

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Tuesday, 31 August 2010

(Extract from book 12)

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By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

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The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC

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Standing Orders Committee — The Speaker, Ms Barker, Mr Kotsiras, Mr McIntosh, Mr Nardella and Mrs Powell.

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Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Beattie, Mr Delahunty, Mrs Maddigan and Mr Morris. (*Council*): Mrs Coote, Mr Leane and Ms Mikakos.

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

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

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

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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

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FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Mr P. J. RYAN

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Hodgett, Mr David John	Kilsyth	LP	Thompson, Mr Murray Hamilton Ross	Sandringham	LP
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Languiller, Mr Telmo Ramon	Derrimut	ALP	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

¹ Resigned 6 August 2007

² Elected 15 September 2007

³ Resigned 2 June 2008

⁴ Elected 13 February 2010

⁵ Elected 28 June 2008

⁶ Resigned 18 January 2010

⁷ Resigned 25 August 2010

⁸ Elected 15 September 2007

⁹ Resigned 6 August 2007

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QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

*Answers to the following questions on notice were circulated on the date shown.
 Questions have been incorporated from the notice paper of the Legislative Assembly.
 Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.
 The portfolio of the minister answering the question on notice starts each heading.*

Tuesday, 31 August 2010

Public transport: on-train announcements

2559. Mr MULDER to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports for the Minister for Public Transport — With reference to on-train announcements made on Metro services:

- (1) Does the volume at which on-train announcements are made vary:
 - (a) between the 15 metropolitan lines;
 - (b) between the Comeng, Siemens and X'Trapolis trains;
 - (c) within the City Loop area.
- (2) At how many decibels are announcements set:
 - (a) on each metropolitan line;
 - (b) for each type of train.
- (3) Can the announcement “Metro now arriving at [station]” be simplified to “Next stop [station]” or similar; if so, what would be the cost of any such programmed change for each type of train.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

- (1)
 - (a) The volume output does not vary between the 15 different train lines.
 - (b) There is minimal variation in the volume between the different types of train (Comeng, X'Trapolis and Siemens).
 - (c) There is no volume variation set for the City Loop relative to any other part of the network.
- (2) The volume does not vary between the different train lines. The following maximum peak levels are set at:
 - X'Trapolis 78 +/-3 decibels
 - Comeng 80 +/-5 decibels
 - Siemens 75 +/-5 decibels
- (3) As part of its agreement with the state, Metro is required to announce the next stop on a train route. The manner in which these announcements are made is a matter for Metro.

Housing: Fewster Road, Hampton — maintenance

2831. Ms ASHER to ask the Minister for Housing — With reference to public housing at 30 Fewster Road in Hampton:

- (1) How much funding was spent on maintenance in:
 - (a) 2008;
 - (b) 2009;
 - (c) 2010 to date.

- (2) What types of maintenance and works were funded in:
 - (a) 2008;
 - (b) 2009;
 - (c) 2010 to date.

- (3) How much funding was spent on repairing windows and locks in:
 - (a) 2008;
 - (b) 2009;
 - (c) 2010 to date.

- (4) How many units were vacant for more than two weeks in:
 - (a) 2008;
 - (b) 2009;
 - (c) 2010 to date.

- (5) For units that were vacant for more than two weeks, how long was each unit vacant, and what were the reasons for the vacancies, in:
 - (a) 2008;
 - (b) 2009;
 - (c) 2010 to date.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

In the 2007–08 financial year, the government allocated \$103.3 million towards maintenance of public housing.

In 2008–09, the government allocated \$110.9 million to maintenance. This was higher than usual due to additional commonwealth funding from the Nation Building and Jobs Plan.

In 2009–10, it is expected the allocation will be \$106.2 million

Maintenance is grouped into responsive maintenance, as well as programmed maintenance.

The Office of Housing is committed to shifting the focus from responsive maintenance to planned, preventative maintenance. This is aimed at addressing maintenance issues as soon as, or even before costs escalate as problems worsen.

The government also has a significant upgrade budget, with \$199.3 million allocated in the 2009–10 budget to improving public housing.

In relation to vacancies, the government has implemented an intensive program of statewide vacancy monitoring over and above regular vacancy monitoring. As a result, vacancy turnaround times have reduced by 32 per cent in the past five years, from an average of 40 days in 2003–04 to 27 days as at December 2009.

At 31 December 2009, there were 474 vacant rental properties, representing less than 0.8 per cent of direct, tenure public rental stock — this compares to a vacancy rate in the private market of 1.3 per cent in metropolitan Melbourne, as recorded by the REIV in September.

Properties may remain vacant for a range of reasons, including the need for maintenance, work to modify properties to meet client needs, client illness, or time for actions such as inspections by Consumer affairs Victoria in the case of disposing of goods abandoned by vacating tenants.

Community services: Department of Human Services — paper consumption

2864. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services — With reference to paper consumption at the Department of Human Services:

- (1) What was the total consumption of reams of A4 equivalent paper per full time employee in each of 2007–08 to 2009–10 to date.
- (2) What was the total consumption of envelopes per full time employee in each of 2007–08 to 2009–10 to date.
- (3) What was the total paper consumption for external printing and publications in each of 2007–08 to 2009–10 to date.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) These figures are published in the department’s annual report.
- (2) These figures are not available and would require an unnecessary diversion of resources to ascertain.
- (3) These figures are not available and would require an unnecessary diversion of resources to ascertain.

Community services: community residential units — services and programs

2943. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Community Services — With reference to residents’ access to services and programs while residing within a Community Residential Unit (CRU):

- (1) What additional external services and/or programs is a resident eligible to access.
- (2) What documentation is available to residents and their families regarding eligibility to access additional services and programs.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

Residents can access a range of external services and programs and information is available on the DHS website or from DHS offices.

Public transport: bus service review

2961. Mrs FYFFE to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports for the Minister for Public Transport — In the Knox/Maroondah/Yarra Ranges Bus Service Review Implementation Plan, section 8.1, to what specific lengths of time do ‘short’, ‘medium’ and ‘long’ refer.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

Section 8.1 of the Knox/Maroondah/Yarra Ranges Bus Service Review Final Report makes reference to specific time frames in which the recommendations may be implemented, should the Department of Transport decide to introduce the recommended changes. These time frames are implementation estimations only.

The time frames are defined as:

- short: within six to nine months;
- medium: within 12 to 18 months; and
- long: more than 18 months.

Environment and climate change: metropolitan sewerage backlog program

3054. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to the Metropolitan Sewerage Backlog Program, for each of the years 2006 to 2010:

- (1) How many properties were using a septic tank system.
- (2) How many properties were included in the program.
- (3) What was the estimated and actual expenditure associated with the program.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibility and should be directed to the Minister for Water.

Environment and climate change: metropolitan sewerage backlog program

3055. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to the Metropolitan Sewerage Backlog Program within the Yarra Valley Water boundary:

- (1) For each of the years 2006 to 2010:
 - (a) what was the estimated number of backlog properties;
 - (b) how many backlog properties brought onto the programme;
 - (c) how many sewerage connection points were made available;
 - (d) what was the budgeted backlog expenditure.
- (2) What is the average cost of servicing a property as part of the program.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibility and should be directed to the Minister for Water.

Environment and climate change: metropolitan sewerage backlog program

3056. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to the Metropolitan Sewerage Backlog Program within the South East Water boundary:

- (1) For each of the years 2006 to 2010:
 - (a) what was the estimated number of backlog properties;
 - (b) how many backlog properties were brought onto the program;
 - (c) how many sewerage connection points were made available;
 - (d) what was the budgeted backlog expenditure.
- (2) What is the average cost of servicing a property as part of the program.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibility and should be directed to the Minister for Water.

Environment and climate change: reticulated sewerage system connections

3057. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — For each of the years 2006 to 2010, how many properties were connected to the reticulated sewerage system from a septic tank system in:

- (1) Victoria.
- (2) The Yarra Valley Water boundary.
- (3) The South East Water boundary.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibility and should be directed to the Minister for Water.

Education: MADEC site

3122. Mr CRISP to ask the Minister for Education — With reference to notification from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to MADEC that the 339 Deakin Avenue site needs to be cleared by 30 June 2010: does the 30 June 2010 deadline still apply; if not, by what date has MADEC been instructed to clear the site.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

Vacation of the site by the MADEC is considered critical, as their ongoing occupation is prohibiting further facilities development for the Mildura Specialist School, a setting where the enrolment has more than doubled in the last ten years.

Vacation of the site is the subject of ongoing discussions with the MADEC management. At the most recent meeting it was agreed that MADEC would not be in a position to commence vacating the site until mid-September.

Police and emergency services: Bungower Road–Shandon Street–Nepean Highway, Mornington — fixed camera timing adjustments

3126. Mr MORRIS to ask the Minister for Police and Emergency Services — What timing adjustments have been made to the fixed cameras at the intersection of Bungower Road, Shandon Street and the Nepean Highway in Mornington during May 2010.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

There have been no timing adjustments made to the fixed camera at the intersection of Bungower Road, Shandon Street and the Nepean Highway in Mornington during May 2010.

Timing adjustments of the lights are the responsibility of the Minister of Roads and Ports.

Agriculture: locust control

3132. Mr CRISP to ask the Minister for Agriculture — What role will local government have in locust control in spring 2010 in the Mallee.

ANSWER:

I am informed that as at the date the question was raised:

As part of the Victorian government's \$43.5 million locust response it was recently agreed that up to \$850 000 be allocated to help local governments (including those in Victoria's Mallee region) manage locusts. Twenty two municipalities most affected by plague locusts would be eligible for this support including: Ararat, Buloke, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mildura, Mitchell, Moira, Mount Alexander, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Southern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, West Wimmera and Yarriambiack.

Support for these councils includes funding for a rebate on insecticides purchased for the treatment of locusts on council managed land, plus funding for an adviser to help coordinate councils' response. This is in addition to the training, information and advice the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) will be making available to all affected land-holders.

Energy and resources: Silex Systems

3134. Mr CRISP to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources — Is any of the funding committed to Silex Systems to continue the planning stages of a solar power station at Carwarp conditional on the company retaining its Melbourne offices and research facilities.

ANSWER:

I am informed that as at the date the question was raised:

Silex Systems and the state government had discussions as part of negotiating the grant that the company would retain its research and test facilities in Victoria.

Environment and climate change: Nowingi block classification

3155. Mr CRISP to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to the Nowingi block, adjacent to the Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, former proposed site for a toxic waste dump:

- (1) Have there been any changes in the tenure or classification of the block.
- (2) Are there any proposals to change or vary the tenure or classification of the block.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) There have been no changes in the tenure or classification of the Nowingi block.
- (2) There are no proposals by the government to change or vary the tenure or classification of the block.

Education: school crossings — supervision

3160. Mr THOMPSON (*Sandringham*) to ask the Minister for Education — If a school crossing supervisor, council traffic officer or police officer is not available to supervise a school crossing:

- (1) Is it expected that children cross the road by themselves.
- (2) Is it in order for a parent to supervise the crossing.
- (3) What contingency plan is available if children cannot cross the road by themselves, and a parent cannot supervise the crossing.

ANSWER:

I am informed as follows:

This matter does not fall within my portfolio of responsibilities and should be referred to the Minister for Local Government.

Environment and climate change: Department of Sustainability and Environment — vehicles

3215. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to vehicles used by Department of Sustainability and Environment employees, what models, and how many of each model, are manufactured by:

- (1) Ford.
- (2) Holden.
- (3) Toyota.
- (4) Subaru.
- (5) Mazda.
- (6) Mitsubishi.
- (7) Other manufacturers.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) Ford.

Ford	Courier	1
Ford	Falcon-LPG	73
Ford	Falcon-ULP	11
Ford	Ranger	5
Ford	Territory	10

- (2) Holden.

Holden	Berlina	9
Holden	Calais	1
Holden	Captiva	4
Holden	Colorado	3
Holden	Commodore–Dual Fuel	1
Holden	Commodore-ULP	23
Holden	Rodeo	3
Holden	Statesman	2
Holden	Ute	2

(3) Toyota.

Toyota	Aurion	4
Toyota	Camry	41
Toyota	Camry Hybrid	19
Toyota	Hilux	167
Toyota	Land Cruiser	98
Toyota	Land Cruiser	93
Toyota	Land Cruiser Prado	95
Toyota	Prius	26

(4) Subaru.

Subaru	Forester	14
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(5) Mazda.

NIL

(6) Mitsubishi.

Mitsubishi	Pajero	5
Mitsubishi	Triton	4
Mitsubishi	Triton	20

(7) Other manufacturers.

Land Rover	Discovery 3	3
Nissan	Navara	7
Nissan	Pathfinder	1
Nissan	Patrol	223
Nissan	X Trail-Diesel	3
Nissan	X Trail-ULP	3

TOTAL VEHICLES 974

In line with the Victorian government's commitment in Our Environment, Our Future 2006, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) purchases offsets each year equivalent to the emissions generated by its passenger vehicle fleet.

Environment and climate change: Department of Sustainability and Environment — vehicles

3216. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to vehicles used by employees of the Department of Sustainability and Environment:

- (1) How many vehicles are in the department's fleet.
- (2) How many vehicles are:

- (a) Hybrid vehicles;
- (b) Electric vehicles.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

- (1) As at 29 July 2010 there were 974 vehicles in the Department of Sustainability and Environment's (DSE) fleet.
- (2a) As at 29 July 2010 DSE had 45 Hybrid vehicles;
 - 26 Toyota Prius; and
 - 19 Toyota Camry Hybrid.
- (2b) As at 29 July 2010 DSE did not have any electric vehicles in its fleet.

In line with the Victorian government's commitment in Our Environment, Our Future 2006, the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) purchases offsets each year equivalent to the emissions generated by its passenger vehicle fleet.

Health: Department of Health — vehicles

3227. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Health — With reference to vehicles used by Department of Health employees, what models, and how many of each model, are manufactured by:

- (1) Ford.
- (2) Holden.
- (3) Toyota.
- (4) Subaru.
- (5) Mazda.
- (6) Mitsubishi.
- (7) Other manufacturers.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This is one approximately 14 000 questions asked since 2006. Due to the nature of the question, the research required to provide a response would place an unreasonable burden on time and resources.

Health: Department of Health — vehicles

3228. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Health — With reference to vehicles used by employees of the Department of Health:

- (1) How many vehicles are in the department's fleet.
- (2) How many vehicles are:
 - (a) Hybrid vehicles;
 - (b) Electric vehicles.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This is one approximately 14 000 questions asked since 2006. Due to the nature of the question, the research required to provide a response would place an unreasonable burden on time and resources.

Attorney-General: drug-related crimes

3305. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Attorney-General — With reference to fines imposed in respect of drug-related crimes in 2009–10:

- (1) What was the value of the fines imposed.
- (2) What was the value of fines collected.

ANSWER:

I am advised that:

The expression “drug-related crimes” in this question is too broad for an accurate response to be provided.

Environment and climate change: sewerage backlog funding — City of Manningham

3329. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — How much money has the government provided to the Manningham City Council to improve its sewerage backlog in 2009–10.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibility and should be directed to the Minister for Water.

Water: Mullum Mullum Creek — funding

3330. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Water — How much money has the government allocated to the Mullum Mullum Creek in 2009–10.

ANSWER:

I am informed that Melbourne Water is responsible for waterway management over Mullum Mullum Creek. Melbourne Water advises that its expenditure on Mullum Mullum Creek in 2009–10 was approximately \$199 100.

Water: Koonung Creek — funding

3331. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Water — How much money has the government allocated to the Koonung Creek in 2009–10.

ANSWER:

I am informed that Melbourne Water is responsible for waterway management over Koonung Creek. Melbourne Water advises that its expenditure on Koonung Creek in 2009–10 was approximately \$406 800.

Roads and ports: Doncaster Road, Doncaster Hill — speed limit

3335. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports — With reference to Manningham City Council’s request to reduce the speed limit on Doncaster Road through the council’s principal activity

centre from 70 km/h to 60 km/h in light of the increased pedestrian and building activity taking place on Doncaster Hill:

- (1) Has VicRoads considered the request.
- (2) Will the Government approve the request; if so, when will it be implemented.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

In response to the Manningham City Council's request, VicRoads has undertaken a review of the speed limit on Doncaster Road at Doncaster Hill and determined that the current speed limit of 70 km/h is appropriate. Speed limits are determined to provide an appropriate balance between safety and mobility, with consideration given to factors such as the number of access points, the nature of the road environment and abutting land use developments.

At this stage, a lower speed limit on this section of road would be inconsistent with the current speed zone guidelines and would not be supported. However, VicRoads is currently working with council to determine whether a speed limit reduction may be appropriate in the future, based on council's Doncaster Hill vision. VicRoads is also working with council on the construction traffic management plan for this area, which may include a speed limit reduction for the long-term worksite.

Water: water, sewage and drainage — Doncaster Hill

- 3338.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Water — Has the Department considered Manningham City Council's request to provide funding for the provision of leading-edge water, sewage and drainage outcomes for Doncaster Hill; if so, will the department approve the request and when will the council receive the funding.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

The Department of Sustainability and Environment has not received a funding request from Manningham City Council for a water, sewage and drainage project in Doncaster Hill.

Environment and climate change: sewerage backlog funding — Yarra Valley Water

- 3339.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Energy and Resources for the Minister for Environment and Climate Change — With reference to Manningham City's request that the government provide sufficient funding in the next Water Plan put forward by Yarra Valley Water to enable the Sewage Backlog Program to be completed by 2019:

Will the funding be given to Yarra Valley Water; if so, over what years.

ANSWER:

I am informed that:

This question does not fall within my portfolio responsibility and should be directed to the Minister for Water.

Roads and ports: King Street, East Doncaster — pedestrian crossing

- 3346.** Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports — Will VicRoads install a pedestrian crossing outside the Roseville Retirement Village on King Street in East Doncaster.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

The Manningham City Council undertook a pedestrian count on King Street outside the Roseville Retirement Village on 16 February 2009. It was found that the number of pedestrians crossing the road at this location was relatively low with respect to the guidelines for the installation of pedestrian crossings. These guidelines assist VicRoads to rank candidate sites for pedestrian crossings, and take into account the needs of elderly pedestrians. Proposals for improvement projects must be considered and evaluated on a statewide basis. There are currently other proposals for pedestrian crossings that, when evaluated, rank higher than this location.

Roads and ports: Victoria Street, East Doncaster — pedestrian crossing

3347. Ms WOOLDRIDGE to ask the Minister for Roads and Ports — Will VicRoads install a pedestrian crossing outside the Domaine Retirement Village on King Street in East Doncaster.

ANSWER:

I am informed that, as at the date the question was raised:

To assist in determining the need for a pedestrian facility at this location, the Manningham City Council undertook pedestrian counts on Victoria Street, Doncaster, on 19 March 2009, during the morning and afternoon peak periods (as defined by the management of the retirement village). It was found that the number of pedestrians crossing the road at this location is low with respect to the guidelines for the installation of pedestrian crossings. These guidelines assist VicRoads to rank candidate sites for pedestrian crossings, and take into account the needs of elderly pedestrians. Proposals for improvement projects must be considered and evaluated on a statewide basis. There are currently other proposals for pedestrian crossings that, when evaluated, rank higher than this location.