

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

**23 and 24 March 2010**

**(Extract from book 4)**

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## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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**Privileges Committee** — Ms Darveniza, Mr D. Davis, Mr Drum, Mr Jennings, Ms Mikakos, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Rich-Phillips.

**Select Committee on Train Services** — Mr Atkinson, Mr Barber, Mr Drum, Ms Huppert, Mr Leane, Mr O'Donohue and Mr Viney.

**Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration** — Mr Barber, Ms Broad, Mr Guy, Mr Hall, Mr Kavanagh, Mr Rich-Phillips and Mr Viney.

**Standing Orders Committee** — The President, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Lenders, Ms Pennicuik and Mr Viney.

## Joint committees

**Dispute Resolution Committee** — (*Council*): Mr D. Davis, Mr Hall, Mr Jennings, Mr Lenders and Ms Pennicuik. (*Assembly*): Mr Batchelor, Mr Cameron, Mr Clark, Mr Holding, Mr Lupton, Mr McIntosh and Mr Walsh.

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**Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Atkinson, Mr D. Davis and Mr Tee. (*Assembly*): Ms Campbell, Mr Crisp, Mr Lim and Ms Thomson.

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**Electoral Matters Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Broad, Mr P. Davis and Mr Somyurek. (*Assembly*): Ms Campbell, Mr O'Brien, Mr Scott and Mr Thompson.

**Environment and Natural Resources Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Murphy and Mrs Petrovich. (*Assembly*): Ms Duncan, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Ingram, Ms Lobato, Mr Pandazopoulos and Mr Walsh.

**Family and Community Development Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Finn and Mr Scheffer. (*Assembly*): Ms Kairouz, Mr Noonan, Mr Perera, Mrs Powell and Mrs Shardey.

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**Rural and Regional Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Darveniza, Mr Drum, Ms Lovell, Ms Tierney and Mr Vogels. (*Assembly*): Mr Nardella and Mr Northe.

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*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* — Acting Secretary: Mr C. Gentner

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**FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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**Deputy Leader of the Government:**

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Mr DAMIAN DRUM

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Broad, Ms Candy Celeste	Northern Victoria	ALP	Madden, Hon. Justin Mark	Western Metropolitan	ALP
Coote, Mrs Andrea	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Murphy, Mr Nathan <sup>2</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Darveniza, Ms Kaye Mary	Northern Victoria	ALP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Davis, Mr 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
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Guy, Mr Matthew Jason	Northern Metropolitan	LP	Scheffer, Mr Johan Emiel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hall, Mr Peter Ronald	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Smith, Hon. Robert Frederick	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Huppert, Ms Jennifer Sue <sup>1</sup>	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	Tee, Mr Brian Lennox	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Theophanous, Hon. Theo Charles <sup>3</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Kavanagh, Mr Peter Damian	Western Victoria	DLP	Thornley, Mr Evan William <sup>4</sup>	Southern Metropolitan	ALP
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Kronberg, Mrs Janice Susan	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Viney, Mr Matthew Shaw	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Vogels, Mr John Adrian	Western Victoria	LP

<sup>1</sup> Appointed 3 February 2009

<sup>2</sup> Appointed 9 March 2010

<sup>3</sup> Resigned 1 March 2010

<sup>4</sup> Resigned 9 January 2009



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**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Tuesday, 23 March 2010**

**Sport: drug use**

**Raised with:** Minister for Sport, Recreation and Youth Affairs

**Raised by:** Ms Darveniza

**Raised on:** 9 June 2009

**REPLY:**

The *CleanEdge* website is a national leader in providing information on the dangers of performance and image enhancing drugs (PIEDs) to parents, teachers and young people.

I am pleased to say I have recently approved an allocation of \$120,000 to Sports Medicine (Victoria Branch) Australia. This funding will expand the resources available through the website and provide new information targeted towards young males and the issues they face in relation to body image.

The work will also include an evaluation of the impact of the new materials which will take into account the use of PIEDs and the impact of overtraining, which has also been identified as an issue with young males.

The next stage of the development of *CleanEdge* is commencing and I will ensure promotion of the site and its resources to rural Victoria is a key component of this new development.

**Bushfires: preparedness**

**Raised with:** Minister for Environment and Climate Change

**Raised by:** Mr P. Davis

**Raised on:** 13 October 2009

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government assisted people with cleaning up after the bushfires by waiving the landfill levy to allow free disposal of bushfire debris and we also worked with local government to assist with disposal of material by encouraging them to waive or reduce their gate fees.

Removing vegetation as part of the preparedness for fire is the responsibility of the landowner as part of the ongoing maintenance of their properties.

Prior to and during the 2009/10 bushfire season a number of local councils took the lead and offered local residents free disposal of green waste.

We strongly support the actions of local government in this matter and would encourage all Victorians needing to dispose of such waste to continue to contact their local councils for more information and assistance.

**Environment: recycling**

**Raised with:** Minister for Environment and Climate Change

**Raised by:** Ms Hartland

**Raised on:** 10 November 2009

**REPLY:**

The Victorian Government acknowledges that silage wrap and other plastics used in agriculture and horticulture are a significant waste issue in some rural areas of Victoria. Burning the material can create air quality issues, and landfilling silage wrap has the potential to destabilise landfills. In addition silage wrap can be a significant litter issue in rural areas if it is not collected and disposed of appropriately.

The Government is supporting the 12 month trial of the Plasback systems through a number of Regional Waste Management Groups in partnership with Murray Goulburn Councils.

The trial, which commenced in January 2010, is based on successful programs run in the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

The Government will continue to work with Regional Waste Management Groups to identify solutions that may increase the demand for used silage wrap.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

**Police: Altona Beach**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police and Emergency Services

**Raised by:** Mr Finn

**Raised on:** 8 December 2009

**REPLY:**

Since coming to office, the State Government has increased the number of police by over 1,400. Further, we have increased funding to Victoria Police to a record budget of more than \$1.89 billion in 2009-10. The Government has also committed nearly \$450 million to fund the construction or refurbishment of over 160 police stations and residences across the state, in Victoria's largest ever police station building program.

The placement of police throughout the state is an operational matter that is resolved by police command on the basis of assessed need. It is important that this process is not subject to political interference. I am assured by the Chief Commissioner of Police that the level of policing across Victoria is continuously monitored by the respective Regional Command Officers, with a view to maintaining optimum policing effectiveness.

Victoria Police deploys first response police across its 56 Police Service Areas using a sophisticated resource allocation model incorporating 12 characteristics of the local community that are used to predict levels of crime and road trauma. Victoria Police uses this model to ensure that police resources are distributed equitably and according to demonstrated operational need. It should be noted that, since 1999, the number of first response officers has increased in all police regions across Victoria, including by 24 per cent in Hobsons Bay. Over the same period the crime rate in Hobsons Bay decreased by 25.3 per cent.

I am advised that police command in Hobsons Bay is currently rostering members to undertake regular daily patrols of the Altona and Williamstown foreshore areas, and that this is proving successful. These patrols are highly mobile and respond quickly to any incidents, including antisocial and hoon activity, in the foreshore and retail precincts.

Victoria Police has indicated that it is committed to working with council to improve community safety in Hobsons Bay. I understand that local police command met with council on Monday 21 December to discuss community safety on the foreshore. Council has also received separate replies regarding this matter from myself and Inspector Bill Mathers of the Hobsons Bay Police Service Area.

Thank you for raising this matter with the Government.

### **Country Fire Authority: Warburton station**

**Raised with:** Minister for Police and Emergency Services

**Raised by:** Mr O'Donohue

**Raised on:** 2 February 2010

#### **REPLY:**

The Government has provided record resources to the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to provide the training, equipment and facilities they need to respond to emergencies to ensure the safety of the Victorian community. Since 1999, the CFA budget has more than tripled from \$113.8 million to \$391.2 million in 2009-10.

The CFA has considered a number of sites for the new Warburton fire station over the past three years. With each site considered, there have been significant levels of assessments and work undertaken in order to determine the suitability for the new station.

Since the allocation of government funding, the CFA, in partnership with the volunteers at Warburton CFA, have put an enormous effort into finding a suitable site for the new Warburton fire station. Once a site is located and obtained, construction of the fire station will follow as soon as possible.

In early January 2010, the CFA identified a possible site consisting of two parcels of land that may be suitable for the fire station. The CFA are currently involved in discussions with the landowner to determine whether the site may be available.

I trust this information is of assistance and thank you for bringing your concerns to my attention.

### **Lake Charm Primary School: building program**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education

**Raised by:** Ms Lovell

**Raised on:** 2 February 2010

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows

I am pleased to note that Lake Charm Primary School was awarded \$265,000 for renovation works through the *Primary Schools of the 21st Century* program and \$25,000 *National School Pride* funding for painting projects, both under the *Building the Education Revolution* program.

The Department and contractor worked closely with the school to get the buildings ready for the first day of school on 2 February 2010. I have been advised that the school's start to the school year was delayed a day as classrooms were not ready for the first day of term.

I have been advised that works are now progressing well and the project is scheduled for completion in April 2010.

The Department and project manager will continue to work closely with the school to achieve the best possible outcome for the Lake Charm school community and will address any concerns they may have regarding its BER project.

I encourage school principals to contact the Department's information line on 1800 679 938 or by email [ber@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:ber@edumail.vic.gov.au) if they have any queries regarding the *Building the Education Revolution*.

### **Schools: literacy and numeracy**

**Raised with:** Minister for Education

**Raised by:** Ms Pennicuik

**Raised on:** 4 February 2010

#### **REPLY:**

I am informed as follows:

The Victorian Government is committed to making information about school performance available to parents and school communities, to enhance accountability and support school improvement across the system. Everyone responsible for a young person's education needs a shared understanding of how children are progressing in their learning and how a school is performing.

In late 2009, I launched the Victorian Government School Performance Summary, which provides parents and school communities with a rich perspective on school performance in our government schools. This includes intake-adjusted measures of school performance, that measure accurately the value schools are adding to their students' outcomes, taking into account student background characteristics. Schools and our school system use this information to diagnose where assistance is needed, and put in place school improvement activities.

The way these summaries are presented provides valuable information, but does not lend itself to the production of simplistic league tables or narrow misrepresentations of school performance by other users. It is important that student results are considered within the school, social and family context in which they occur.

Later this year the Victorian Government will release the Victorian School Performance Summary for all schools, government, Catholic and independent, which will include the data published through the *My School* website, as well as data unique to Victorian schools such as *On Track* survey results and VCE results.

The Victorian Government, through the National Education Agreement, the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, and through the Ministerial Council on Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs, is committed to comprehensive national assessment and reporting processes.

ACARA's *My School* website provides important, comparable school performance data for all Australian schools. It places the results of Victorian schools in a broader, national context.

NAPLAN provides information for students, parents, teachers and principals on student achievement and progress. These data give Victorian schools and teachers a powerful means of analysing areas of strength and weakness and identifying students who require further challenge or support. As a national assessment, it also enables consistency, comparability and transferability of educational outcomes to be measured across all school jurisdictions. This assessment program plays a critical role in the ongoing development and success of school systems in Australia.

**WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES**

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

**Wednesday, 24 March 2010**

**Women: workforce opportunities**

**Raised with:** Minister for Women's Affairs

**Raised by:** Mrs Coote

**Raised on:** 23 February 2010

**REPLY:**

As Mrs Coote MP noted in the question she has raised, Commonwealth employment programs are matters for federal government.

Notwithstanding, the Victorian Government is committed to promoting flexible education, training and employment opportunities for women and we have provided a number of programs and initiatives including Returning to Earning and New Workforce Partnerships which support women's participation in the labour force.

Returning to Earning is a \$13.2 million four-year program designed to assist parents who have been out of the paid workforce for at least two years while caring for children. Between 2007-2008 and 2008-09, the Returning to Earning program delivered 5,696 grants to assist parents with dependents return to work with over 90 per cent of parents accessing the program being women.

The New Workforce Partnerships program helps to meet the labour and skills needs of Victorian industry and to create opportunities for people with significant barriers to sustainable employment. Targeted assistance is provided to jobseekers who need assistance to become "work ready" and find employment in a highly competitive labour market. Twenty-nine New Workforce Partnerships were funded in 2008-09. The program is characterised by a flexible model that can be adapted to suit the needs of different groups of jobseekers, particularly women.