutory Rule Nos. 111 and 127.

Notice pursuant to section 32(3) in relation to the Waste Management Policy (Used Packaging Materials).

Notice pursuant to section 32(4) in relation to the Waste Management Policy (Sitting, Design and Management of Landfills).

Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986 — Minister's certificate of 19 October 2010 pursuant to section 7(4) of the Act.

Major Sporting Events Act 2009 — Major sporting event order of 26 October 2010 in relation to the 2010 Australian Masters Golf Tournament.

Ombudsman — Report on Investigation into the issuing of infringement notices to public transport users and related matters, December 2010.

Planning and Environment Act 1987 —

Notices of Approval of the following amendments to planning schemes:

Ararat Planning Scheme — Amendment C14 Part 2.

Ballarat Planning Scheme — Amendment C139.

Banyule Planning Scheme — Amendments C60, C63, C75 and C95.

Bass Coast Planning Scheme — Amendment C113.

Bayside Planning Scheme — Amendment C93.

Boroondara Planning Scheme — Amendments C90, C117 and C133.

Brimbank Planning Scheme — Amendments C122 and C139.

Cardinia Planning Scheme — Amendments C130, C139, C140, C142 and C145.

Casey Planning Scheme — Amendment C127.

Central Goldfields Planning Scheme — Amendment C20.

Darebin Planning Scheme — Amendments C107 and C119.

East Gippsland Planning Scheme — Amendment C95.

Frankston Planning Scheme — Amendments C64 and C68.

Glenelg Planning Scheme — Amendments C50 and C54.

Golden Plains Planning Scheme — Amendment C52.

Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme — Amendment C119.

Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme — Amendments C112, C121 and C126.

Greater Geelong Planning Scheme — Amendments C146, C163, C168, C169, C195, C200, C232 and C235.

Greater Shepparton Planning Scheme — Amendment C126.

Hepburn Planning Scheme — Amendment C47.

Horsham Planning Scheme — Amendment C41.

Hume Planning Scheme — Amendments C120, C144, C145 and C146.

Kingston Planning Scheme — Amendment C115.

Knox Planning Scheme — Amendments C48, C86 and C94.

Latrobe Planning Scheme — Amendment C14.

Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme — Amendments C68 and C76.

Manningham Planning Scheme — Amendments C55, C89 and C91.

Mansfield Planning Scheme — Amendment C21.

Maribymong Planning Scheme — Amendment C96.

Melbourne Planning Scheme — Amendments C141, C157, C164, C174 and C175.

Melton Planning Scheme — Amendments C82, C84 Part 1, C104 and C105.

Mildura Planning Scheme — Amendments C52, C55, C57, C62 and C70.

Mitchell Planning Scheme — Amendment C74.

Monash Planning Scheme — Amendments C89 and C99.

Moonee Valley Planning Scheme — Amendment C103.

Moorabool Planning Scheme — Amendment C40.

Moreland Planning Scheme — Amendment C109.

Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme — Amendments C86, C134, C141 and C149.

Mount Alexander Planning Scheme — Amendment C58.

Moyne Planning Scheme — Amendments C36 and C45.

Murrindindi Planning Scheme — Amendments C28 and C33.

Nillumbik Planning Scheme — Amendment C69.

Northern Grampians Planning Scheme — Amendment C33.

Southern Grampians Planning Scheme — Amendment C21.

Stonnington Planning Scheme — Amendments C78, C116, C125, C126 and C140.

Surf Coast Planning Scheme — Amendment C49.

Swan Hill Planning Scheme — Amendment C36.

Victoria Planning Provisions — Amendments VC74, VC75 and VC76.

Wangaratta Planning Scheme — Amendment C37.

Wellington Planning Scheme — Amendment C65 Part 1.

West Wimmera Planning Scheme — Amendment C21.

Whittlesea Planning Scheme — Amendments C58, C131, C140 and C149.

Wodonga Planning Scheme — Amendment C69.

Wyndham Planning Scheme — Amendment C130.

Yarra Planning Scheme — Amendments C109, C116, C126 and C136.

Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme — Amendment C90 Part 2.

Yarriambiack Planning Scheme — Amendment C15.

Accident Compensation Act 1985 — No. 128.

Bail Act 1977 — No. 121.

Bus Safety Act 2009 — No. 110.

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 — No. 105.

Conveyancers Act 2006 — No. 107.

County Court Act 1958 — No. 146.

County Court Act 1958 — Civil Procedure Act 2010 — No. 145.

Crown Proceedings Act 1958 — No. 120.

Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 — Nos. 130 and 131.

Electricity Safety Act 1998 — No. 111.

Fair Trading Act 1999 — No. 124.

First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 — No. 138.

Fisheries Act 1995 — No. 118.

Gambling Regulation Act 2003 — No. 129.

Legal Profession Act 2004 — No. 123.

Liquor Control Reform Act 1998 — No. 125.

Magistrates' Court Act 1989 — Nos. 122, 140 and 141.

Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958 — No. 126.

Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 — No. 108.

Motor Car Traders Act 1986 — No. 101.

Port Management Act 1995 — No. 115.

Prostitution Control Act 1994 — No. 106.

Rail Safety Act 2006 — No. 114.

Residential Tenancies Act 1997 — No. 132.

Road Safety Act 1986 — Nos. 116, 134, 135, 136 and 137.

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Nos. 103, 104 and 112.

Supreme Court Act 1986 — Nos. 100, 142, 143 and 144.

Surveying Act 2004 — No. 102.

Tobacco Act 1987 — No. 113.

Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983 — No. 133.

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998 — No. 117.

Statutory Rules under the following Acts of Parliament:

Victorian Energy Efficiency Target Act 2007 — Nos. 109 and 127.

Water Act 1989 — No. 139.

Working with Children Act 2005 — No. 119.

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 —

Ministers' infringements offence consultation certificate under section 6A(3) in respect of Statutory Rule Nos. 101, 107 and 134.

Minister's exception certificates under section 8(4) in respect of Statutory Rule Nos. 94, 100, 103, 104, 105, 112, 117, 126, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145 and 146.

Ministers' exemption certificates under section 9(6) in respect of Statutory Rule Nos. 97, 98, 101, 102, 106, 107, 108, 109, 113, 114, 116, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 124, 128, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137 and 139.

TAFE Development Centre — Minister's report of receipt of 2009–10 report.

Victorian Law Reform Commission — Final Report on the Review of the Property Law Act 1958.

Water Act 1989 — Yarram Water Supply Protection Area Groundwater Management Plan 2010.

Wrongs Act 1958 — Notice of Scale of Fees and Costs for Referrals of Medical Questions to Medical Panels.

**Proclamations of the Governor in Council fixing operative dates in respect of the following acts:**

Civil Procedure Act 2010 — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G41, 14 October 2010*).

Confiscation Amendment Act 2010 — Part 1, sections 4(1), 4(3), 5, 7, 14(1), 14(3), 15, 20 to 23, 28, 30, 32, 33 and Part 4 (except sections 70(1), 70(2) and 70(3)) — 1 November 2010 (*Gazette No. G43, 28 October 2010*).

Consumer Affairs Legislation Amendment Act 2010 — Remaining provisions of Part 3 and sections 42, 44, 52, 53, 62, 64 to 67, 71, 72 and 74 — 1 November 2010; section 60 — 1 December 2010; remaining provisions of Part 5 (except sections 33 and 36) — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G41, 14 October 2010*).

Consumer Affairs Legislation Amendment (Reform) Act 2010 — Part 3, Part 5 (except sections 35(1)(c), 36, 38 to 40, 46, 47(2) and 47(3)), Part 6 (except section 55), section 58, Part 8 (except sections 63 and 64), Part 9 (except sections 70, 71 and 72(2)), Part 11 and section 76 — 1 November 2010; sections 46, 77(3), 79 and 80 — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G41, 14 October 2010*).

Energy and Resources Legislation Amendment Act 2010 — Parts 1, 2 and 4 to 9 (except section 85) — 14 October 2010; Part 3 (except section 36) — 21 October 2010 (*Gazette No. G41, 14 October 2010*).

Firearms and Other Acts Amendment Act 2010 — Part 1, sections 3(1) (except paragraphs (a) and (c)), 4, 17, 19, 21, 23, 28 and Parts 4 to 6 — 1 November 2010 (*Gazette No. G43, 28 October 2010*).

Gambling Regulation Amendment (Licensing) Act 2010 — Section 20 — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G42, 21 October 2010*).

Gambling Regulation Further Amendment Act 2009 — Sections 4(3), 19(1) and 121 — 19 October 2010; sections 12 to 16, 21 to 24 and 108 to 110 — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. S424, 19 October 2010*).

Justice Legislation Amendment Act 2010 — Remaining provisions (except sections 9, 13, 16, 18 to 22 and 25 to 27) — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G43, 28 October 2010*).

Justice Legislation Further Amendment Act 2010 — Part 8 (except sections 36, 38(3), 38(4) and 42 to 44) — 12 October 2010 (*Gazette No. S415, 12 October 2010*); Part 7 — 28 October 2010; Divisions 3 and 7 of Part 5 — 1 November 2010; Part 10 — 1 November 2010 (*Gazette No. G42, 21 October 2010*); Divisions 2 and 8 of Part 5 — 28 October 2010; Part 4 — 1 January 2011; Division 1 of Part 5 — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G43, 28 October 2010*).

Liquor Control Reform Amendment Act 2010 — Sections 1 to 3, 4(3), 7, 8, 12 to 16, 20, 21(1), 22 to 27 and 29 — 1 November 2010; remaining provisions — 1 January 2011 (*Gazette No. G40, 7 October 2010*).

Mineral Resources Amendment (Sustainable Development) Act 2010 — Part 1, sections 37, 41 and 51, Parts 4 and 5 — 14 October 2010 (*Gazette No. G41, 14 October 2010*).

Personal Safety Intervention Orders Act 2010 — Part 1, Division 1 of Part 14 and sections 222 to 224 — 1 December 2010 (*Gazette No. G41, 14 October 2010*).

Primary Industries Legislation Amendment Act 2009 — Sections 9, 10 and 18 — 1 October 2010 (*Gazette No. S398, 30 September 2010*).

Road Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Act 2010 — except sections 5, 14, 21, 23 and 24(3) — 1 November 2010; section 24(3) — 25 October 2010; sections 14 and 21 — 12 December 2010 (*Gazette No. G42, 21 October 2010*).

Transport Accident and Accident Compensation Legislation Amendment Act 2010 — Sections 21 to 23, 50, 51 and 80 to 84 — 1 November 2010 (*Gazette No. G43, 28 October 2010*).

Transport Legislation Amendment (Hoon Boating and Other Amendments) Act 2009 — Sections 3, 10, 12 to 14 and Part 4 — 1 November 2010; sections 20(5) and 22(4) — 31 December 2010 (*Gazette No. G42, 21 October 2010*).

Water Amendment (Victorian Environmental Water Holder) Act 2010 — Sections 1, 2, 9 to 12 and 24 to 27 — 28 October 2010 (*Gazette No. G43, 28 October 2010*).

## NOTICES OF MOTION

### Notices of motion given.

#### Mr O'DONOHUE having given notice of motion:

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — I seek leave to move:

That Mr O'Donohue be given leave to debate the motion forthwith.

### Leave refused.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! Just so that the house is aware of the process, Mr O'Donohue has given notice of that motion. There is no obligation at all for him to proceed at this stage, and seeking leave at this point is not really in order given that it is only a notice of motion.

### Further notices of motion given.

## PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

### Nominations

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! In respect of committees, essentially motions can be moved appointing members to the procedure and privileges committees, and nominations can be announced regarding those appointments and appointments to the three standing committees.

It is my view that in this instance, where I have not been provided with any nominations in writing, I will seek the nominations for those various committees from the party leaders and I will move to an appointment on their recommendations on the next day of sitting.

**Mr Lenders** — On a point of order, President, pursuant to standing order 23.03(1) party leaders can put their nominations forward for these committees. I have the Labor Party's nominees for each of the three standing committees. If we follow the course of action you are suggesting, this house will not have the ability to scrutinise until February. We have been called together now as a matter of urgency to get government going. Pursuant to that standing order I propose to nominate the nine Labor Party members to those three committees today. I can give those to the Chair, pursuant to the President's ruling, rather than announcing them in the chamber, but I believe that ruling would supersede the standing order which talks about this being done with some immediacy.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I accept what Mr Lenders has put forward as a point of order, but I intend to maintain the position I have put in my ruling. Whilst the member refers to the standing order in this place, we have not adopted a convention or a procedure in that respect which would cover the appointment of those committees necessarily on the first day of sitting.

If Mr Lenders wants to proceed with his nominations on this occasion — and I note he is prepared to provide them to me in writing, even though that is after he has done the deed — I would have thought that as a matter of courtesy he might well have provided them to me in writing so that I would have been able to look at those nominations and then entertain what has been put.

I do not believe the matter of scrutiny raised is an issue at this point. It might well be a good debating point for a media release, but I suggest it is not a matter that goes to the workings of government. The Senate procedure is fairly clear; it relates back to standing orders, which we have here, and some of the approaches whereby the party leaders advise the President of their nominations for the various committees. There is then a motion to appoint them.

As I said, on this occasion I would be quite happy to receive the member's nominations as a matter of advice. I intend to put the motion for the appointment of the committees down for the next date of meeting.

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — The President has invited me to move them. The notice paper says nominations can be announced. I announce that the opposition nominates Ms Pulford, Mr Somyurek and Ms Broad to be members of the Economic and Infrastructure Committee; Ms Mikakos, Mr Pakula and Mr Viney to be members of the Legal and Social Issues Committee; and Mr Tee, Mr Scheffer and Ms Tierney to be members of the Environment and Planning Committee.

**Mr BARBER** (Northern Metropolitan) — I will do the same. The Greens put forward my name as our nomination for the Economic and Infrastructure Committee; for the Environment and Planning Committee we put forward Ms Pennicuik; and for the Legal and Social Issues Committee we put forward Ms Hartland.

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — I make the point that the government will nominate members of these committees after discussion with other parties in this chamber. The government will do so in the context of discussion about the joint committees as well.

**Ms Pennicuik** — On a point of order, President, I did not hear a word that the Leader of the Government said.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! He said that in due course the government would advise of its nominees. I accept that those nominations are on the record and I look forward to the courtesy of a letter informing me of

the nominations from both parties and, in due course, from the government. The house will determine the final composition of those committees on the next day of meeting.

**STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL 2010**

*Introduction*

**Hon. D. M. DAVIS** (Minister for Health) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to revise the statute law of Victoria.

**Leave refused.**

**GOVERNOR’S SPEECH**

**Address-in-reply**

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I have to report that the Governor attended the house this day and was pleased to make a speech, of which, for greater accuracy, I have obtained a copy. As the speech is printed, I take it that members do not desire that I should read it to them.

**Mr ELSBURY** (Western Metropolitan) — I move:

That the Council agree to the following address to the Governor in reply to the Governor’s opening speech:

May it please the Governor:

We, the Legislative Council of Victoria assembled in Parliament, express our loyalty to Australia and the people of Victoria, and thank you for the speech which you have made to the Parliament.

We declare that we will faithfully carry out the important duties entrusted to us by the people of Victoria, to advance the best interests of all sections of the community.

President, thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the people of the Western Metropolitan Region in reply to the Governor’s speech and allow me to be added to the list of members formally congratulating you on election to your office. This Council will benefit from your guidance, and I look forward to working with you in your role.

It is a great honour to be standing in this place as a newly elected Liberal member for Western Metropolitan Region. Western Metropolitan Region covers the part of Melbourne I love and which I have called home for all of my life. The old workers cottages, growth suburbs, chemical plants, market gardens, million-dollar beachfront homes and housing

commission flats all combine to make up this rich community. Western Metropolitan Region beckons many with opportunities for people from across Australia and the globe. The growth suburbs of Point Cook, Craigieburn, Caroline Springs, to name a few, offer reasonably priced housing. Laverton North, Essendon and Altona possess the industrial backbone of Melbourne. Tullamarine airport, the Williamstown docks and Essendon Airport provide unique infrastructure which can benefit the state if utilised effectively. All these places have been part of my life, and I am now able to play a part in guiding the future of these communities.

I was born in Footscray hospital, the fourth child of Beverley and Rex Elsbury. The family home was in Hoppers Crossing, which was in those days surrounded by paddocks. Derrimut Road was a strip of bitumen and the shopping was done in Werribee, Footscray or a small shopping centre called Highpoint! I remember that when I was a kid the Laverton air force base was still an active airfield. The C-130 Hercules transport aircraft would take its approach directly over our house, so low you could just about see the colour of the pilot’s eyes. For some this was a terrible nuisance, but for our former Royal Australian Air Force family it was part of normal, everyday life.

Mum and dad had chosen Hoppers Crossing as the place they would settle their family after dad, a man who had worked up through the ranks, had been posted to Laverton. The small community of Hoppers Crossing suited their needs, and over time the suburb grew. Soon paddocks gave way to more houses, Werribee Plaza sprung up from yet another paddock, and schools, sports fields, shops and petrol stations all began to appear in this thriving community. Today the neighbourhoods of Hoppers Crossing have continued to expand, with new housing estates stretching in every direction.

I attended St Peter Apostle Primary School in Hoppers Crossing from prep to grade 6 and then undertook my secondary education at Hoppers Crossing Secondary College, where I completed my Victorian certificate of education. At Deakin University in Waurin Ponds I studied a bachelor of arts (public relations) with a sub-major in politics. It is strange that I should be standing here now! While studying I took up a role as a sales assistant at Video Ezy in Werribee. It was during that time in 1997 that I decided to nail my political colours to the mast.

For my entire life I have lived in an electorate dominated by the Labor Party. Since the passing of Neville Hudson, a former member for Werribee in the

Assembly, in 1979 Labor has held Werribee and its successor electorate, Tarneit. On the federal level the electorate of Lalor was firmly held by Labor. Growing up it was clear that Labor was the dominant political force across my community.

Yet, like many young men, it was my father who most significantly influenced my early political outlook. Many is the evening in the Elsbury household when my father would rail at the television about the mess into which Labor was putting our state and our nation. My father was not fond of Bob Hawke or John Cain, and he made that point very clear to anyone within earshot of the evening news broadcast. In following my father's example, during the 1987 federal election I informed everyone that they should vote for Andrew Peacock. I distinctly remember telling our neighbours as they went to vote that Andrew Peacock was the one for whom they had to vote. I was quickly shuffled inside the house at the time lest I cause a war with our very Labor neighbours. The other error I made that day was that John Howard was then the leader of the Liberal Party!

Growing up I was aware that Victoria was in serious trouble. Hope faded as the state's finances dissipated. My sister, a schoolteacher in the state school system, was no longer being paid by the education department but by the State Electricity Commission and the Gas and Fuel Corporation. The election of the Kennett government in 1992 was the beginning of Victoria's rebirth. Tough decisions were made, but each action was necessary and provided an economy of movement which the government needed to be able to work through to resolve the issues that our state faced. This turnaround economically, socially and, for want of a better term, spiritually in Victoria naturally made the Kennett government and the Liberal Party very attractive to me.

It was in November 1997 when I boarded a train at Hoppers Crossing station with my mate Ken and travelled into the city so that I could put in my application to join the Liberal Party. It was a deliberate and very conscious decision to join the Liberal Party, knowing full well that the natural bias of the region where I lived was to the advantage of Labor. As a volunteer I worked on the Lalor federal campaign against a new candidate by the name of Julia Gillard. In 1999, with the state seat of Werribee on a political knife edge, I worked with Liberal candidate David McLaren. The crushing defeat this election delivered on a local level and a state level only steeled my resolve to one day see the Liberal Party return to government. I was fortunate that my professional career soon took me directly along the path I have taken to be able to stand

here today, but it could have been very different due to a single conversation I had with an old friend.

I played badminton as a teenager and a young adult — not well, but all the same I played. At the same time the Honourable Ken Coghill, MLA, a former Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and a former member for Werribee, was a committee member of the club; his children also played for the club. On this particular day following our weekly match I came to be chatting to Dr Coghill, and he made an offer. It was late in 1999 or early 2000, and the Bracks Labor government was in its infancy. Dr Coghill said something to me along the lines of, 'You've almost finished your degree, and I know you're studying politics. The new government is looking for young people to take up roles so, if you like, I could have a chat with someone and see if there are any positions available'.

For any political animal this offer would have been far too good to pass up — fresh from university with no job prospects in sight, and here was an offer of a job with the new state Labor government. The choice was mine: be pragmatic about the electoral chances of the Liberal Party ever winning a seat in the west and run with the hounds, or stick to what I believe in and trudge through an uncertain future with the Liberal Party.

With the advantage of hindsight, I could have enjoyed 11 years working in the government, working with ministers, developing contacts and playing factional games, and then when I judged the time was right I could have raised my hand to stand for Labor in a safe western suburbs seat. Instead I turned to Dr Coghill and said, 'Thanks for the offer, but there is one problem: I am a Liberal'. I stayed the course, not for personal benefit but because I believe that the Liberal philosophy of the rights of the individual, of enterprise and of limited government interference in the daily lives of citizens is the best way for the western suburbs to advance. If we rely on government for everything, if we wait for others to lead the way, if we allow uniformity to reign, then the western suburbs will never advance, never change and never succeed.

The massive potential in Melbourne's west should not be allowed to stagnate because the roads are clogged, the trains do not run or our schools are poorly maintained. We need and deserve the infrastructure befitting any urban community in this state. It should be delivered before issues get out of control, and it must be planned to grow as the community grows. For 11 long years the western suburbs have been allowed to grow but they have not received the infrastructure they so desperately need. In my suburb of Tarneit a new police station was opened, but it is operational for only

16 hours a day. I had reason to call upon this station at 11.00 p.m. one evening because of a man walking down the middle of Derrimut Road, but I found the doors to be locked.

So many roads across the region need attention. Announcements have been made of one-point-something million dollars to fix issues, but all this does is tinker at the fringes and provide for better organised traffic jams rather than addressing the root problem. As someone who was born and raised in the western suburbs, my passion for this community is real and not contrived by political desire. I have not been gifted the seat I occupy. I have worked hard in the community and maintained my political beliefs rather than discarding my values or my connection to the west. It is important for anyone in this place to hold values from which they will not waiver.

As I have stated, I support the rights of individuals. Individuals need to be very aware of their responsibility to others and their responsibility for their own actions rather than choosing to abdicate responsibility when an error is made or a deliberate act causes pain to others. I appreciate that some people have fallen on hard times or have had an upbringing which has not been filled with the love and opportunities afforded to me by my caring parents and broader family, but this does not excuse people for committing heinous offences, and punishment must fit the crime.

I applaud Premier Ted Baillieu for his support for the introduction of a bill to remove suspended sentences for serious offences from the raft of penalties that courts can inflict upon those who challenge the law. This sends a clear message that the laws of this state are not to be flouted and that the impact of offences will be felt by the offender, not just the victim.

I believe in low taxes, as growth in the economy can only occur through the enterprise of individuals rather than the fiat of government. Government should develop an environment in which business can prosper, providing greater capacity to develop jobs and in turn increasing the capacity of this state to produce goods and services. Economic growth benefits us all, not just the captains of industry, as it also improves the standard of living for workers. Once you have a strong economy, a government is then able to tackle the broader issues of government both environmentally and socially.

I encourage people to think about their impact on the environment and to support initiatives for recycling, saving energy and reducing water use by using rainwater for toilets and gardens, as well as harnessing solar energy at home. I have organised a local Clean Up

Australia Day event in my community for the past four years, and I feel that participation on a local level is more valuable than any government-mandated initiative.

Victoria has a rich cultural heritage which has evolved through the trials and tribulations of this state and the preceding colony. Our legal system, legislative framework, attitude and way of life are a reflection of our history and traditions. We must take care that in providing a welcoming society for people from other cultures we do not in turn destroy the very things which people sought when coming here.

I am grateful for the diversity of our community and the magnificent way in which cultures, creeds and ideologies can coexist in the one place under the one law. It is unfortunate, though, that we continue to call for tolerance in this state. The word to me suggests a limitation: bridges have a tolerance before they break; a person tolerates a mosquito on a summer night. What we need to seek is greater respect, not just between different cultures but between individuals as well. If we are to continue to improve the harmony we have in this state, we cannot continue to erode the institutions and values which have made our state great.

When I made my oath today I meant every word. I am a monarchist, and I believe that a constitutional monarchy affords the people of Victoria the stability they need in order to have confidence in their government, no matter the colour of the political party in power. I am a Catholic, and while some will choose to dilute my opinions on some issues as just being the result of my religious beliefs, I can assure you that my views are developed upon much broader foundations than just the way I choose to worship.

I believe in the sanctity of innocent life and will not stand by while thousands of innocent Victorian children are not given the most basic of human rights: the right to live. Abortion is a practice I cannot and will not abide. I will do everything in my power to repeal the laws that permit this terrible act.

I do not agree with same-sex marriage, but I do believe that same-sex couples deserve the same financial recognition, especially in relation to superannuation and issues around living wills. I am not opposed to same-sex commitment ceremonies or a relationship register.

I believe there are some crimes so abhorrent that the death penalty is justified. These include acts of murder, drug trafficking or production in commercial quantities, and terrorism.

I do not believe every child will grow up to be a doctor, lawyer or computer engineer. Options must be made available to those children who are not academically talented to develop the skills they do possess with their hands. Trades education is vital for not only the economic aspects such as the need for a skilled labour force but also socially to reduce the risk of people falling through the cracks into substance abuse or crime. Rather than the adage 'Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day', some might say 'Teach a man to be a mechanic, and he will charge like a wounded bull' would be more fitting for this day and age.

I would now like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the many important people who have enabled me to achieve this goal of being a representative for Melbourne's west. To my wife, Belinda, who knew this was the path I was taking when she agreed to marry me eight years ago, I say thank you for your love, support and frankness. I could never have asked for more from the woman who has agreed to take this journey with me. My children, Hannah and Grace, may be small, but their hugs, smiles and generally being around have grounded and focused me on what is truly important.

I thank my mother for instilling in me the values I have and the respect I possess for others. Her nurturing and love have got me here today.

To my father who passed away this year, a victim of prostate cancer, I say: Dad, I wish you were here to see me, but I know you are with me every day and I will love you forever. The strength of your convictions and the determination you had inspired me to do all that I can.

To my brother, Wayne, who is my best mate and has worked with me throughout my time as a member of the Liberal Party with the view of achieving this goal, I say: your friendship, advice and hard work have been above and beyond what anyone would expect, even from their brother.

I Senator the Honourable Michael Ronaldson, my boss for the last five and a half years and my mentor. His advice and support have been invaluable, and I thank him for the opportunity he provided me to work with such a professional and loyal person.

I would like to thank all the lower house candidates across the west for their dedication and the time they put in with the knowledge that victory was likely to be elusive. They are: Mark Rose in Altona, Wayne Tseng in Derrimut, Goran Kesic in Kororoit, Damon Ryder in Keilor, Rebecca Gauci in Essendon, Ken Betts in Footscray, Joh Bauch in Niddrie, Claude Tomisich in

Pascoe Vale, Glenn Goodfellow in Tarneit, David McConnell in Williamstown and Philip Cutler in Yuroke.

I thank my running partners in the upper house: Victoria Fairbairn, Jeremy Barth and William Kenny.

I thank Bernie Finn, my colleague and friend, for his support and the hard work he did in paving the way for further Liberal success in the west.

I say thank you to the members of the Liberal Party across the western suburbs for sticking in there. For many years the times were tougher than normal. Victories have been elusive, yet you have stood by the party. My standing here is as much the result of your work as mine, and I thank all of you.

To all the staff at 104, your diligent work and skills have been well utilised in this campaign, and I thank you all for the long hours you put in and the terse phone calls you dealt with.

This is who I am, and these are the values I hold. I sincerely seek to serve the people of the western suburbs to the best of my ability. There is a lot of work to be done across Melbourne's west, and I am determined to be out there working for the people I grew up with, who are my neighbours and members of my community.

#### **Sitting suspended 6.41 p.m. until 8.13 p.m.**

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I invite Mr O'Brien to second the motion to accept the Governor's address to the Parliament.

**Mr O'BRIEN** (Western Victoria) — President, I second the motion. I also congratulate you on your appointment to this high office.

It is with immense gratitude that I rise to humbly thank first and foremost the people of Western Victoria Region for granting me the opportunity to represent their interests in this chamber over the next four years. In thanking the people of Western Victoria Region for placing their trust in me I understand that as yet I have only achieved an opportunity to advance their interests, an opportunity I intend to embrace with my full conviction and to serve with the best of my ability.

The opportunity that has fallen to me is a reflection of the decisive win of the Baillieu-Ryan coalition government in the last election. I am acutely aware that the present upper house preferences system that has delivered the coalition and me this chance is an endorsement of the hard work of the entire coalition

team in putting together a set of policies that has delivered a historic return to government.

In terms of individual thanks I need look no further for inspiration than to the new Deputy Premier, Peter Ryan. I would also like to thank his wife, Trish, for her continuing support of me and my family over many years. Since assuming the leadership of our party after the 1999 election, the Deputy Premier has travelled long and difficult roads, but like the wise old salts of the sea he has stayed the course and kept a firm hand on the tiller, knowing that our steadily increasing Nationals representation would eventually see us back onto the government benches. At all times the delivery of better outcomes for the regions has been his and our party's top priority.

Throughout the party's 90-year history The Nationals have made standing up for the regions a singular defining principle. Beyond that we hold no other hidden agendas. When the now Premier and Deputy Premier re-entered the coalition agreement in 2008 it was done on behalf of two proud and independent parties. We now look forward to working closely with the Liberal Party in stable coalition government for as long as the citizens of this state continue to hold us in their favour.

My own family's history has to some extent followed the fortunes and challenges that have faced many in the west over this state's history. I am a product of proud western Victoria traditions. My family has been part of the small western Victorian community of Peshurst for over 160 years. I am fortunate enough to own a historic property, Yulungah, formerly owned by Cr John Mackiehan, a founder of the Municipal Association of Victoria and a noted winemaker.

I also pay tribute to Bill Lewis, a former MLA, who is fondly remembered as a football administrator and a parochial contributor to all aspects of Peshurst life, especially the Peshurst and District Memorial Hospital. He is reputed to have had no difficulty in finding a direct and vital relationship between his beloved Peshurst and much of the business that went before the Legislative Assembly. I can well understand why.

In approximately 1841 my great-great-grandfather, Terence O'Brien, arrived in Victoria as a 21-year-old from Tipperary, Ireland, and settled at Mount Moriac, west of Geelong. By 1853 he had acquired substantial land-holdings north-west of Peshurst, which he called Springfield after his native townland in Ireland. I am pleased to say that after six generations our family still farms a portion of this land on the Murdum Creek

known as Glad's spring, after my grandmother Gladys Wik.

I am the first lawyer in our family over those generations, but it seems the second to have entered public life. My great-great-grandfather, old Terry, as he was known, managed to top the poll at the first vote for the formation of the Mount Rouse Roads Board in 1860, as a precursor to the Shire of Mount Rouse, on which he also served.

The no. 1 issue then was one very familiar to western Victorians today, and it is one I intend to take as my top priority in my time in Parliament — that is, the condition of the district's roads. The extensive land-holdings that my great-grandfather built up in the 19th century were unfortunately whittled away after his death in 1893, so that when my grandparents married they were able to purchase just a small acreage at the final clearing sale of Springfield in 1928, where they struggled to raise my father, Terry, his sister Lillian and their brother, Brian O'Brien.

Despite my father's poor circumstances, his parents and teachers recognised the importance of education and prepared him for a junior government scholarship so he could continue his education beyond grade 8. He was successful and went on to attend St Patrick's College Ballarat, followed by employment for seven years at the former Shire of Wimmera in Horsham, where he completed his matriculation by correspondence. He then went on to a stellar academic career in civil engineering at the University of Melbourne.

In later years he founded his own private practice, OMC International, which specialises in innovative computer technology for the safer and more efficient movement of bulk and container ships in and out of ports, for which it is recognised as a world leader. His team continues to contribute significant savings to the Australian economy. He was recently honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia for this service. I also congratulate my parents on the momentous occasion of their 47th wedding anniversary today.

A commitment to equal opportunity runs deep in my family. My great-grandmother, Catherine Archbold, who was also from Peshurst, was a signatory to the 1891 petition presented to this Parliament calling for the right of women to vote on equal terms with men.

As a result of my father's experience, my parents valued education, and their six children have gone on to develop professional careers. I pay tribute to them and their blossoming families today. They are, in order of age: Professor Terence O'Brien, professor of medicine

at the University of Melbourne and Royal Melbourne Hospital; Dr Daniel O'Brien, infectious diseases specialist at Geelong Hospital and voluntary physician with Médecins Sans Frontières; Peter O'Brien, a maritime engineer and CEO of OMC International; Dr Catherine Meade of the neuropsychology unit at St Vincent's Hospital; and Dr Matthew O'Brien, paediatric registrar at Hervey Bay Hospital, Queensland.

I must say, however, that the academic and professional successes which have blessed our family are due as much, if not more, to the support and encouragement of my mother, Pauline Robins, as they are to my father's success. Her family also comes from western Victoria. She is descended from the earliest settlers around Clunes and Ballarat. A relation on her side whose name I am honoured to carry into this chamber, Archibald Roland Knight, was one of over 150 western Victorian light-horsemen who were tragically killed in the first two waves at the Nek, Gallipoli, in August 1915. Let us not forget.

My memories of the farm in childhood and the Easter races to the summit of Mount Rouse with my siblings, my involvement with the Penshurst Football and Netball Club and my time as a licensee of the Penshurst Hotel have contributed to a belief in the attractions of country life and a vision for western Victoria. This vision has been powerful enough for me to move from my legal profession to the position I now hold in this Parliament.

Penshurst is but one example of the many towns and communities that exist in western Victoria with a great potential for revitalised growth. The issue of regional development has been the recurring theme of my political life to date, arising from my professional experience and family background. Regional development and reversing the population pull towards Melbourne provide a large part of my vision for the electorate of Western Victoria Region. It is a vision that many country people hold and which I am pleased to see has in recent times been embraced in principle by all of the major parties that are represented in this chamber.

However, despite the plans of its earliest settlers, including many notable western Victorians, Victoria currently finds itself to be one of the most centralised and urbanised populations in the world. There are two fundamental problems: firstly, people in the regions, who are the lifeblood of the economy — the producers — unfairly miss out on the opportunities which flow from investment and infrastructure; and secondly, at the same time cities like Melbourne groan

under the burden of development and planning pressures, congestion, overcrowding, pollution and carbon emissions.

Regional Cities Victoria recently commissioned work by the firm Essential Economics that estimated that if 50 000 people were settled in regional cities rather than Melbourne, the cumulative cost of providing critical infrastructure to support this population would be \$1 billion rather than the \$3.1 billion required in Melbourne. The study also quantified significant savings in congestion and greenhouse gas costs associated with encouraging population growth in regional cities.

For us in government to sustain western Victorian towns and eventually reverse the regional population decline, the main requirements are jobs, people, good schools, hospitals, good community facilities, roads — and more jobs. What will bring the jobs? Many things will, but they start with a belief and a vision, and they are delivered with money, commitment and hard work. Roads, rail and air freight are critical, as well as the continued development of our nationally significant ports of Portland and Geelong.

Whilst development has occurred in recent years in Geelong, the Surf Coast and Ballarat, even greater opportunities lie out further west in places such as Horsham, Hamilton, Warrnambool, Portland, Ararat, Stawell, Balmoral, Colac and Camperdown, and all the hinterland towns such as those comprising the membership of the magnificent Mininera and district football and netball league.

The strong role played by the Deputy Premier as the Minister for Regional and Rural Development in formulating the coalition's \$1 billion regional growth fund will be of benefit to all Victorians.

A further issue of importance to western Victoria on which I wish to comment briefly is the wind farm industry. I state at the outset that I am a supporter of the wind farm industry as a great renewable resource, particularly for south-western Victoria. Together with potential offshore wave power resources along the south-west coast, it could become a major contributor to the sustainable prosperity of the state. Nevertheless, I have since my first involvement with wind farm development proposals advocated for a reform to the system of royalty compensation payments so as to include adjoining landowners who do not host turbines on their properties but who may nevertheless be adversely impacted by their nearby location. I was pleased to see this form part of the coalition policy, as it has been a longstanding plank of the policy of The

Nationals. It is derived from successful practice overseas.

This aspect of the policy will not cause undue economic hardship for wind farm proposals. I believe that if these proposals are made more equitable, they will proceed with less community division, to the ultimate benefit of the communities that support them. I also believe that, where possible, a proportion of the revenue should be returned to the local community, and I will encourage the efforts of local wind farm operators in my area to continue to pursue this objective.

Much can be achieved in the west without needing to sacrifice environmental amenities or productive agricultural farmland. We must see an improvement to our farmgate prices so that more young farmers can be encouraged to stay on the land and raise their children in local communities.

I also have a passion for music and would like to affirm the growth of musical festivals in western Victoria in recent years. Having had the opportunity to perform at the Meredith and Falls festivals in past years, I can confirm that they are wonderful events, which, if carefully planned and organised, offer a great resource to farmers and foster community spirit. In a volunteer capacity I have assisted Advance Peshurst to organise its annual Mount Rouse music festival, and we look forward to celebrating our third festival in conjunction with Peshurst's 150th celebrations next year.

One does not arrive at a place like this on one's own. My journey here would not have occurred without the support of my wife, Janine. Her patience and support for me, as well as that from my three beautiful children, Lillian, Sam and Ned, is an inspiration and a motivation for putting myself up for public office to try to improve the lives of all Victorian children. It is a fundamental and self-evident truth that our children will be the leaders of tomorrow, and we must look after their welfare.

I also thank the members of my wider family — my many cousins, the O'Hallorans, Munros, Cockburns and Luyres; my in-laws, the Denholms and Wieses; the Moores and Damon O'Brien — for their continuing support. I thank the president of The Nationals, Robert Mitchell, vice-presidents Peter Schwarz and Craig Sobey, members and supporters of The Nationals, federal and state, who have assisted me over the years. I also pay special tribute to Senator-elect Bridget McKenzie. I acknowledge the contribution and assistance provided to me from the great western Victorian Nationals, including the Honourable Roger Hallam; Mr Delahunty, the Minister for Sport and

Recreation in the Assembly; Wendy McIvor; Brian and Luke O'Sullivan; and the Cameron family of Myamyn. In Ruby Cameron, the very active president of the Young Nationals, the future of our great party is in safe hands.

I also acknowledge the cooperation of the Liberal Party and its members who have supported me, as well as my colleagues from The Nationals in this chamber. I thank my branch and supporters over two election campaigns, although the limited time available to me prevents me from mentioning them all by name. I acknowledge the service and valuable contributions of my immediate predecessor, Peter Kavanagh. I also look forward to working with my colleagues from the Western Victoria Region — David Koch, Simon Ramsay, Jaala Pulford and Gayle Tierney — for the betterment of our great region.

I briefly acknowledge the support of the many members of the Victorian Bar who have acted, sometimes simultaneously, as friends, opponents, confidants and mentors. I would also like to thank my many instructing solicitors as well as my clerk, John Kelly, and the secretaries and all the staff at Foley's List who have provided such impeccable and professional service to me over many years. I must also acknowledge the contribution of the now recently retired Judge Frank Walsh to the administration of justice in this state over many years.

In concluding, I turn briefly to a document which I recently discovered in the parliamentary library. The document refers to a little-known underground movement that has not been released on any media Wikileaks. It does not as yet even warrant a Wikipedia webpage. It does, however, have a provocative title. It is called *West Victoria Separation Movement — the 1860s Call for Secession*. Very little is known about this movement. The call for secession was led by many prominent western Victorians of the time, including members of the Henty family. It began at a large public meeting in Portland on 10 May 1861, where it was resolved:

... that the centralising policy of Melbourne demands that we should endeavour to obtain the cooperation of the neighbouring townships in the Western District and part of the south-eastern district of South Australia, in having these formed into a separate colony.

I do not know if my great-great-grandfather was present, but I do know that he managed to play a prominent role in the breakaway movement of the Mount Rouse Roads Board from the Shire of Belfast some five months earlier. It is worth remembering that

this meeting took place in Portland one month after the US Civil War began.

Have no fear, President: so soon after swearing the oath of loyalty earlier today, I do not stand in my capacity as a newly elected member for Western Victoria region to preach secession as a cure for western Victoria's needs. The document is worthy of careful study for the cause of the grievances and the striking similarities to today's complaints and opportunities facing the west. The concluding hope of these colonial leaders was:

The day when we should have a local Parliament in West Victoria would be a day of new life and prosperity to Belfast and Warrnambool in particular, as well as to all other towns of the new colony. There would then be established between Melbourne and Adelaide another centre of population, another mart for colonial enterprise in the new colony, which would possess five serviceable ports, a healthy and salubrious climate, abundance of rich land and an ample revenue.

The years may have passed, but the song remains the same. The notion of a truly international gateway port and a centre of population in the Portland-Warrnambool area is not lost but in my view remains as a great opportunity to be achieved in the early part of this century.

The process begins with a whole-of-government commitment to achieve these ends not only on behalf and to the benefit of the wonderful electorate of Western Victoria Region but also to relieve infrastructure pressures for the benefit of Melbourne. In saying this, I genuinely believe for the reasons I have stated that more often than not what is good for western Victoria will also be good for this great state as a whole.

I intend to honour the trust given to me by the people of western Victoria and apply my wholehearted commitment to the task ahead. Thank you, President.

**Mr TARLAMIS** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — Friends, colleagues, supporters and comrades: let me begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we stand, the Kulin nation, and paying my respects to their elders past and present.

President, I congratulate you on your election to the high office of President of the Legislative Council.

I am incredibly honoured and privileged to be standing before you all today. It is indeed a humbling experience. It is a proud day for me, my family and my friends. I would also like to sincerely thank the voters of the South Eastern Metropolitan Region for entrusting me with the special responsibility of representing them.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the hard work and dedication displayed by the Assembly members in my region: Daniel Andrews, John Pandazopoulos, Hong Lim, Tim Holding, Jude Perera, Luke Donnellan and Judith Graley — as well as those who were unsuccessful at the election: Janice Munt, Alistair Harkness, Jenny Lindell and Maxine Morand. My election in South Eastern Metropolitan Region would not have been possible without their hard work. I also acknowledge the work of my Labor colleagues in South Eastern Metropolitan Region, Gavin Jennings and Adem Somyurek.

I represent an electorate that is a large cultural melting pot and is socially, culturally, linguistically and economically diverse, an electorate that covers approximately 545 square kilometres. It takes in the bayside suburbs from Frankston to Mordialloc, the multicultural diversity of the city of Greater Dandenong and the growth corridor encompassing Cranbourne, Narre Warren North and Narre Warren South. It takes in the gastronomic delights of a variety of cuisines in Springvale and Clayton, the leafy suburbs of Mount Waverley and everything in between. It is an electorate that covers 11 lower house districts and five local government areas — the cities of Greater Dandenong, Casey, Kingston, Monash and Frankston.

The city of Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse municipality in Victoria, with 56 per cent of its population being born overseas and 51 per cent of them coming from non-English-speaking countries. Among the 156 birthplaces recorded at the 2006 census are Greece, Italy, Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, India, China, Bosnia, Sudan and Afghanistan, to name a few.

The city of Casey boasts one of the youngest areas in Victoria, with 29 per cent of its residents aged under 18 and with only 11 per cent aged over 60. Casey also takes in the rapidly expanding growth corridor of Narre Warren South, Berwick, Cranbourne, Cranbourne North, Cranbourne South, Lynbrook and Lyndhurst, making this one of the most popular locations for new homes and young families.

On the other hand the city of Monash has a population that is shifting to an older profile, with the fastest increase in the 50 and over age group.

The city of Kingston is a geographically diverse part of the South Eastern Metropolitan Region. It contains bayside beaches, natural wetlands, market gardens and world-class golf courses and has a strong manufacturing base.

The city of Frankston is an area of about 131 square kilometres, stretching from the Ramsar-listed Seaford wetlands in the north to Mount Eliza in the south and the Western Port Highway in the east. The western boundary of the city is made up of about 10 kilometres of coastline along Port Phillip Bay.

I am sure that with this diversity will come many challenges, and equally as many will be the rewards of representing a unique electorate. Having been raised in the Noble Park and Keysborough area, I look forward to broadening my horizons and learning more about the people who choose to live in the South Eastern Metropolitan Region. I want to learn about their backgrounds, their communities, their ideas, their visions and their dreams.

I am committed to ensuring that not only the residents of the South Eastern Metropolitan Region but all Victorians have access to the rights and privileges of our society, irrespective of where they live or who they are. I want to ensure that Victoria remains a tolerant, diverse, welcoming and multicultural community. I will work hard to ensure that the new government delivers on all its commitments.

I am one of three children born to Sam and Glenda Tarlamis. I grew up in the Keysborough and Noble Park area and along with my older brother, Kon, and younger sister, Nola, grew up in a working-class family. My father was born in Greece, on the island of Lemnos. His family migrated to Uruguay when he was still very young and settled in Australia 15 years later. My mother was born in Australia. My mother and father taught me from an early age about responsibility, trust and the meaning of hard work.

I remember on weekends and school holidays getting up around 4.30 in the morning and going to work with my parents. I was afforded no special treatment, despite my father being the boss. My father had me work full days in the factory so I would understand firsthand just how hard it was, and so I learnt that if you want anything in life you need to work hard for it. I thank my parents for the opportunities they afforded me and the sacrifices they made for their children.

My brother, Kon, was first diagnosed with cancer when he was 15 and passed away when he was 17. He would have turned 37 this Boxing Day. He underwent two years of intense treatment, which included both chemo and radiation therapy. At no time during those two years can I remember him complaining, despite the pain and discomfort he was enduring. He always remained positive even when things were at their worst. Even after a period in intensive care, when it was

thought he would not make it, sure enough he bounced back a few days later and just shrugged it off as if nothing had happened.

I remember him trying to broach with my mother the issue of what he wanted to happen when he died, and understandably this was very challenging for both of them. What I remember most about Kon is his strength, his courage, his determination and his desire to make the situation easier for all those around him. Like all brothers, we fought a lot — and I mean a lot — and it felt like we only began to bond after he was diagnosed with cancer. That made it even harder when he passed away, but what he taught me during this difficult time through his actions has driven me in life and motivated me, and I am sure if he was alive today he would be as proud of me as I am of him.

My sister, Nola, and I are very close. She has always been there for me when I have needed her and she has tolerated how annoying an older brother can be. She is an extremely intelligent and capable individual who will go far in life, and I thank her for her support.

Growing up in a working-class family was not always easy. I remember not being able to afford a computer and the Keysborough Learning Centre lending me one for a period so I could complete my school work. I was so appreciative of this that I began doing some voluntary work at the centre, where I worked closely with Agnes Bonar, who was the dedicated and hardworking coordinator at the time. I remember after some time Agnes introducing me to the state member for Springvale, Eddie Micallef, during one of his regular visits to the centre and insisting that he give me the opportunity to do some voluntary work in the office — and I mean insisting. After 12 or so months of doing voluntary work for Eddie in his office in Springvale, Eddie employed me for a few days a week, and I ended up working for him for about three years. This was a fantastic opportunity and I could not believe I was actually getting paid to do work in the community, something that I had come to really enjoy.

Sue Hayes from the office took me under her wing and taught me the ropes. She is a wonderful woman who was always eager to help others and really knew her way around. She taught me everything there was to know about being a good electorate officer. I believe this also holds true for many of the tasks of being a good member. Working in Eddie's office with Sue opened many doors for me and exposed me to so many new things and, although I did not know it then, it was the catalyst that ultimately led me here.

It was through Eddie's office that I first met Wes Eggleston and got involved with the Springvale Benevolent Society. Before passing away in 2009, Wes had dedicated his life to helping others. He ran the Springvale Benevolent Society from his furniture store in Springvale and served as its secretary for 40 years. He would take referrals from other agencies and calls from individuals and families, and people dropped in to his store seeking assistance with food, blankets, bills they could not pay and even looking for somewhere to live. Wes was always eager to help and it was not uncommon for him to pop out to the nearby bakery and buy people lunch. He was often seen at the supermarket buying nappies for families who could not afford them. The benevolent society has a team of wonderful and hardworking volunteers with whom I have been proud to be associated. These individuals would visit individuals and families who were experiencing financial hardship and see firsthand what their needs were so that they could help them.

I remember on many of the visits I made finding myself just sitting there listening to people, because in addition to their material needs they also needed someone to open up to. I cannot express how rewarding it was to help people in this way. Their experiences taught me so much about myself and fuelled my desire to help those less fortunate. The community was weakened when Wes passed away, but the lasting memory he left behind will never be forgotten. I wish to thank all the members and volunteers of the Springvale Benevolent Society for all the work they do. They are a wonderful group of people.

I have many valuable memories of the time spent working in the local community. The strongest one that comes to mind involves the bringing together of a large and diverse group of people, and it took place in 2009. It was the Noble Park centenary. Auspiced by the Noble Park/Keysborough Community Drug Action Forum and funded by the City of Greater Dandenong, this was a culmination of 17 months work which concluded with two days of activities, including street parades, rides, historical displays, a commemorative DVD and cultural performances, which brought thousands of people to Noble Park. The valuable information and photographs from the historical display have been converted into a book and there is now an annual celebration to commemorate this occasion.

The community spirit that this brought out and the relationships that were formed through this event will last forever and have already led to other significant projects locally. To see so many people working together for their community is truly inspiring and

makes you believe that where there is a will, anything can be achieved.

For me, coming to this place is an extension of the work I have been doing for the community for many years and an opportunity to do much more. I would like to thank the Australian Labor Party, whose core values of justice, compassion, equality and socially progressive policies resonate with me, for the opportunity to represent it and for the support and opportunities that have been afforded to me during the last 17 years that I have been a member. While I am here I will strive to put those core values into action.

Throughout that time I have made friendships with people who remain a strong influence in my personal and political life today. People like Alan Griffin and Daniel Andrews have mentored me and taught me so much. I consider them to be close friends. Without their guidance, support and friendship I would not be here today.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Julie and Steven Kafrouni and Martin Hartnett, whom I consider to be family. They have provided me with a great deal of support over the many years I have known them and they have always been there when I have needed them.

I have been blessed to have made so many friends on my journey through life so far, all of whom have left a lasting impression. Some of them include Ray De Witt, Dale Wilson, Andrew Giles, Luke Hilakari, Aliriza Akal, Anne Eckstein, Susan Davies, Graeme Watson, Pat Gibson, John Paul, Barb Kuhl, Chris Reilly, Christina Dickinson, Phil Reed, the Downie family, Helen Constatas and the Dunkley team as well as the many branch members that I have spent a great deal of time with and who it would be impossible to name here tonight.

I have worked closely with many members of Parliament over the years, and I would like to acknowledge some of them here today: in this chamber, Gavin Jennings and Johan Scheffer; and in the Legislative Assembly, Daniel Andrews, Jude Perera, John Pandazopoulos, Martin Foley, Jill Hennessy, Richard Wynne and Lily D'Ambrosio.

As well as from the ALP I have received great support from the union movement, the values of which are so important to me. There are a number of unions in particular that I would like to acknowledge: the Rail, Tram and Bus Union, the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, the Australian Services Union, the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union, the

Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union, the Textile Clothing and Footwear Union of Australia, the Community and Public Sector Union and the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union — in particular, the electrical trades branch. I am currently and have been for many years a member of the CPSU. These relationships will grow during my time here.

It is my solemn hope and ambition that everything I do in this place reflects well upon my community, my party and me now and into the future.

To my parliamentary Labor colleagues I express my sincere thanks for making me feel so welcome, and I look forward to working with the community and all my colleagues in the chamber as we strive towards making Victoria the best place it can be.

**Debate interrupted.**

### DISTINGUISHED VISITOR

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I draw to the attention of the house that we have another former minister and member of this house in the gallery in Digby Crozier. I dare say Mr Crozier has more than a passing interest in the proceedings of the house this evening, because I now ask Ms Georgie Crozier to speak to the motion before the chair.

### GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

#### Address-in-reply

**Debate resumed.**

**Ms CROZIER** (Southern Metropolitan) — President, congratulations to both you and the Deputy President on your election to high office and indeed to all newly elected members of this house.

It is both a privilege and an honour to have been elected to the Victorian Parliament and to be representing the people of Southern Metropolitan Region. It is a unique region of Melbourne characterised by its rich diversity, culture and history. It encompasses the oldest Melbourne bayside suburbs, the renowned Chapel Street shopping precinct, the vibrant arts and cafe culture of St Kilda and some of Melbourne's most established suburbs which border the Yarra River — a river recognised internationally for its capacity to sustain native fauna and flora in the heart of a thriving city. It is home to the historic Como House, Kew Cottages, the Shrine of Remembrance and Victoria's Government House. It also takes in some of the most

popular beaches within Port Phillip Bay and the internationally acclaimed Royal Botanic Gardens.

Within its borders it has the world-class and iconic health and research facilities of the Alfred hospital and the Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute. It contains the Very Special Kids program, a program that supports families and children who have life-threatening illnesses, SIDS and Kids, and Vision Australia, just to name a few. It is a region that is well known for both its public and private education facilities and includes some of Melbourne's most prominent independent schools, reflecting as this does the educational priorities of parents in the region and the financial sacrifices that many of them make to provide the best opportunities for their children.

It is home to a diverse group of individuals and communities that make our city one of the most livable cities in the world. To maintain that status, however, individuals and communities should always have access to all levels of government. They should feel safe and respected. As individuals they should continue to have freedom of choice and the right to pursue economic independence with limited government intervention, especially if such intervention is likely to impact adversely on the living standards of the majority of citizens. Nevertheless within the inevitable constraints of competing budget priorities our governments should endeavour to maintain appropriate levels of service to all their citizens, including the provision of a realistic safety net for the most vulnerable. These are the philosophies laid down by the party's founder, Sir Robert Menzies — himself a former member of the Legislative Council — which still hold true today and in which I believe so strongly.

I have lived in the region for 28 years and feel very much a part of it, but before that I was also fortunate to have grown up in the heart of red gum country in far western Victoria. I attended the small local primary school at Wando Vale, then Casterton High School, before attending boarding school in Geelong for my final years of secondary school. The legacy of this background is both a realistic understanding of the challenges and rewards of living in the country and an abiding empathy with those for whom this is their chosen environment.

I am well aware of the hardships and personal trauma that harsh seasons and natural disasters can inflict on the farming community, but I also recognise and applaud the resilience of country people and their capacity to respond to emergencies on their own initiative. Whether the emergency be bushfire, floods or

accidents resulting in some form of injury, my own family are all too familiar with these events.

My career led me to Melbourne where my first job was for a small business in Commercial Road, Prahran, before commencing my general nurse training at the Alfred hospital in February 1983. My training commenced just a few weeks before Ash Wednesday. That day and its immediate aftermath is etched in my memory. Then, as it is today and as it was following the Bali bombings in 2002 and on Black Saturday 2009, the Alfred hospital was a major trauma centre, nationally recognised for the skills and abilities of its many devoted health professionals.

In this context it is pertinent to recall the involvement of our many voluntary organisations, both in their unfailing responses to emergency situations and in their roles of ongoing civic leadership. The longstanding tradition of voluntary public service is manifest in a range of community activities, whether it be a Nippers program on the coast, Meals on Wheels, the Scouts, doorknocking for the Red Shield Appeal, or being a member of the Country Fire Authority and the State Emergency Service, just to name a few, and inculcates a sense of belonging in local areas, thereby enhancing a strong community spirit. Such programs should continue to be promoted and encouraged by government to build a more respected, stronger and inclusive society.

As I pursued my earlier career within the public health sector, dealing and respecting people from all manner of backgrounds and circumstances, receiving immense satisfaction from the most basic of tasks, to taking on leadership roles and studying further at university, I was privileged to work with so many capable and professional people all pursuing the best of outcomes. One of the areas I studied and in which I have an ongoing interest is chronic disease. Our health system has been overburdened in recent times and there has been an alarming increase in chronic and complex health problems.

During my nursing career I specialised in the management of diabetes, and in particular gestational diabetes, a potential precursor to type 2 diabetes, and am acutely aware of the social consequences and ever-increasing costs of this insidious disease and its proven nexus to the lifestyles of many Western cultures, including our own.

The cost-efficient delivery of health services will obviously remain a prime responsibility of governments, both state and federal, but in contemplating the rising incidence of largely

preventable disease, I am firmly of the view that all of us have an ongoing obligation to do whatever we can to safeguard our own health.

As someone who has also worked in the corporate sector, and more recently in small business, I also understand the enormous pressures and challenges that small business operators face and the ever-increasing demands of maintaining a viable business — factors such as the burden of operational costs, rising utility prices and the many imposts that business bear on a day-to-day basis. With these demands, however, there is also the immense reward for achieving something of your own or in partnership. The experiences of my working life, whether as a nurse in my earlier career, an employee of a major corporate organisation, or as a small business operator, have all given me an understanding of what so many people experience every day right across Southern Metropolitan Region and indeed Victoria. These are experiences of which I hope never to lose sight.

The one experience that I have never forgotten, and which for me was the trigger to become more involved in our democratic process, was an event in the mid-1980s during the now infamous nurses strike of 1985. Although sympathetic to many of the issues faced by the nursing profession at the time, I chose not to take strike action. The personal intimidation directed at me as a consequence and the feeling of erosion of my right to stand up for what I believed in and the right to choose consolidated in my mind the ideologies and philosophies of liberalism and provided the catalyst for my active involvement in the Liberal Party.

As a member of this coalition government and as a representative of the people of Southern Metropolitan Region I am proud to be part of a government that represents all Victorians, provides leadership and makes decisions in the interests of all; one that is economically prudent and spends taxpayers money wisely; one that is consultative; one that aims to ensure the provision of adequate services to all; one that respects its citizens and embraces the diversity of our communities — a government that is accountable, takes responsibility for its actions or inaction and makes decisions without fear or favour.

State governments have an important role to play. They impact on the daily lives of the people they represent through responsible government and the delivery of services. To that effect I am reminded of the words of my father, who said in this chamber on 18 September 1973:

... that we as a nation are a federation; that long before Canberra was ever thought of, responsible government existed in Melbourne.

It is a great privilege — no doubt a common sentiment held by most members — to take my seat in the ornate ambience of this splendid chamber for the first time. I am reminded of its rich history and the contribution of many former members on both sides of the house whose endeavours in public life had a lasting impact on the affairs of this state and indeed the nation.

I have been fortunate to have known many great Liberals who have contributed to and have been recognised for improving the lives of many and who have been integral in the delivery of good and effective government. I have been fortunate to have been involved so closely with the people of Higgins and to have served on the electorate executive of the former federal Treasurer and member for Higgins, Peter Costello, where I learnt so much. I have been fortunate to have received wise counsel from Peter Costello, my family and my friends — Stephen Mitchell, David Webster, Victoria and Robert Lane, Frank Greenstein, David Ryan, Ross Liebmann, Senator Michael Ronaldson, Senator Helen Kroger and Senator Scott Ryan.

To my mentor, very good friend and now parliamentary colleague Andrea Coote, who has given me guidance and support on so many occasions and who encouraged me quite a number of years ago to pursue this course, I say thank you, Andrea. And I say thank you to you all.

My thanks also go to the many Liberal Party members within Southern Metropolitan Region who put their faith in my abilities, as well as members in other areas of the state who encouraged me to stand for this office. And of course to my family, who have given me so much love, support and encouragement, including my brothers, John and Will, and my sister, Annabel, their spouses Anna, Sara and Gus, I say thank you very much. To my mother, Jill, who gave all of us as children so much guidance and who ensured that we were self-sufficient and independent at a very young age, and my father, Digby, who together with Mum has given great wisdom, love and strength, I say thank you. I am so fortunate to have both of them here with me tonight.

The structure and support of the family — no matter an individual's circumstances — is the basis for any well-functioning society and should remain its cornerstone. I am so fortunate to have a wonderful family and to have them here with me today to share in this occasion.

For my family, and especially for me, it is an enormous honour and privilege to be following my father and entering this place — as he did some 37 years ago as the member for Western Province before then moving to the Legislative Assembly and becoming the member for Portland until his retirement in 1988. During his time in Parliament he served as a minister in both the Hamer and Thompson governments. I am so proud of his considerable achievements and the recognition by so many of his contribution to the people of western Victoria and the state of Victoria during those years. The Hamer and Thompson government years were renowned for the successful post-war economic development of Victoria and the expansion of international trade at a time when people and governments were also becoming increasingly aware of quality-of-life issues.

The world today is a different place to what it was then. However, it is also of some personal significance that tonight I can reflect on the Parliamentary career of my great-great-grandfather, the Honourable John Crozier, who was a member of the Legislative Council of the young colony of South Australia from 1867 to 1887. He also presided over very different times. But the fundamental values of good government — whether 140 years ago, 37 years ago or today — should remain, and as citizens and representatives of this great state we should seek to uphold them.

President, as I take my place in this chamber for the very first time, I look forward to the opportunities now open to me to contribute to this objective.

**Mr ONDARCHIE** (Northern Metropolitan) — President, I would like to begin by congratulating you on your election as President of the Legislative Council. Election to this house is indeed an honour and a privilege, but to enhance that through your election as the presiding officer is a wonderful recognition of the contribution you have made to Victorians over such a long time. I am sure you will uphold this office with the utmost dignity. Congratulations!

I am honoured to stand here tonight to deliver this inaugural speech to the Parliament of Victoria. I have long had a focus on our decision-making system. I have watched attentively as this chamber and the Legislative Assembly have debated, asked questions and delivered legislation. I now take pride in being one of only 128 Victorians elected to manage the affairs of our great state as a representative of over 5 million people.

It is a privilege to be elected as only the second Liberal MLC for Northern Metropolitan Region. This region has the diversity of Richmond, the CBD and the inner

suburbs, with the multiculturalism of Broadmeadows, Thomastown, Mill Park and Bundoora and the fast growing corridor of Yan Yean. I believe the Northern Metropolitan Region deserves a greater range of services and infrastructure; it has been taken for granted for far too long. There are no Liberal members in this region other than the Minister for Planning and me. This community has demanded improvements to public transport, road infrastructure, law and order, education and health services, and over the next four years I will commit myself to being a strong advocate for the delivery of those services and others to my constituency.

My parents arrived in Australia in 1950 from Ceylon, now known as Sri Lanka. My father arrived with a slightly different spelling of his name to the one I present with today. His name was Ondaatje. When he arrived in Anglo-Saxon 1950 he was told that with a name like that he would never get on, so he changed the spelling of his name to Ondarchie for the benefit of his children. He built a career around human resources and industrial relations, and he taught his family to care more about others than themselves. He was an honorary probation officer, and I remember him making a bicycle for the vicar's son one Christmas because the vicar could not afford to buy his son a bicycle. He was chair of a hospital board, he took people into his own home and he finished his career as a member of the Accident Compensation Tribunal.

My mother was a small businesswoman, who worked tirelessly to make a home for her three sons and raise funds simply to provide her children with an education. My parents taught me this: you make a living from what you get, but you make a life from what you give. My mum will be at home listening to this, if that is possible. My late father, whom I still miss to this day, would probably be proud of his boy right now. I am who I am due to their parenting, and my love remains with them always.

I subscribe to strong Christian family values. I believe in giving, not getting. I believe in the value of the individual, freedom and liberty. I believe in free association, free speech and free enterprise. I have a migrant background. I was taught to work hard to succeed and that nothing is given to you; you must earn it. The family unit is the centre of our society. It is the fabric on which society is built, and I stand up for families. I believe in the value of recreation — I am a hack cricketer and a broken-down footballer, so I believe in those values. I believe in teamwork. My father taught me, as I taught my children, to do the Ondarchie name proud.

As a brand-new member of this chamber I want to say openly and proudly that I am a Christian. My faith has always been something that has given me strength, security and guidance. It has been a powerful and positive force in my life. My place of worship, the Diamond Valley Baptist Church, is a spiritual place of love, care and compassion. It has a proud history of caring for its community. A fine example of this is the role my church has played and continues to play in support of Victorians affected by the Black Saturday bushfires.

Being Christian at this time of year should remind us all of the true meaning of Christmas: the birth of Jesus Christ. My Lord and Saviour, even in his dying moments, showed more care for others than he did for himself. I will bring that lesson and ethos to my parliamentary life. I believe in the sanctity and the value of marriage. I believe in contributing to society and helping others. Since I was a 16-year-old I have been involved in a range of community activities: as a leader at the Church of England Boys Society; a president of Apex, a kinder and schools; and being involved in sporting clubs, churches and regional economic development organisations; indeed I was the chair of the first City of Hume economic development organisation.

In business I believe in treating people well and with respect, in valuing their opinions and listening to them, and it will be the same in my parliamentary life. Work is about much more than earning money; it is about contributing to society and enabling a sense of value, purpose and belonging. We should all find time to volunteer and contribute to our community, and I will encourage all my constituents to play a role in their local area. I live by the golden rule of treating others as you would like to be treated. I live my life by it and teach it to my children, and that will guide me through my parliamentary life.

As a young man I was taught about the Liberal philosophy around the family dinner table. It is a philosophy that supports the concept that wealth is created in the private sector and that the health of the private sector determines the ultimate health of the economy. I strongly believe in our role of providing a framework for Victorians to live their lives in a safe, joyful, harmonious and prosperous environment. I am proud to serve this house as a member of the Liberal Party, a party I joined in 1997. I am proud to be part of this coalition, a team ready to lead Victoria onwards. I have never believed that only being one of the best is good enough for Victoria. Our state has a proud history, and I believe it can have a dynamic future as well. I am looking forward to being part of this exciting time.

A move into Parliament for me is not about status, power or recognition; it is about service and a great opportunity to serve my fellow Victorians. It is a chance to try to leave Victoria a little bit better than the way I found it. For me leadership is service. I have a passion for people and for making life better. I have a passion for growth, improvement and innovation. I have a passion for justice, mercy and compassion. In business I often talk about systematic accountability — that is, acting as though the owners are always present, and I will take that into my parliamentary life.

My role as executive director of the Royal Women's Hospital for part of my career taught me some things about women's health, things that men rarely speak about or even understand. I am committed to supporting Victorian women.

I live in the area where five young Victorians died in a car accident one night. I am committed to improving road safety, particularly for those overrepresented in accidents: young people. I believe in education for the future, developing skills for emerging opportunities and supporting those who nurture, teach, guide and advise the next generation. Unashamedly I feel this is a calling — to use our talents, passion and skills for the betterment of the community.

I come to this place from a business background in senior roles in corporate Australia and as the owner of a successful company. I have run my own company, raised my own capital and generated my own income. There are assumptions about business leaders moving into the Parliament. What do they bring? Do they have expectations that the process of government should happen more quickly? Are businesspeople just about professionalism and efficiency? Stereotypically do they care only about profit? Is every policy only about what margin it can generate? I think not.

The assumptions that business leaders, having a profit focus, are not well versed in the greater good — that there is little value in diversity, respect and kindness — are not true in my case. There are assumptions that business people are concerned about deficits. As a person who has raised my own capital on market, I can understand why people might assume that of business people. In my case many of these stereotypes are untrue. I remain steadfast in my commitment to investing in people and their environments.

I am proud to have developed my own business, RADNO, a company that prides itself on diversity, providing equal opportunity, managing risk and enabling growth. As a businessman coming into this place for the first time and recognising those

assumptions about my new role, I am not prepared to give up my experience and refined skills in due diligence and understanding opportunity costs or my experience in infrastructure planning and financing.

I have spent the last eight years of my career supporting the aspirations and wellbeing of my staff. Over 80 per cent of RADNO's business is with Victorians. We have focused on growing Victorian businesses and providing opportunities for Victorians to be employed and grow their skills. I trust that my understanding of capital markets, constructing financial options, optimising decisions around hurdle rates and discount rates, debt management, delivering economic value and job creation, and guiding longer-term financial management will add value to this place.

My range of clients' activities also include significant advisory roles in the not-for-profit sector. Through this activity I understand the value of a four-year-old not being able to hear. I understand the benefits of providing a facility for young men in inner Melbourne who have nowhere else to go. I understand the support mechanisms required to support those assisting asylum seekers, and I am very clear about the need to provide a range of support services to parents. To me, it is about growth — personal growth, societal growth, learning, skills, social growth, understanding of the nation and embracing different cultures. Diversity is good. I seek to share my views, to observe and to listen. I have always believed politicians should talk less and listen more. It is about appreciating that no one person has the mortgage on good ideas.

The challenge ahead for me, and the importance of my appointment, is my concern — my drive — to ensure that this place is not short-sighted; that we do not plan for 12 months, 5 years or even 20 years; that we think about the whole of life; that we make decisions for Victorians who are not even born yet; and that we do the right thing, not just the most popular thing. I guess I will face opposition in this house about my convictions, but it is my job as an elected representative to have the courage of those convictions. I am going to be a true representative of my constituents. I am going to look beyond the here and now. I am aware that my actions will have consequences for eternity and that generations will be affected by decisions we make in this house. I know I want to leave a positive legacy, so that some of the history books will say favourable things about this Parliament and so that we can leave it a little bit better than we found it.

I would like to draw to the end of my inaugural speech by expressing my deep thanks to the people of Northern Metropolitan Region. The size of this region presents

some challenges. However, I am blessed to be able to represent an area of Melbourne where I was born and married, and where I raise my family, educate my children and live. Further, I am honoured to be only the second member of the Liberal Party to serve Northern Metropolitan Region. To be elected to this chamber is a celebration of our democracy — a democracy that many Australians have fought and died to preserve. We must continue to uphold this privilege and treat this place with the respect and dignity it affords us.

My message to my new constituents is to thank them for the chance to be one of their local representatives. I thank my friends, some of whom are here tonight, for their help, their guidance, their counsel and, of course, their prayers. Whilst I cannot acknowledge all who supported me, I would particularly like to mention the Minister for Planning, Mr Guy; the Minister for Health, David Davis; and a member for Western Metropolitan Region, Mr Finn, for their continuing encouragement and friendship. I also thank the members for Warrandyte, Doncaster and Bayswater in the Assembly and, of course, the Premier for his wonderful support and advice.

I also acknowledge the tireless work done by all members of the Liberal campaign team for Northern Metropolitan Region, led by Stuart McCraith, Daniel Parsons and Jacky Douglas, for their hard work and passion in getting me here. Further, I pass on my thanks to the 11 lower house candidates. Without them I would not be here. My membership of the Liberal Party has allowed me to develop many lifelong friends, but in particular I wish to acknowledge the friendship, advice and guidance of Peter McWilliam — a man who has steadfastly remained a continual source of encouragement for my candidacy.

My colleagues — or rather I should say my friends — at RADNO have been unabashed in their encouragement, guidance, support and coaching. I am indebted to them as they have both shared and nurtured this journey. Ondarch says thanks.

I, like many people elected to public office, have been able to progress this calling with the wonderful support of my family. My children, Matthew, Steven and Megan, have been tireless in their love, support and patience for their dad. Our other two children, Marianne and Luke, whilst not of blood, have remained constant rocks and providers of love and inspiration for the guy they treat as dad. I proudly declare my thanks and love to all my five children.

Finally, but most importantly, I would like to acknowledge and thank my wife of 26 years, Gina. We

have been a team for almost 30 years and in that time she has dedicated her life to the betterment of others. She has the most pastoral heart of anyone I have ever met, and I draw my inspiration from her. Gina has been there as my counsellor, coach, advocate and, dare I say, honest critic. I love her very much and look forward to our lifelong journey, with God's help.

In closing, President, and in demonstrating my commitment to this great state that I love and value, I quote from Edward Everett Hale:

I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do. What I can do, I should do. And what I should do, by the grace of God, I will do.

I thank the house for its indulgence.

**Mr RAMSAY** (Western Victoria) — President, I congratulate you on reaching the high office of President in this 57th Parliament. As I stand to speak for the first time in this chamber today I am more than ever conscious of the responsibility and honour that the people of western Victoria have bestowed on me, a responsibility and honour which I take very seriously. All my life I have worked in rural and regional communities with and for country people. I am proud to say that my family history is a story of many men and women who have played an important leadership role in their local communities. The church, politics, agriculture and the towns and communities of western Victoria have all been symbols of the life travels of my family.

My great-great-grandfather, the Reverend Andrew Ramsay, arrived from Scotland on 4 January 1847, settling in Melbourne. In 1850, with three other ministers, he formed the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church of Victoria. He was the first minister at Port Phillip of the United Succession and helped build St Enoch's Church in Collins Street.

While the church played an important role in the values of my family, it was my great-grandfather, Robert Ramsay, who forged a career in politics. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly of the Victorian Parliament in 1870. Over a long parliamentary career he served as Postmaster-General and Minister for Education. For a short time in 1880 he also served as Chief Secretary. History tells us that in this role one of his most celebrated achievements was dispatching resources to capture the Kelly bushranger gang.

My grandfather, Major Robert Ramsay, served in World War II before becoming active in local government, most notably as mayor of Colac Shire over

successive terms. He also served on the Graziers Federal Council of Australia from 1939 to 1942 and played an important role with Sir William Gunn in shaping the wool industry at that time.

Here we have a mixture of three generations involved in religion, politics and agripolitics, and a love of the land that was to shape my life.

My father, Andrew Ramsay, tragically lost his life to cancer at a young age. I know how proud he would have been to see me standing here today, advocating the values that have been passed down through the generations — the importance of hard work, respect, fairness and equality of opportunity — all of this mixed with the principles of liberalism and a passion for the land and its people.

Throughout my life I have been encouraged to speak out for what I believe in — that so-called political correctness should not sway the passion of one's convictions. I am passionate about speaking out for the people of western Victoria. As a third generation farmer from Birregurra, I learned from a young age the importance of standing up for my community, whether it be in the local kindergarten, school, the Country Fire Authority, the farming community or small business. That work continued on behalf of many rural communities throughout Victoria when I served for four years as president of the Victorian Farmers Federation.

There were many challenges through that time, supporting communities through droughts, floods and bushfires, advocating for investment in research and development, fighting for tax reforms, improving sea freight lanes to improve export competitiveness, to name but a few. I also fought for sensible environmental policies which aimed to strike the right balance in the preservation of our environment.

The region of Western Victoria is rich and diverse. It spans all the way from the western suburbs of Melbourne to the South Australian border. It includes large regional cities like Geelong, Ballarat and Warrnambool, and many smaller cities and towns like Colac, Ararat and Mortlake, to name but a few. Western Victoria comprises the iconic Great Ocean Road coastline, rich farmlands and magnificent national parks.

Agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and small business underpin the economic success of this region, and so too innovation, technology and education services. It is also one of the country's most important

food-producing regions. Much of our produce — dairy, wool, beef and wheat — is exported around the world.

Whether people live in large cities or small towns like the one I grew up in, job security, health, education, communications, public transport, better roads and safety are vital. Over the past 11 years critical services in regional Victoria have suffered, coupled with a failure to make proper investment in infrastructure — all of this while encouraging population growth at a rate that is now causing real concern. Regional Victoria was not only crying out for big improvements in basic services, it was looking for a government that could provide a vision — a vision that would enrich our regional communities with an improved sense of worth, security and hope.

It is clear that in 2010 the people of Victoria wanted change. But with a change of government comes great responsibility. It is my solid commitment to fight for all country communities throughout western Victoria.

Decentralisation of services is absolutely critical. Business and industry must have the appropriate motivation to move country communities and to provide jobs and opportunities. Just as important is proper planning to ensure that we can provide affordable housing, safeguard our environment and protect our food-producing regions.

I make the commitment to the Parliament today that I will work tirelessly for the people whom I represent and, in doing so, with no parliamentary representative from the coalition, Ballarat will become a particular focus of mine.

I take this opportunity to thank those who have been instrumental in my election as a member of Parliament. Thank you to the many hardworking members of the Liberal Party for their support and belief in me. I thank in particular the Premier, Ted Baillieu, the Liberal Party president, David Kemp, and the state director, Tony Nutt.

I would also like to acknowledge my predecessor, John Vogels. I wanted to call him honourable, but he did not want me to; however, I will, because I find him a very honourable person. John was widely respected for his work in representing the region. He had a great ability to communicate with all sections of the community; he was a willing listener and a strong advocate for western Victoria. John's political life has been filled with twists and turns: two seats he held were abolished, and he retired just prior to the coalition being returned to power. John says he has no regrets and to me that is the measure of a man who says it how it is.

I also look forward to working alongside the other members of the coalition team in Western Victoria Region — David Koch and David O'Brien — and working constructively and respectfully with all members of this house to deliver better government and improved services. While many people have helped me on my political journey, I would especially like to thank the Honourable Dick de Fegely, the Honourable Ian Smith, David Harris and Andrew Gubbins.

To my immediate family — my mother, Gillian, who has been a guiding light through all of my life; my stepfather, Geoff; my brother, Michael; my sister, Serena; and my wonderful children, Nicola, Tiffany and Andrew — thank you. My father remains my great inspiration. Thank you to my partner Sarah, who has been a rock of Gibraltar during my campaign and a wise counsel during the good times and the tough times.

I thank members of this house for allowing me to express my pride and gratitude today. It is with a great sense of duty and honour that I embark on my service to the Victorian Parliament and to the people of Western Victoria Region.

**Debate adjourned on motion of Mr O'DONOHUE (Eastern Victoria).**

**Debate adjourned until next day.**

## CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! I take this opportunity to convey best wishes to all members for the Christmas and new year period. In the past we have had extensive felicitations in the house, but I am sure that on this day I can make remarks on behalf of all members and convey particularly to some of the staff of the Parliament our best wishes for the Christmas period.

We acknowledge the department heads: Wayne Tunnecliffe, the Clerk of the Legislative Council; Ray Purdey, the Clerk of the Parliaments and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; and Peter Lochert, Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services. I also thank the acting director of information services, Joanne Truman; the director of precinct and property management, Hilton Barr; and the catering manager, Luke Jordan.

In moving to the attendants, who are perhaps better known to members of this house, we thank and convey the best wishes for the season to all the attendants who served this Parliament well in the previous parliamentary term. We look forward to a long and

happy relationship with each of them as attendants to this house going forward.

The high regard in which many of the staff in this Parliament are held was typified by the number of people who attended Russel Bowman's funeral. He was obviously a special person, but I think there was also a great deal of respect demonstrated by all members for those people who serve this Parliament and the people of Victoria. Each member of staff should take that going forward to Christmas and into the new year. Their work is very much valued in this place, and we wish them and their families all the best for Christmas.

To all members, I again extend best wishes to each of you and your families and also to your electorate officers who support you in your endeavours as representatives of the people of Victoria.

When I go to schools just before school holidays I always say to the kids, 'I want to see you all back without plaster on your legs or arms and without bandages on your heads', and I guess I would convey the same message to each of you. I hope you all stay safe and sound over the Christmas period and that we see you back next year on a date that we are about to learn from the Minister for Higher Education and Skills.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

### Adjournment

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I move:

That the Council, at its rising, adjourn until Tuesday, 8 February 2011.

**Motion agreed to.**

## ADJOURNMENT

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — I move:

That the house do now adjourn.

### Water: government election commitments

**Mr LENDERS** (Southern Metropolitan) — The matter I raise is for the attention of the Minister for Water. It relates to the commitment the minister made during the election campaign that if elected a Baillieu government if elected would establish a ministerial advisory council for living Victoria which would report

within the first 100 days of a Baillieu government on a living Victoria road map that would cover the planning, regulation, pricing, legislative change and government management of water and sustainability issues.

The reason I raise this matter for the attention of the Minister for Water is that virtually within days of being elected to government the Minister for Water sought to wriggle out of the sound and solemn commitment given at the election to have this plan in place within 100 days, because he wants more time.

If the minister is out there telling the entire community that he has the solutions to fix the problems and that he is seeking a comprehensive plan, and then he says, 'I need to do some work on it to get it there', it raises questions for the people of Victoria as to how comprehensive his plan is and how serious his commitment is to fixing the problems. He may be talking of the importance of a comprehensive plan, but he is making all these ad hoc decisions in the meantime. An example is the decision to increase the cost of water for almost 80 per cent of Victorians by closing the north-south pipeline. Decisions on the cost of living for Victorians —

**Mr Drum** interjected.

**Mr LENDERS** — Mr Drum laughs, but we need some answers in this comprehensive plan. For instance, is Melbourne Water going to be asked to pay the \$300 million towards the building of the north-south pipeline and towards the food bowl irrigation projects without any recompense? From a government that got elected saying that the cost of living was a key issue we have an ad hoc decision, away from a 100-day plan, that will up the cost of living for almost 80 per cent of Victorians. That is by this single action, which is being made away from the plan.

The action that I seek from the Minister for Water, although actions are no longer required to be sought in adjournment matters under the standing orders, is for him to stick to his word, honour the commitment and put the 100-day plan out within 100 days.

### **Public holidays: Christmas Day**

**Ms PENNICUIK** (Southern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, Mr Dalla-Riva, and it concerns the 2010 Christmas Day public holiday. Under section 6 of the Public Holidays Act 1993 the Monday after Christmas Day is proclaimed Christmas Day if 25 December is a Saturday. This means that workers rostered to work on the Monday public holiday will be

paid full public holiday penalty rates, while workers rostered to work on the actual day, which this year is Saturday, are not entitled to public holiday penalty rates.

This provision of the act is unfair and discriminatory to those shiftworkers who are rostered to work on 25 December, which is the day that most families will be getting together for Christmas celebrations, not the Monday. These workers will be absent from those family celebrations but will receive no compensation in the form of penalty rates. This situation is likely to have the greatest effect on essential services workers, who have little or no option to take the day off to be with family, and staff of businesses that choose to open on 25 December because it is worth their while to do so and thus should pay public holiday penalty rates to their staff.

Victoria and South Australia are the only states to not have gazetted Saturday, 25 December, as a public holiday in 2010, meaning Victorian workers will be worse off than their counterparts in other states of Australia. Under sections 7 and 8 of the Public Holidays Act 1993 the minister can by notice in the *Government Gazette* appoint one or more days as public holidays or substitute public holidays in a particular year. My request to the minister is that before the end of this week — that is, before 24 December 2010 — he act to gazette Saturday, 25 December, as a public holiday for 2010 in addition to Monday, 27 December.

I have been advised that perhaps I have addressed this matter to the wrong minister, and it perhaps should be addressed to the Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business, so I hope Mr Hall can assist me in that matter.

### **Schools: Officer**

**Mr O'DONOHUE** (Eastern Victoria) — I raise a matter this evening for the attention of the Minister for Education, Mr Dixon, and it relates to two commitments the coalition made at the recent state election. The first is to build a new secondary college for Officer during this term of government and the second is to build a new special school for the people of the Casey Cardinia region, again in the Officer precinct.

I am pleased to congratulate the minister for his leadership in this area, because for too long, despite the population growth in this growth corridor, the education investment has not kept pace with that growth. In particular it is a tragedy that many of those with special needs spend up to 2 hours a day each way

travelling from towns such as Pakenham and Nar Nar Goon to special schools in metropolitan Melbourne because of the lack of facilities in the growth corridor.

For the government to be able to develop these new facilities it is important that engagement with stakeholders and proper planning takes place. As a first step in that process I ask the minister to convene a meeting as early as possible with the Cardinia Shire Council, local members of Parliament and other stakeholders so that detailed planning on these two exciting and important local projects can commence.

### **Planning: community consultation**

**Mr TEE** (Eastern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Planning, and it is in the context of the commitment he made today in question time to consult with local communities about planning decisions, a sentiment that was echoed in the Governor's address today. It is with this background that I raise his decision, which was reported in the *Age*, that Richmond station, E-gate and Fishermans Bend will be targets for massive population growth and housing developments. This decision has been made in the context of estimates that some 300 000 new houses that need to be built in Melbourne, not including those that are needed in our growth corridors.

My questions to the minister are: why did he not consult with these communities; and why, before he made his decision, did he not consult about the impact the housing developments would have on surrounding communities? I would have thought that consultation and investigation in relation to the impact of traffic, congestion, public transport, schools, amenities and atmosphere on these communities and surrounding communities would be essential. I ask the minister to walk the talk and talk to people who will be affected by his decisions and in future to consult with and engage with communities before making decisions that can have a dramatic impact on their way of life. Without proper preparation, proper infrastructure and a proper audit of what is needed for these communities, they will fail.

### **Autism: western suburbs schools**

**Mr FINN** (Western Metropolitan) — Before I raise my matter tonight I congratulate you, President, on your election to the position of President. I have absolutely no doubt you will be a magnificent holder of that position for however long you may wish to hold it. I wish members a happy Christmas, all the best for the new year and a safe trip if any members are taking a trip over the Christmas period.

I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Education. I am delighted to see that Mr Hall is in the chamber and is the minister on duty, as he is obviously somebody who has a great deal of interest in the education portfolio.

The house would probably be aware that I have raised on a number of occasions throughout the course of this year the fact that a P-12 autism-specific school in the western suburbs was a particularly hot issue in the months leading up to the election. It came to symbolise the neglect of the west by the former Labor government. I have absolutely no doubt it played a significant role in the strong vote against Labor that we saw in many parts of the western suburbs on 27 November.

The coalition government has committed to the establishment of a P-12 school for children with autism in the western suburbs. That is something that has given a great deal of joy and, I have to say, a great deal of relief to a good many parents right throughout the western suburbs, because up until this point — and it is extraordinary — children with autism have been able to access secondary education in the eastern suburbs, the northern suburbs and the southern suburbs, but there has been nothing in the western suburbs. That is just appalling; it is intolerable. I am delighted to say it is something that is about to come to an end. Having spoken to the Minister for Education, Martin Dixon, I know he has reaffirmed the coalition's commitment to education for all children with autism in the western suburbs.

I ask the minister to take into consideration what we need to get this thing up and running. I believe a consultation process with parents and the school community is necessary very early in the new year. This is something that cannot wait. I hope that throughout the course of next year we can get this school up and running, and those children will benefit.

### **Floods: government assistance**

**Ms BROAD** (Northern Victoria) — May I also join in congratulating you, President, on your new position.

The matter I wish to raise on the adjournment debate this evening is for the attention of the Assistant Treasurer, Mr Gordon Rich-Phillips, who is the minister representing the Treasurer. The matter I wish to raise for his attention concerns assistance for farmers, their families and communities, particularly in the north-west area of Northern Victoria Region, which is the region I represent in this place. It is the case that due to very heavy rainfall after many years of drought there

are many farmers who are now in a position where they are not able to harvest their crops, where their crops are variously under water or unable to be harvested because of the conditions or where the crop is rain affected and therefore greatly devalued.

The combination of all these factors means there are many families who are, as a result, under very great pressure in the lead-up to Christmas. I have received calls from health workers in the north-west region of Victoria who are most concerned about the circumstances that some families are facing and what may happen to them as a consequence.

The matter which I am specifically raising for the attention of Mr Rich-Phillips is what assistance the new government is going to make available to these families and communities who are facing the prospect of losing everything right now and who are under very great pressures as a result. I do not think I can put it any more highly than that or stress more strongly the urgency of it being made clear to these families and communities what help is available to them. As we know, in rural communities it is often the case that families and communities under pressure do not seek out assistance that may be available to them, so I would urge Mr Rich-Phillips as a matter of urgency to attend to the task of making it clear to these families and communities what practical assistance the government is going to provide.

### **Eaglehawk, Comet Hill and Bendigo North primary schools: merger**

**Mr DRUM** (Northern Victoria) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Education, Martin Dixon, and deals with the Eaglehawk Primary School in Bendigo, one of three schools that under the previous government was mooted to be merged into one super-school along with Comet Hill Primary School and Bendigo North Primary School.

The local member for Bendigo East, Jacinta Allan, was a proponent of this merger or closure, whatever it be called, and the closure of a school in the Bendigo suburb of Eaglehawk. It was not until public support for a stand-alone option became so great and the pressure from the public so strong that Jacinta Allan was forced to retreat from her previous stance, back down and come up with the compromise that Eaglehawk Primary School would stay open for another year and operate in a separate precinct as part of the super-school at Comet Hill.

To this end the coalition has come to the party and promised \$2 million to upgrade Eaglehawk Primary

School to enable it to stand alone so that all residents of Eaglehawk will have confidence that Eaglehawk primary is suitable and parents will start enrolling their children there.

However, because there has been so much uncertainty about the future of Eaglehawk Primary School there is currently a need for the residents of Eaglehawk to be totally reassured that their school will be operating as a stand-alone primary school with its own board, committee and principal and that there will be a suitable and sustainable future for generations of children from families in Eaglehawk.

I ask the minister if he can assist by going back to the Bendigo region. He has been there twice since the election, but it is very important that the minister continue to have a presence in Eaglehawk and Bendigo to ensure that the people of Eaglehawk have the necessary confidence to enrol their children at that school in the future.

### **Geelong Hospital: funding**

**Ms TIERNEY** (Western Victoria) — President, I also offer my congratulations to you on your election earlier today.

My adjournment matter this evening is directed to the Minister for Health, David Davis, and it relates to the level of funding for the expansion of the Geelong Hospital. I quote from the *Geelong Advertiser* editorial of 9 December 2010, which states:

... Geelong discovered on Tuesday that a pledge of \$165 million for Geelong Hospital from the Liberals came with a disappointing qualification attached that only \$50 million would be available in its first term in office.

I seek clarification from the minister as to the reasons why this detail was not provided to the people of Geelong before the election, and I request that the minister provide an explanation as to why only \$50 million will now be provided when only weeks ago the coalition committed \$165 million towards Geelong health services.

I raise this, as I know it can be done. The previous state government went to the 2006 election with an election commitment of over \$80 million to redevelop the Warrnambool hospital. All the money that was promised was delivered, and it has been through that commitment that the Warrnambool hospital redevelopment is now very close to completion.

I want to know when this government will provide assurance and consistency to the people of Geelong that the election promise made only weeks ago will be

honoured and that the full amount for the 64-bed, dual-ward upgrade will be forthcoming, as well as the moneys for the second hospital in Geelong, within this term of government. I request that the minister take urgent and immediate action to remedy this matter as soon as possible.

### **Schools: city of Maroondah**

**Mr LEANE** (Eastern Metropolitan) — My adjournment matter is for Mr Hall in his role as Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession. I seek from the minister that he secure funding from his government for the Maroondah schools regeneration project, which is very important to a lot of teachers, particularly in the outer east. It is something that was committed to by the previous education minister, the member for Melbourne in the Assembly, Bronwyn Pike, before the election.

The Maroondah schools regeneration project consists of the major redevelopment of the existing Croydon Community School, which will support an alternative environment specifically catering for students with learning disabilities and those who are considered at risk; a major redevelopment of the existing Heathmont College, replacing ageing infrastructure with modern learning facilities; and a major redevelopment and co-location of the existing Maroondah Secondary College and Croydon Secondary College. The project will include the rollout of an environmental education program and shared community sports facilities.

The schools regeneration project will also include major redevelopment and co-location of the existing Parkwood Secondary College and Norwood Secondary College. This project will have a community and sustainability focus and will specialise in sports. Major redevelopment of the existing Ringwood Secondary College will have a focus on the community and the performing arts.

The funding for this project was also called for by my fellow member for Eastern Metropolitan Region in this chamber, Mr Atkinson, earlier this year, and I concur with his sentiments at the time that there has been more than enough consultation with parents and stakeholders about this project and it is time it was funded.

The member for Kilsyth in the Assembly, who is now the cabinet secretary, recently made a number of statements, which were printed in local papers, saying that this is a great project that needs to be delivered within a reasonable time. He stated — and I take it he did not mean the royal ‘we’ but meant the coalition — ‘We’ had been very supportive of the project and there

was nothing to indicate that ‘we’ would not be supportive of this project if ‘we’ were elected. One thing I have to say that the member for Kilsyth managed to conveniently miss is that when the coalition finally released its costing through the Treasurer’s accountant the funding for the Maroondah regeneration project was not there. I call once again on the Minister for Higher Education and Skills to make it clear to the community of Maroondah that this very important project will be funded.

### **Ambulance services: response times**

**Mr SCHEFFER** (Eastern Victoria) — Could I add my voice to those who have offered their congratulations to you, President, on your new position.

I have a matter for the attention of the Minister for Health, David Davis, and it relates to ambulance response times. In October the Auditor-General released a report entitled *Audit Summary of Access to Ambulance Services*. At the time Ambulance Victoria stated that the report was fair and was an accurate assessment of the state’s ambulance services. Ambulance Victoria acknowledged that there had in fact been an increase in emergency response times in recent years and welcomed the hundreds of additional paramedics announced by the Brumby government. Many of those were directed to regional Victoria.

At the time Ambulance Victoria also welcomed new innovations that would improve patient flow at hospitals and the amalgamation of the state’s ambulance services into one organisation, which occurred in July 2008 and had already led to an improved planning capability.

At the time the Auditor-General’s report was tabled the Minister for Health, in his capacity as the then opposition health spokesperson in this chamber, drew attention to the increase in patient transfer times that the Auditor-General had identified and accused the then government of putting patients’ lives at risk. The minister described the situation as a crisis for Ambulance Victoria and said that the mismanagement of Victoria’s ambulances was directly leading to loss of life. In fact I recall that earlier this year the coalition published a very long list of examples that it said were evidence of the Brumby government’s mismanagement and incompetence that had resulted in some patient deaths. Four of those related to incidents that occurred in Eastern Victoria Region.

The coalition indicated that if it got into government it would meet waiting time benchmarks and that that would save lives. As all members now know, the

coalition promised a 13 per cent increase in operational ambulance officer numbers across Victoria. That would be 340 in total — 310 new paramedics and some transport officers — at a value of \$151 million. It also promised that the Ambulance Victoria service would be rebuilt.

In the context of all that, I ask the government now if it is going to fix the problems. I ask the minister to release details of the rollout of those additional 340 staff, as was promised. When will these additional staff be operational? Finally, will the minister also provide the ambulance waiting time benchmarks that the government will be held to, to ensure that it will fix the problems that it so forcefully identified so that we can solve this so-called crisis that the minister alluded to and the unacceptably long response times, as he said? I would very much appreciate a response from the minister along those lines.

### **Rail: Wendouree**

**Ms PULFORD** (Western Victoria) — This evening I raise a matter for the attention of the new Minister for Public Transport. It relates to the Liberal Party commitment in the lead-up to the election that every train service to Ballarat will terminate at Wendouree. Wendouree station was opened in 2009, and currently seven trains depart from Wendouree on weekdays and two on both Saturdays and Sundays. Five trains return to Ballarat from Melbourne each weekday, and two return on Saturdays and Sundays. The trains that run to Ararat from Ballarat, and indeed from Melbourne, pass through Wendouree station.

Wendouree station was designed as a commuter station, to alleviate parking issues at Ballarat station and to provide a new access point for public transport in Ballarat's western growth corridor. It has a large car park and connecting bus services. As many colleagues may have experienced in the lovely spring month of November, it is a fine place to see a sunrise while handing out election leaflets as well. It was never envisaged that this station would replace Ballarat station as the primary train station.

Demand for regional rail services has grown steadily since the previous Labor government delivered a large rebuilding of capacity on regional rail. This was much needed after the Liberal Party's previous performance when last in government: closing six rail lines, privatising the rail freight network and closing 28 train stations. I welcome the government's epiphany on regional rail in Wendouree and its intention to build on Labor's work of returning services to Ararat,

Bairnsdale, Maryborough and Creswick with a great many more services and carriages.

I bring to the attention of the Minister for Public Transport some local information about the way this might work. The rail line splits Ballarat down the middle in many respects. The line between Ballarat and Wendouree stations has seven rail crossings, with three on the major roads of Gillies Street, Burnbank Street and Creswick Road, and four on the busy city streets of Forest Street, Doveton Street, Lydiard Street and Macarthur Street — which I can attest is a great place to live, work and raise a family.

I am concerned that the Liberal Party policy is funded to the tune of \$1.6 million in recurrent funding but zero in capital expenses. This is woefully inadequate, and I urge the minister to consider funding this properly.

### **Teachers: remuneration**

**Mr ELASMAR** (Northern Metropolitan) — President, I also would like to congratulate you on your appointment.

I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Higher Education and Skills, who is responsible for the teaching profession, about the statement made by the Premier during the recent general election regarding teachers remuneration in Victoria. I am not sure if this is the first of many repudiations of commitments given to the Victorian people during the election campaign. Having read articles in the national daily newspapers last week that the new government is already renegeing on this important promise to the teachers of Victoria, can the minister confirm that the Baillieu state government has moved away from its election promise that Victorian teachers will be the highest paid teachers in Australia.

I call upon the minister to fully support our teachers receiving appropriate salary packages.

### **Racing: Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund**

**Hon M. P. PAKULA** (Western Metropolitan) — President, you have always been a very humble man, and I do not expect this will cause you to get an inflated ego: I also want to congratulate you on your elevation to the high office; it is very well deserved.

The matter I raise tonight is for the Minister for Racing. It relates to the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund. It is an \$86 million fund that was set up by the previous government, with a \$45 million contribution by the government and a \$41 million contribution by the racing industry. It is a fund that allows the racing

industry to be the master of its own destiny. It is a fund that gives those in the three codes the ability to assess what they need in order to upgrade racetracks so that they are viable by investing in 21st century infrastructure. It provides the funds to make all that a reality.

The new government has formed its own view about the priorities for regional racing infrastructure. It has committed to returning harness racing to Boort, Gunbower, Ouyen, St Arnaud, Wedderburn and Wangaratta, and greyhound racing to Wangaratta as well. Give or take a bit, some \$40 million remains in the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund. Those in the three racing codes have their own views and priorities about how that money should be spent. That is how the fund was set up — to allow those in the codes to set their own priorities for the future of racing in country Victoria. I believe the priorities of those in the three codes to be quite different from the priorities espoused by the new minister and by the government in its election commitments.

I understand that members no longer need to seek an action by a minister, but I seek an action. It is that the Minister for Racing write to me and confirm that the government will not pilfer or appropriate any of the funds from the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund — which was set up for the codes to fund their own commitments — to fund the government's separate election commitments, and that the government will fund those commitments from separate moneys and not appropriate any of the funds in the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund that has been created specifically for the industry to be the master of its own destiny.

### Planning: Dandenong development

**Mr SOMYUREK** (South Eastern Metropolitan) — I raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Planning, Mr Matthew Guy. From the perspective of my electorate, one of the greatest achievements of the Bracks-Brumby government in the 11 years or so that it occupied power was the transformation of Dandenong.

In the late 1990s Dandenong, which has traditionally been a manufacturing hub, became the victim of national economic restructuring due to the forces of globalisation. By the time the Bracks government took office in 1999 drugs and prostitution were common commodities on the streets of the centre of Dandenong, in Lonsdale Street in particular. In fact in the area of the office where I worked in Lonsdale Street, prostitution, drugs and syringes were commonplace.

The Bracks-Brumby government's targeted programs did a great deal to reverse this trend. In particular the Brumby government's \$290 million investment commitment to revitalising central Dandenong has done much to bring life and vitality back to the city centre. This initiative has already attracted investment. It is anticipated it will attract \$1 billion. It has attracted many millions of dollars but not quite \$1 billion yet; I am sure that in the future it will do so. Thanks to those projects Dandenong is now a place that people want to visit rather than bypass for fear of their security.

In conclusion, I seek an assurance from the minister that his government will support the Dandenong revitalisation project.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! Under the new standing orders the opposition has reached the quota that is available for today for adjournment items, so that completes the adjournment matters. I invite the minister to respond.

### Responses

**Hon. P. R. HALL** (Minister for Higher Education and Skills) — In the spirit of Christmas I will do my earnest best to respond in full to those matters that have been raised by all members on both sides of the chamber this evening. If I go through them one by one, I have 14 to deal with. The first of those was raised by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Lenders, for my colleague the Minister for Water, Mr Walsh.

*Honourable members interjecting.*

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! The minister has indicated a willingness to respond constructively to the questions that were put to him. I am not sure that the opposition has actually shown a willingness to listen. I do not know that there was much attention being paid to the minister's answer at that point because of a series of conversations. Perhaps we could have a little less noise from the opposition benches to allow the minister's answers to be considered.

**Hon. P. R. HALL** — In relation to the matter raised by Mr Lenders, I was saying that in the matter he raised for the Minister for Water Mr Lenders made the request that the 100-day plan promised by Mr Walsh as Minister for Water in fact be delivered.

Mr Walsh would be one of the hardest working ministers in the coalition government. I have spoken to him about this matter, and he is working diligently to deliver that within the 100-day time frame. I am confident that he will achieve that, but nevertheless I

will pass on the request from the Leader of the Opposition that that commitment be delivered in full.

Ms Pennicuik raised a matter concerning the possible gazetting of 25 December 2010 as a public holiday, and she was not sure whether that should be directed to the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations or the Minister for Innovation, Services and Small Business. I think it is the small business minister who has responsibility for the gazetting of public holidays, so I will refer the matter to that minister. If she advises me otherwise, I will talk to my colleague the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations.

Mr O'Donohue raised an issue for the Minister for Education. It concerned again two very fine election commitments made down in the Cardinia area concerning a secondary college at Officer and also a special school in the Officer-Cardinia precinct. Being a person who shares that electorate with Mr O'Donohue, I am well aware of the importance of both those projects and the need to expedite a process in terms of their planning. Mr O'Donohue has asked that the first step be the convening of a meeting between Cardinia Shire Council and other interest groups involved in this matter and that that be undertaken early next year. I will certainly pass that request on to Mr Dixon, the Minister for Education, who I am sure will accede to that request.

The fourth item was raised by Mr Tee, and it was directed to the Minister for Planning. It was posed in the form of a question — one of the new forms in which adjournment matters can be put. He simply asked why the Minister for Planning did not consult with the local community regarding a number of planning decisions that Mr Tee mentioned. I will leave it up to the minister to answer that question, and I will not debate whether the premise for that question is indeed true or not. Rather than trying to debate that issue on my feet tonight, I will simply pass that question on to the Minister for Planning and ask him to respond to Mr Tee.

Mr Finn raised the matter of schools for the attention of the Minister for Education, and again it concerned an electoral commitment to establish a P-12 school for children with autism in the western suburbs. I think we all heard of that particular project during the course of the recent election campaign. It is a much-needed school for that area. The action sought by Mr Finn was for the establishment of a consulting process that would start early in 2011 — the first steps toward the establishment of that school. Again I say that the Minister for Education is very supportive of this

project, and I will pass that request on. I am sure he will accede to that request by Mr Finn and his community.

Ms Broad asked for actions from the Assistant Treasurer in regard to financial assistance that might be needed by farmers who have had their crops affected by recent rains in parts of the state. I acknowledge that is an important issue, and I understand there are some farmers, particularly in the north of the state in the member's electorate, who have been hard hit by the rains. For some there may be an inability to harvest, but for others there would definitely be a reduced value for those crops because of the rain effect. I appreciate that this matter has some urgency associated with it, so first thing in the morning I will ensure that that request is relayed to the Assistant Treasurer, who I am sure will also consult with the Minister for Agriculture and Food Security so that appropriate assessments for rain damage to crops can be undertaken and where possible assistance provided.

Mr Drum raised a matter for the Minister for Education concerning an election commitment of \$2 million to upgrade Eaglehawk Primary School so that it will remain as a stand-alone school. Mr Drum was seeking some reassurance for his local community that that commitment will be fully met and given to the people of Eaglehawk Primary School to assist with their decision about enrolments for next year. I will pass that request on as a matter of urgency to the Minister for Education.

Ms Tierney raised an issue for the Minister for Health concerning funding for the expansion of Geelong Hospital. In particular she sought an explanation of the timing of the staged funding commitments to that project. I am sure that is something the Minister for Health can provide a response to. I will pass that on to him.

Mr Leane raised a matter for me in my capacity as Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession concerning the Maroondah schools regeneration project, something which I have read quite a bit about. Essentially that regeneration project is a capital works project within certain schools in that region, and while teachers have a vital interest in it, it is not part of my responsibility as the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession. It falls into the responsibilities of my colleague Mr Dixon, who is Minister for Education. Nevertheless we share that common interest across the wider education portfolio areas. As I said, I am well aware of that regeneration project, and so I will take that up in a regular meeting that I have with Mr Dixon, which happens to be tomorrow afternoon. I will talk to him about that tomorrow for Mr Leane.

Mr Scheffer raised an issue for the Minister for Health concerning ambulance response times. He spoke about the then coalition — now the government — commitment to meeting ambulance time benchmarks. He also spoke about the 340 additional paramedics we promised as part of our election platform. He specifically requested the timetable rollout and the new benchmarks for ambulance response times, and he asked the Minister for Health whether both those figures could be published. That is a very reasonable request which I will pass on to my colleague the Minister for Health.

Ms Pulford raised an issue for the Minister for Public Transport. I think her request was that all train services to Ballarat be properly funded to enable them to terminate at Wendouree. I listened carefully to the 3 minutes and tried to analyse exactly what the request was. I will pass that on to the Minister for Public Transport. When we read back through the contribution I am sure we will be able to define even more precisely exactly what that request was. I am more than happy to pass that on.

Mr Elasmara raised an issue with me in my capacity as Minister for Higher Education and Skills. It concerned remuneration to teachers as part of the forthcoming EBA (enterprise bargaining agreement) negotiations. He specifically asked whether I would confirm that the coalition government has moved away from election promises in regard to that. I can confirm that we have not moved away from any election promise in regard to that.

The Leader of the Opposition would well understand EBA processes. When he was Minister for Education he was initially responsible for part of the negotiations on the current EBA agreement, which I might point out to members does not expire until 31 December 2012. There is an additional teacher pay increase which will occur on 1 January 2011. That is part of a four-step pay increase which started on 1 May 2008 at 4.9 per cent and then for the next three years was set at a 2.71 per cent increment. EBAs are not just increments in wages; there are a lot of other issues associated with pay, conditions and work hours. That will all be part of the EBA bargaining process that we will embark upon over the next 12 months.

Victorian teachers are not the highest paid in Australia. On average Western Australia has the highest paid teaching force, and in approximate terms teachers there get paid roughly about \$3000 per teacher more than those in Victoria. Part of that reason, as the opposition would well understand, was the resources boom in Western Australia and the need for not only teachers

but all the professions to be offered significant pay to meet service needs. It is certainly the will — and every endeavour will be applied — of the Victorian government to adequately reward Victorian teachers. In that regard we do not resile from the fact that we will do everything in our power to see that Victorian teachers are the highest paid in Australia throughout that EBA negotiation process which will take place over the next 12 months. As I said today in question time, I stand here proudly as the Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession and I will do everything I can to support teachers in their endeavours.

There were two other items. Mr Pakula raised an issue about racing and in particular the expenditure from the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund. His request to the Minister for Racing was that expenditure from the Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund go to the priorities of the three racing codes and that any different priorities of the coalition government be funded separately. I am sure my colleague Dr Naphine, the Minister for Racing, will be able to give Mr Pakula a fulsome answer on that issue. I will pass on his request and views on this matter to the minister and ask him to respond accordingly.

Finally, Mr Somyurek raised an issue for the Minister for Planning. He sought an assurance that the current government would continue to support the revitalisation of Dandenong project. It is a good project. I have seen evidence of the expenditure in Dandenong, having not so long ago been to a graduation held at the Chisholm Institute facilities there. I had an opportunity to look at some of the ongoing work in the Dandenong CBD and surrounds. I compliment the efforts of the former government and others who have been part of that project. I will put Mr Somyurek's request of the government to the Minister for Planning.

Those are the 14 matters raised, and I thank the members who are still in the chamber for being here and take the opportunity to wish them all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

**The PRESIDENT** — Order! The house now stands adjourned.

**House adjourned 10.29 p.m. until Tuesday, 8 February 2011.**

**MEMBERS INDEX****BARBER, Mr** (Northern Metropolitan)**Greens: leadership**, 9**Parliamentary committees**

Nominations, 20

**Points of order**, 9, 10**Questions without notice**

Bushfires: royal commission recommendations, 16

**BROAD, Ms** (Northern Victoria)**Adjournment**

Floods: government assistance, 40

**CROZIER, Ms** (Southern Metropolitan)**Governor's speech**

Address-in-reply, 31

**DAVIS, Hon. D. M.** (Southern Metropolitan) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ageing)**Bills**

Statute Law Revision Bill 2010, 21

**Election of President**, 1, 2**Ministry**, 8**Parliamentary committees**

Nominations, 20

**Points of order**, 10**Questions without notice**

Ambulance services: funding, 12, 13

Hospitals: staff holiday pay, 10

Questions without notice: government policy, 10

**DRUM, Mr** (Northern Victoria)**Adjournment**

Eaglehawk, Comet Hill and Bendigo North primary schools: merger, 41

**Questions without notice**

Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: responsibilities, 11

**ELASMAR, Mr** (Northern Metropolitan)**Adjournment**

Teachers: remuneration, 43

**ELSBURY, Mr** (Western Metropolitan)**Governor's speech**

Address-in-reply, 21

**FINN, Mr** (Western Metropolitan)**Adjournment**

Autism: western suburbs schools, 40

**GUY, Hon. M. J.** (Northern Metropolitan) (Minister for Planning)**Questions without notice**

Bushfires: royal commission recommendations, 16

Planning: government policy, 15

**HALL, Hon. P. R.** (Eastern Victoria) (Minister for Higher Education and Skills and Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession)**Adjournment**

Ambulance services: response times, 46

Autism: western suburbs schools, 45

Eaglehawk, Comet Hill and Bendigo North primary schools: merger, 45

Floods: government assistance, 45

Geelong Hospital: funding, 45

Planning

community consultation, 45

Dandenong development, 46

Public holidays: Christmas Day, 45

Racing: Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund, 46

Rail: Wendouree, 46

Schools

city of Maroondah, 45

Officer, 45

Teachers: remuneration, 46

Water: government election commitments, 44

**Bills**

The Nationals: leadership, 9

**Election of President**, 2**Points of order**, 10

## MEMBERS INDEX

### Questions without notice

Minister responsible for the Teaching Profession: responsibilities, 11

**JENNINGS, Mr** (South Eastern Metropolitan)

### Questions without notice

Ambulance services: funding, 12, 13

**KOCH, Mr** (Western Victoria)

### Questions without notice

Hospitals: staff holiday pay, 10

**KRONBERG, Mrs** (Eastern Metropolitan)

### Questions without notice

Housing: waiting list, 13

**LEANE, Mr** (Eastern Metropolitan)

### Adjournment

Schools: city of Maroondah, 42

**LENDERS, Mr** (Southern Metropolitan)

### Adjournment

Water: government election commitments, 38

**Election of Deputy President**, 3

**Election of President**, 2

**Notices of motion**, 19

### Parliamentary committees

Nominations, 20

**Points of order**, 10, 11, 20

### Questions without notice

Questions without notice: government policy, 10

**Shadow ministry**, 9

**LOVELL, Hon. W. A.** (Northern Victoria) (Minister for Housing and Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development)

### Questions without notice

Housing: waiting list, 13

Kindergartens: funding, 11

**MIKAKOS, Ms** (Northern Metropolitan)

### Questions without notice

Kindergartens: funding, 11

**O'BRIEN, Mr** (Western Victoria)

### Governor's speech

Address-in-reply, 24

**O'DONOHUE, Mr** (Eastern Victoria)

### Adjournment

Schools: Officer, 39

### Questions without notice

Information and communications technology: government initiatives, 16

**ONDARCHIE, Mr** (Northern Metropolitan)

### Governor's speech

Address-in-reply, 33

**PAKULA, Hon M. P.** (Western Metropolitan)

### Adjournment

Racing: Regional Racing Infrastructure Fund, 43

**PENNICUIK, Ms** (Southern Metropolitan)

### Adjournment

Public holidays: Christmas Day, 39

**Election of President**, 2

**Points of order**, 20

**PEULICH, Mrs** (South Eastern Metropolitan)

### Questions without notice

Planning: government policy, 15

**PRESIDENT, The (Hon. B. N. Atkinson)**

**Acting Presidents**, 9

**Commission to Administer Oath or Affirmation to Members**, 8

**Christmas Felicitations**, 38

**Condolences**

Russel Lee Bowman, 8

**Distinguished visitors**, 12, 14, 31

**Election of President**, 2

**Governor's speech**

Address-in-reply, 21

**Parliamentary committees**

Nominations, 20

**Reception of President by Governor**, 8

**Rulings**, 10, 13, 15, 20

**PULFORD, Ms** (Western Victoria)

**Adjournment**

Rail: Wendouree, 43

**Points of order**, 13

**RAMSAY, Mr** (Western Victoria)

**Governor's speech**

Address-in-reply, 36

**RICH-PHILLIPS, Hon. G. K.** (South Eastern Metropolitan)  
(Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Technology and Minister responsible for the Aviation Industry)

**Questions without notice**

Information and communications technology  
government initiatives, 16  
national broadband network, 14, 15

**SCHEFFER, Mr** (Eastern Victoria)

**Adjournment**

Ambulance services: response times, 42

**SOMYUREK, Mr** (South Eastern Metropolitan)

**Adjournment**

Planning: Dandenong development, 44

**Questions without notice**

Information and communications technology: national broadband network, 14

**TARLAMIS, Mr** (South Eastern Metropolitan)

**Governor's speech**

Address-in-reply, 28

**TEE, Mr** (Eastern Metropolitan)

**Adjournment**

Planning: community consultation, 40

**TIERNEY, Ms** (Western Victoria)

**Adjournment**

Geelong Hospital: funding, 41

**VINEY, Mr** (Eastern Victoria)

**Points of order**, 15